

# Studying the Relationship between Lack of Job Promotion and Career Plateau of Staff: A Case Study in Well Being Office of Kerman

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## Abstract

Behavior of staff in an office or organization can be affected by their job attitudes. Therefore, it is necessary that managers be aware of them. The present research aims to study the effect of lack of job promotion of well-being staff of Kerman on their job motivations. The method used in this research is descriptive survey. Statistical population of the research is 80 persons including official, contractual staff in well-being of Kerman city. The present research is correlative and data and information were gathered by field researches (questionnaire) with complete census sampling. Results show that staff under the consideration are exposed to lack of job motivation due to their type of job so that managers require identifying this issue accurately. Also, results indicated that if staff have positive attitudes towards their jobs, they will expose to fewer plateaus. As a

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result, managers of well-being organization should try to increase positive attitudes of the staff.

**Keywords:** Job motivation, plateau, job promotion.

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## Introduction

Today organizations have changed from ladder form into a board form. Governance of organizational activities by virtual and electronic world is undeniable and it is the art of organizational individuals to adapt with new organizational structures and to prevent domination of the environment, job, change of individuals' mind and spirit. This is both an individual and managerial art. Human force is considered as the most basic, largest and the most valuable capital of an organization in society and the country. Therefore, countries and organizations have invested on this valuable force and tried to believe it. Societies will improve and promote if they develop these forces and abilities hidden in them (Nasrollahpour, 2006). One of the main factors of career plateau occurs when the staff is placed in a situation where they do not expect higher promotion, new positions with more responsibilities. Career plateau is considered as one of the factors of non-optimal job outcomes such as low satisfaction, high stress, poor performance, low organizational commitment, and increase of leaving the job. On this basis, one of the main issues that have been paid attention in occupational settings is efficient and self-motivated human force. Concerning that each organization should have the highest efficiency for its growth and development and achievement of its planned goals, it should try hard and pay attention to human force and its requirements (Soleimani Baghshah, 2005: 43). In one hand, studies show that lack of occupational promotion is unavoidable in current complex condition. On the other hand, plateau causes inefficiency and non-achievement of goals in the company or organization. Results of researches indicate that people will be skillful in one career within three years. From now on, the ordinary career will be uniform and nothing is left for learning. In this state, the individual feels weakness and thinks that his work is less pleasant and valuable; this natural experience is called plateau (Taleghani, 2002: 1, 3, 9). Milliman divided career plateau into two classes: hierarchical plateau and content plateau. Hierarchical plateau is defined as the end of promotion in present organization. Content plateau is defined as impossibility for learning new knowledge and skills in present career (Baoguo & Mian, 2005: 1739). Accordingly, the present research aims to study the effect of lack of occupational promotion of staff of well-being organization in Kerman on their job motivation.

## Research theoretical basics

Behavior of staff in the organization can be affected by their occupational attitudes; therefore, managers should be aware of them. Denis Waitley, the author of the book "birds' superiority" wrote: real leaders of business, professional communities, education, government and house have superiorities compared to other people in the society that distinguish them from others. Their superiority is not in their exceptional birth, high

intelligence or special gift rather their superiority is in their views and attitudes not in their competence and talent. Unfortunately, most of individuals are obstinate against such theory. They think that talent merely is sufficient (or talent without experience). But we know hundreds of teams who did not reach their goals although they had talented people and the cause of their failure was the way that team members think and believe in (Javari, 2009).

### *Plateau*

Hilman believed that career plateau is a predictor for non-optimal job outcomes such as low satisfaction, high stress, poor performance, low organizational commitment, and increase of leaving the job. In current complex conditions, plateau is undeniable. On the other hand, plateau causes inefficiency without reaching goals in the company or organization (James, 2005:3). The concept of career plateau has been studied in two recent decades. However, due to some factors occurred in current condition for all organizations including organizational and environmental aspects such as engineering or restructuring commerce, lowering sizes, expansion of hierarchy and even unplanned job management in organization can result in plateau of staff. Because organizational structures are horizontal, today occupational advancement, in terms of vertical promotion, has been changed into a complex and competitive thing. Therefore, most of employers will face with career plateau before reaching their job goals. Career plateau is not a new event. However, what is of concern is rapid expansion of this event in many organizations. Many researchers of organizational jobs believe that career plateau has been changed into a critical, organizational, and managerial issue that requires correct management in order to prevent from dissatisfaction of employers. Due to changes in commercial setting, restructuring, privatization, and employment, career plateau will be probably one of the important job issues in next decade (Ongori & Agolla, 2009: 268-271).

**Lack of job promotion:** lack of job promotion occurs when employers are placed in situations where they do not expect more promotions or new positions with high responsibilities (Appelbaum and Finestone, 1994: 12).

**Creativity of staff:** creativity can be defined as combination of the interaction between individual and environmental sources resulting in production of valuable solutions (Mouchiroud & Burnoussi, 2008: 372)

**Skills of staff:** being skillful in a work. A practice that is done in the least time with spending the least energy with maximum quality and efficiency

Plateau in direction of job advancement in three dimensions based on theory of Bardowick

1- Lack of organizational promotion and growth: unclear direction of job promotion of the staff

2- Lack of learning: works with low variety and boring content

3- Lack of feeling of enjoyment and ordinariness (everydayness): when personal life has no basic changes, the person faces with ordinariness (Khanifar, 2006: 102-103).

### *Types of life plateaus*

In order to solve the problem brought about by different types of life plateau, we can use essential views. There are three life plateaus including: structural plateau, content plateau and life plateau. While these are different from each other but they associate with each other. Bardowick believes that three types of career plateaus are different from each other and they are as follows:

A: structural factors of career plateau

B: content factors of career plateau

C: biological factors of career plateau

#### Structural Factors

This factor associates with the organizational structure and job promotion. He believed that for example among one hundred people who were employed by their competences and qualifications only one person reaches the middle level of management and this is also true about top level of management in the organization meaning that only one person reaches top level of organizational management. Other people will stay at lower levels and although they have obtained some qualifications, it is impossible for them to go upper levels. Therefore, when employers do not see the certain path in front of them and advancement of their colleagues, they will face with plateau.

#### Content Factor

Sometimes people will face with career plateau due to the job content because it has low variety and boring content. For several years they are working uniformly and they exactly know what to do every day and there is no new thing for learning. Content dimension can include all organizations even academic ones.

#### Biological Factors

These factors relate to life of person. Bardwick believed that when personal life has no basic changes and the person feels no interest or enjoyment in life, he will face with biological plateau (Khanifer, 2006: 102).

Bardwick's three factors plateau process as shown in Figure 1.

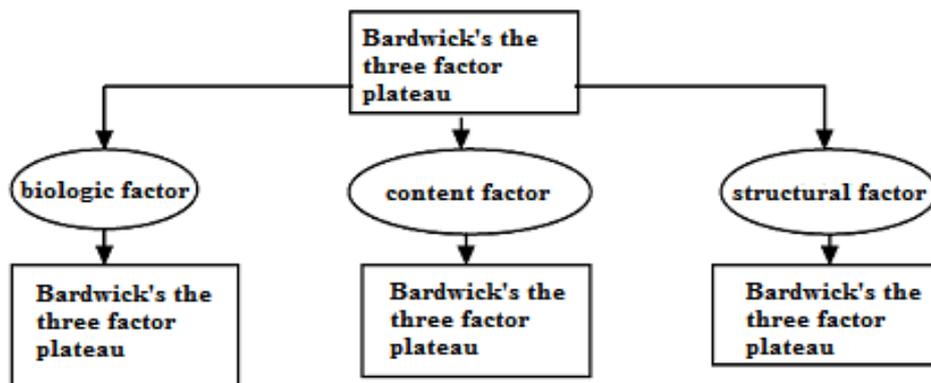


Figure 1 Bardwick's three factors plateau process  
Source: Hossein Khanifar (2006)

### *No Career Motivation*

It is evident that today staff think about the work life more than past and they want to grow and develop in their jobs. They often start their job with special hopes and expectations for reaching the highest level in the organization and advancement, power, reaching the highest responsibilities and rewards are very important for most of them. But unfortunately, before reaching their goals, they will face with plateau (James, 2006: 2). Career plateau occurs when employees are placed in situation where they do not expect higher promotion, new positions with higher responsibilities (Appelbaum and Finestone, 1994: 12). Also some researches have been done regarding job motivation of staff and their promotion and plateau including the research done by Khamrnia, Tourani and Mohammadi on studying the effect of dimensions of social capital on career burnout in female nurses of Hasheminejad hospital. Results showed that female nurses of this hospital had high career burnout and social capital was effective on them in some components. Therefore, it seems that some efforts should be done in order to increase and promote dimensions of social capital in personnel of hospitals that are of the most important serving organizations (Khoramnia, Tourani and Mohammadi, 2011). Also, in another research done by Mayasari (2009), results indicated that if workers have no ability and skill related to their jobs, they will not do their jobs well. Therefore, if they are given new positions and works and their jobs are promoted, they will refuse doing them because they are not qualified for those jobs. This situation can create a still condition for the person so that the person will have no advancement for acquiring better jobs (Mayasari, 2009).

### **Research Method**

The method is descriptive survey. In one hand, the present research is correlative. Data and information were prepared by field researches (questionnaire) and complete census sampling was used. The validity of the questionnaires was studied and confirmed by professors and experts. Then, in order to determine reliability of questionnaires of career plateau and positive job motivation, Cronbach' alpha was used. Reliability coefficient was calculated 0.82 and 0.98 for questionnaire of positive job motivation and

questionnaire of career plateau respectively. Statistical population of the research is 80 persons including official, contractual staff in well-being of Kerman city. Concerning limited amount of statistical population, sampling was not performed and all staff were selected. In other words, complete census sampling has been used. In present research, descriptive statistics including tables, graphs, mean, and standard deviation have been used to analyze data. Also, Pearson correlation coefficient has been used to test research hypotheses. In addition, SPSS 18 was applied to analyze data.

### Research Findings

Table 1 shows that 35 persons are satisfied from their jobs (75.48%) who selected the choice “average”, 30 persons selected the choice “high” (5.37%), 30 persons selected the choice “high” (5.37%), 8 persons selected the choice “low” (10%), 4 persons selected the choice “very low” (5%) and 3 persons selected the choice “very high” (75.3%) and 3 persons selected no choice (75.3%).

Table 1: frequency distribution of the sample under study in terms of job satisfaction

Job satisfaction	Frequency	Frequency percentage	Cumulative frequency percentage
Very high	3	75.3%	75.3%
High	27	75.33%	5.37%
Average	35	75.43%	25.81%
Low	8	10%	25.91%
Very low	4	5%	25.96%
Without sign	3	75.3%	-
Total	80	100%	100%

Table 2 shows that 39 persons are satisfied from their positions (75.48%) who selected the choice “average”, 12 persons selected the choice “low” (15%), 14 persons selected the choice “high” (5.17%), 12 persons selected the choice “very low” (15%), 3 persons selected no choice (75.3%) and no one selected the choice “very high”.

Table 2: frequency distribution of the sample under study in terms of satisfaction from organizational job

Satisfaction from organizational position	Frequency	Frequency percentage	Cumulative frequency percentage
Very high	0	0%	0%
High	14	5.17%	5.17%
Average	39	75.48%	25.66%
Low	12	15%	25.81%
Very low	12	15%	25.96%
Without sign	3	75.3%	-
Total	80	100%	100%

Table 3 components related to job attitudes

Components	Variable	M.	Med.	Expon.	SD	V.	Skew.	Range of changes	Min.	Max.	Unknown	N
Being interested in helping others for reaching a goal		956.3	4	4	745.0	556.0	- 591.0	4	1	5	0	80
Trying to reach the highest quality		930.3	4	4	762.0	581.0	- 516.0	3	2	5	1	80
Being creative to solve job problems		861.3	4	4	687.0	473.0	- 261.0	3	2	5	1	80
Being interested to take new responsibilities		554.3	3.66 6	4	626.0	393.0	- 423.0	33.3	67.1	5	2	80
Reaching the determined dead line and completing the mission before the dead line		704.3	3.83 3	4	706.0	499.0	- 286.0	67.3	33.1	5	0	80
Personal skills of staff		343.3	33.3	3.3	708.0	502.0	- 094.0	67.3	33.1	5	2	80

Table 4: analysis of correlation coefficient

Components	Plateau
Being interested in helping others for reaching a goal	- 182.0
Trying to reach the highest quality	- 179.0
Being creative to solve job problems	- 153.0
Being interested to take new responsibilities	- 153.0
Reaching the determined dead line and completing the mission before the dead line	- 014.0
Personal skills of staff	- 157.0

Based on data analysis, it can be determined that:

- Pearson correlation coefficient between two variables of amount of career plateau and their interest for helping others to reach one goal is  $-0.182$  with P value of 0.011 that are lower than significance level  $\alpha = 0.05$ . The relationship between these two variables suggests that if a person faces with career plateau, he will not be interested in helping others. This study can be occurred inversely.

- Pearson correlation coefficient between two variables of amount of career plateau and attempting to reach high quality is  $-0.179$  with P value of 0.012 that are lower than significance level  $\alpha = 0.05$ . Statistics showed that the increasing amount of career plateau reduces attempting for reaching high quality.

- Pearson correlation coefficient between two variables of amount of career plateau and creativity for solving work problems is  $-0.153$  with p value of 0.028 that are lower than significance level of  $\alpha = 0.05$ . So, according to statistics and researches, it can be said that by appearance of plateau, the person will be less creative resulted from plateau.

- Pearson correlation coefficient between two variables of amount of career plateau and taking new responsibilities of staff is  $-0.135$  with p value of  $0.045$  that are lower than significance level of  $\alpha = 0.05$ . Results show reduction of taking new responsibilities in plateau conditions.

- Pearson correlation coefficient between two variables of amount of career plateau and reaching determined deadlines is  $-0.014$  with p value of  $0.430$  that are higher than significance level of  $\alpha = 0.05$ . There is no significant relationship between career plateau and reaching determined deadlines.

- Pearson correlation coefficient between two variables of amount of career plateau and individual skills is  $-0.157$  with p value of  $0.025$  that are lower than significance level of  $\alpha = 0.05$ . Results show reduction of taking new responsibilities in plateau conditions. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between career plateau and individual skills of staff in offices of Kerman city. It can be found that the increasing amount of career plateau will challenge this component.

- Pearson correlation coefficient between two variables of amount of career plateau and positive job attitudes of staff is  $-0.133$  with p value of  $0.049$  that are lower than significance level of  $\alpha = 0.05$ . Results show reduction of taking new responsibilities in plateau conditions. Increasing amount of career plateau will reduce positive job attitudes. The opposition of this relation is also true.

## Conclusion

Today organizations try to attract the best individuals and benefit from them in direction of realization of their goals. For the purpose of changing human force into a valuable capital with value creation for the organization, it is necessary to provide condition where they can play their role in a secure, peaceful setting and use their abilities in direction of organizational goals and become interested in their job. One of ways that causes the staff to try hard and to be interested in their job is to change their job attitudes. Job promotion occurs when employers reach the point where there is no advancement for them and they cannot take any additional responsibilities. Results show that the staff may be occupationally unmotivated so managers of the organization should identify this issue carefully. Also results show that if staff has positive job attitudes, they will face fewer plateaus. As a result, organizational managers should increase positive attitudes of the staff.

## Recommendations

- 1- On time announcement of promotions, rewards, and careers of staff is an important factor in motivation of staff
- 2- Paying attention to meritocracy and using experts in specialized affairs should be top programs of top managers of the well-being in order not to waste their talents and energy and to help development of the organization using their science and specialization

3- For appointing persons in managerial positions, selection of qualified persons, having scientific and experimental qualification should be paid attention in order to prevent appointment of unqualified managers.

4- The most important source of each organization is human force. Therefore, it is necessary that organizations measure amount of plateau and burnout and study the causes and the coping ways based on the results.

5- Each employer should learn to be effective via analysis of interests, organizational matching, talents and merits, intrinsic ability, experiences and skills. Such analysis should be studied continuously and should be included in the archive as a file. Range of answers of employers to plateau was variable between excellent and dynamic performance, positive attitude, high dissatisfaction, and poor performance. If skills and abilities are inappropriate, improvement and feedback of individual performance and reanalysis of selection system are suggested. When there are few requirements for movement in direction of job promotion, better informational systems should be created in direction of job promotion. Due to lack of intrinsic motivation in jobs, they can be enriched and developed. Concerning presence of job stress and burnout, job tasks and programs of stress management should be changed.

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