

# THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CAREER PATH PLANNING IN PROMOTING ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE IN BUSINESS MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATIONS IN THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

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## Abstract

The study aimed to identify the effectiveness of planning career paths in promoting organizational excellence in business management organizations. The researcher adopted the descriptive analytical approach. The study sample consisted of (80) managers and their assistants in the Saudi Arabian Mining Company, and the questionnaire was used as a tool for collecting information. The study reached a set of results that the responses of the study members towards the effectiveness of planning career paths in promoting organizational excellence in business management organizations in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia came at a (low) degree with a total arithmetic mean of (2.32). This mean falls into the fourth category of the five-step scale. The results also showed that there is a direct (positive) relationship between the total degree of the effectiveness of career path planning in business organizations and the degrees of enhancing organizational excellence within business organizations.

**Keywords:** career paths, organizational excellence, business organizations.

## Introduction

The human element is the main driver of organizations, and takes priority among the various resources that organizations need to achieve their vision, mission and goals in society, because the effectiveness and success of the organization and its achievement of a high level of performance depends largely on maximizing the utilization and optimal investment of its human resources.

The world has witnessed many challenges, most notably the unexpectedly high pace of change at the level of entrepreneurship and competitiveness among companies. These challenges led to a change in customer needs and requirements, increased competitiveness, and labor market disruption (Crane & Hartwell, 2019). From this angle, it has become necessary to search for work methods that enable institutions and companies to respond quickly to keep pace with changes that occur in the business environment, exploit resources, and use them at the right time (Al-Abri & Kooli, 2018).

In order for any organization to compete in the business environment perfectly; it has to be able to sense the upcoming change, respond quickly and flexibly, read changes in the environment around it, and predict what's coming, in addition to exploiting opportunities and improving its performance by planning career paths (De Mauro et al, 2018). In light of this, the importance of the role of human resources management lies in working on good planning for employees in a way that makes them achieve effective compatibility between their goals and needs, and the goals and aspirations of business organizations, by working with the employee and helping him in drawing and planning the career path, and predetermining promotions and horizontal and vertical transfers for successive jobs (Turner & Endres, 2017).

Bhagra & Sharma (2018) indicated that career path planning plays a key role in identifying promising management leaders, and training and developing them early. Succi & Canovi (2020) also noted that career planning is an essential tool for employee development and retention within the organization, as it ensures that employees have a clear view of the career options available to them. Ghazaleh's study (2019) confirmed the positive relationship between career path dimensions and job satisfaction, and Ghadban & Awalami (2018) study confirmed that there is a positive relationship between career path and employee performance and the enhancement of skills stock in business organizations.

In light of the above, the importance of planning career paths to promote organizational excellence in business management organizations in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is evident to bring about the intended positive change and to invest human resources and competencies, as it has an influential role in raising the efficiency and effectiveness of organizations (Subramony et al, 2018). This investment is best embodied in the management of competencies, which represent a resource and high-value human

capital. This has made managing competencies and good selection of employees, discovering and developing their talents, and developing their career paths, among the priorities of business organizations (Bocciardi et al, 2017).

### **Problem of the Study**

Organizational excellence has become an important direction for business organizations at all levels, and a necessity of administrative development to raise performance levels, through developing the skills and capabilities of all employees, and involving them in the decision that concerns them, and the ability to reconcile and coordinate the elements of the organization and operate them in integration and interdependence to achieve the highest rates of effectiveness.

However, by tracing the reality of planning career path planning on promoting organizational excellence in business management organizations in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in addition to the experience that the researcher possesses through her work at the University of Hail and some sectors of business organizations, the researcher found that there is a weakness in the opportunities for development and career advancement and the current perception of the concept of career paths and their role in achieving true alignment between the individual, the job and the organization. Based on the foregoing, there is a need for the current study to answer the following main question:

**What is the effectiveness of career path planning on promoting organizational excellence in business management organizations in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia through the Saudi Mining Company as a model?**

### **Questions of the Study**

1. What is the reality of career path planning on promoting organizational excellence in the Saudi Mining Company?
2. Is there a statistically significant relationship between career paths planning on promoting organizational excellence in the Saudi Mining Company?

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. Identifying the reality of planning career paths in the Saudi Mining Company.
2. Identifying the statistically significant relationship between career paths planning and the promotion of organizational excellence in the Saudi Mining Company.

### **Significance of the Study**

1. The study may be a reference for leaders, researchers, and those interested in planning career paths to promote organizational excellence in the Saudi Mining Company.
2. In line with the aspirations of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in building qualified human resources and meeting the requirements of the labor market in business organizations, the current study may contribute to promote organizational excellence in business organizations.
3. The study may contribute to directing the attention of administrators in business organizations to the importance of taking practical and measured procedures to develop career planning in promoting organizational excellence in business organizations.

### **Background**

Career paths are defined as moving from a lower level to a higher level in the organization in order to achieve goals, promotion, job improvement or self-realization, by matching the capabilities of employees and developing their skill stock, in addition to developing the organization's capabilities (Mehdibeigi et al, 2018).

The human resource is one of the valuable and necessary assets of business organizations, which they care about for the purpose of competition, survival and continuity (Newberry et al, 2020). Therefore, in recent years, many business organizations have begun to view human resource management practices as the direct means of achieving their goals (El Sedafy & Yehia, 2019). As for career path management, it means that process in which the individual plays a major role in cooperation with the organization in determining his professional goals and the appropriate way to achieve them (Tabiu & Nura, 2020). From this vision, career path management is the process of the employee's transition from his current job to a higher job, and this job is concerned with creating compatibility and congruence between the individual and the jobs he occupies (Dahl et al, 2020).

In the same context, career path management is defined as a process that describes the sequence of job positions, and the professional steps that an employee must take in a government institution in line with the progress he is making in his job (MacKinnon, 2020). In light of this, the career path management processes need an effective strategic action plan drawn by the organization in partnership with the employee, in which the employee can progress towards achieving his goals and aspirations (Fodor et al, 2018).

Due to several changes, Vobava et al (2015) states that the career path has been developed by allowing individuals in technical positions to move to higher technical positions or move to other managerial positions in the organization, thus contributing to attracting and retaining qualified technical staff for critical positions in the organization and ensuring the continuity of Career development of individuals in the organization. Accordingly, the importance of career path management becomes clear as follows: (Gyansah & Guantai, 2018)

1. Achieving the goals of the individual through growth in work and satisfaction with it, in addition to achieving the goals of the organization in productivity and profit by placing the right person in the right place.
2. Renewing the skills of employees, and maintaining what can be used of skills and abilities.

3. Providing employees with feedback that includes the organization's view of their efforts and capabilities.
4. Giving workers the opportunity to get close to advanced job experiences that increase the expertise and skills of the individual.
5. Reducing work turnover and absenteeism.
6. Preventing the obsolescence of employees by encouraging them to develop themselves by joining training courses; this will help to build an educated, multi-competence and skill force.

Moreover, Fodor et al (2018) indicated that the parties involved in shaping the career path are as follows:

**Human Resources Department:** It sets the planning and career path development system, which includes training executive managers on advice, helping individuals to act on their own, planning their paths, and practicing some career path methods; such as: transportation, entertainment, training, rehabilitation, rotation and assessing the suitability of the employee's career path options through a number of methods such as: performance evaluation, and career path laboratories which are exercises and choices, the main purpose of which is for the individual to reveal his aspirations and career hopes, and to reveal his capabilities abilities and skills.

**Direct manager:** he observes subordinates to determine the compatibility between their skills and the jobs they are looking to move to and provides advice, experience and advice.

**The employee:** through his insight into his career hopes, his identification of his abilities, capabilities and skills required and how to develop his abilities to keep pace with them.

In light of this, it is clear that the process of planning career paths is a joint and integrated process that was not carried out in isolation from any of the three parties (human resources department, direct manager, and employee) to achieve the desired goal.

The process of planning paths for human resource development in order to enhance the stock of skills in business organizations includes the following: (Chetana & Mohapatra, 2017)

1. **Tools:** There are two tools that must be considered when implementing the process of planning careers paths to promote the skill stock in organizations and they are as follows:
  - Job Group-Based Career Path: This tool sets out the various career path options for the employee working in the current job group, as well as the options available to him in other job groups.
  - Career Path Map for Critical Jobs: This tool studies the organizational structure of the organization, and sets a set of paths in the form of a map of all critical jobs in the organization, the sudden leaving of which may lead to disruption of basic operations in the organization.
2. **Framework of Job:** The framework for job of the paths to promote the skill stock in organizations consists of three components, represented in the following: (Basavaraj & Aranha, 2021)
  - Drawing pre-defined career paths: The Human Resources Department draws career paths for all positions in the organization by drawing career paths for functional groups, in addition to drawing specific career paths for critical jobs in the organization.
  - Drawing a career path for one employee: The manager and employee use the "career paths" and "career path maps" developed by the Human Resources Department as a reference to discuss them in the process of mapping out a career path for the employee in line with the job needs and the employee's aspirations.
  - Career path participation and follow-up: The agreed upon career path for a specific employee is converted into an executable work plan that includes training and development processes that are in line with the requirements to achieve the desired career path.

## Field Study

### Methodology of the Study

The researcher adopted the descriptive analytical approach by investigating the opinions of the study sample members to find out their opinions about the effectiveness of planning career paths in promoting organizational excellence in business management organizations in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia through a case study of the Saudi Arabian Mining Company as a model.

### Sample of the Study

The study sample reached (80) managers and their assistants in business organizations in the Saudi Arabian Mining Company, and the sample size was determined based on the law of minimum selection of samples.

### Instrument of the Study

To achieve the objectives of the study, the researcher prepared a questionnaire about the effectiveness of planning career paths in promoting organizational excellence.

### Validity of the Questionnaire

The correlation coefficients for the total score were calculated, and the following table shows the procedures for calculating the internal consistency validity.

**Table (1) Pearson correlation coefficients**

Dimension	correlation coefficients	Value of Significance
The effectiveness of planning career paths in promoting organizational excellence	0.709**	0.000

It is clear from the previous table that the correlation coefficient reached (0.709), which is a high coefficient and statistically significant at the level of significance (0.05).

#### Reliability of the Questionnaire

Reliability of the questionnaire was tested using Cronbach's Alpha equation. It is a method that requires calculating the correlation of items with each other. The following table shows the reliability coefficient using Cronbach's Alpha equation.

**Table (2) Cronbach's Alpha**

Dimension	Cronbach's Alpha
The effectiveness of planning career paths in promoting organizational excellence	0.871
Total Reliability	0.861

It is clear from the previous table that the total reliability coefficient of the questionnaire was (0.861), which is a high reliability coefficient that indicates that the questionnaire has a high degree of reliability and can be relied upon in the field application of the study.

#### Results and Discussion of the first question

What is the reality of career path planning on promoting organizational excellence in the Saudi Mining Company?

To answer the question, arithmetic means, standard deviations, and ranks were calculated for the responses of the sample members on the effectiveness of planning career paths on promoting organizational excellence, and the following table illustrates this.

**Table (3) Means, standard deviations, and ranks of the effectiveness of career path planning on promoting organizational excellence**

No.	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank
1	The Saudi Arabian Mining Company is working to spread the culture of career planning among its employees.	2.52	1.042	8
2	The Human Resources Department continues to ensure that discussions regarding career planning are conducted.	2.68	0.93	2
3	There are career path maps for critical jobs that challenge skills for employees.	2.09	0.89	12
4	The employee's career paths align with his aspirations and goals.	2.37	0.98	
5	There is a job description that explains the duties, responsibilities and conditions in the career path planning process.	2.62	1.12	1
6	Career path planning enhances the skill stock in Saudi Arabian Mining Company.	2.16	1.11	11
7	Career path models are available on the human resources database of the Saudi Arabian Mining Company.	2.71	1.521	9
8	Career paths are charted with a view to enhancing skills and capabilities within the Saudi Arabian Mining Company.	2.82	0.562	6
9	The employees of the Saudi Arabian Mining Company have career paths that challenge their skill stock.	2.08	1.843	13
10	The process of planning career paths is reviewed on the skill performance	2.44	1.521	5

No.	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank
	of employees.			
11	Career paths are evaluated based on organizational excellence within the Saudi Arabian Mining Company.	2.22	0.539	3
12	Job performance outcomes are linked through effective career path planning.	2.16	1.286	3
13	Training and professional development activities focus on future job roles.	2.28	1.622	10
14	There are clear criteria for assessments of career path planning on organizational excellence.	2.39	1.303	14
15	The Saudi Arabian Mining Company applies a job rotation policy to serve the career path planning department.	1.67	1.492	15
Total Mean		2.35	0.753	-

By looking at Table (3), it is clear that: The responses of the study members towards the effectiveness of career path planning in promoting organizational excellence from the point of view of managers and their assistants in the Saudi Arabian Mining Company came at a (low) degree, where the total arithmetic mean was (2.35), This mean falls into the fourth category of the five-step scale.

As it is clear from the table that one item came with a medium degree of approval, which is item No. (2) There is a job description that explains the duties, responsibilities and conditions in the career path planning process. The researcher suggests this result to the fact that the efforts of business organizations provide procedural and organizational evidence, and what they contain of job descriptions for various administrative functions. There is no doubt that job descriptions play an important role in helping employees understand their responsibilities, and help managers evaluate the performance of employees, and they have a pivotal role in implementing the effective career path management process. In spite of that, these job descriptions are comprehensive for leadership and administrative positions only and there are no clear job descriptions at the level of detailed required for all jobs in business organizations.

While the rest of the dimension items were with a (low) score, and this result can be explained that there is a decrease in the level of alignment between the job performance evaluation criteria and the level of career progression, as the performance evaluation criteria are not significantly related to the employee's goals and the essential skills and competencies he possesses. This result is also explained by the weak dissemination of career path planning culture on the skill stock, in addition to the absence of career path maps for specific and critical jobs within organizations.

### Results and Discussion of the Second Question

Is there a statistically significant relationship between career paths planning on promoting organizational excellence in the Saudi Mining Company?

To answer this question, the researcher used the Pearson correlation coefficient to measure the relationship among the scores of the research sample members. The following table shows the results obtained:

**Table (4) Pearson correlation coefficients to measure the relationship between planning career paths and promoting organizational excellence**

Dimension	correlation coefficient	Level of Significance	Description of the relationship
The effectiveness of planning career paths	0.4263	0.000 Significant at significance level 0.01	direct (positive)
promoting organizational excellence	0.2334	0.000 Significant at significance level 0.01	direct (positive)

It is clear from Table (4) that there are direct (positive) relationships between the total degree of the impact of career path planning in business organizations and the degrees of promoting organizational excellence within the Saudi Arabian Mining Company, which indicates that the higher the level of career path planning in business organizations, the higher their degree in promoting organizational excellence, and those relationships were statistically significant at the level of 0.05 or less.

## Recommendations

1. The importance of the research sample, represented by the senior management in the Saudi Arabian Mining Company, directing the formation of working teams of specialists, and conducting seminars and educational lectures regarding organizational excellence and its relationship to determining career paths.
2. Enhancing the factors that lead to the promotion of organizational excellence in accordance with contemporary administrative trends, and taking into account the strength of the relationships between the research variables (career paths, organizational excellence) on the basis that they represent a positive case for the research sample company.
3. Developing trust among individuals within the research sample companies, as a strategic asset that is not subject to imitation and competition.
4. The necessity of the commitment of the Human Resources Department in the Saudi Arabian Mining Company to promote the dissemination of the culture of career planning, and to provide a comprehensive job description for all job roles in the Saudi Arabian Mining Company to facilitate the conduct of the career path management process.
5. Working on developing career paths for the specific jobs within the job group, and job path maps for critical jobs, and providing job path models available to employees in the Saudi Arabian Mining Company.
6. Working to enhance the human potential of employees through training and equipping them with the skills and abilities necessary for creativity, undermining them with tasks, and applying a job rotation policy, which contributes to the advancement of their work, and to serve the career path management.

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