

RESEARCH ARTICLE

PERSONAL FACTORS AND GOALS FOR CAREER ADVANCEMENT OF TENURED CALL CENTER EMPLOYEES IN BUSINESS PROCESS OUTSOURCE COMPANIES

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ARTICLE DETAILS

Article History:

Received 02 December 2024
Revised 30 January 2025
Accepted 12 February 2025
Available online 22 February 2025

ABSTRACT

The study explores the personal factors shaping the career advancement goals among tenured call center employees in the Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) companies in one of the cities in Batangas Province Philippines, specifically call center agents' confidence in self-efficacy and outcome expectations. It also examines career goals in terms of motivation, direction, and accountability, alongside employee's perception of promotion, salary increase, and job satisfaction. Employing a quantitative research approach, data was collected from 345 call center agents with a minimum tenure of six months to examine personal factors, career goals, and advancement opportunities. The results showed high level of self-efficacy and direction. Statistical analysis shows a significant association between personal traits and job objectives, particularly in terms of motivation, direction, and accountability. Career aspirations significantly predict promotion, salary increase, and job satisfaction. The finding reveals employees that are confident in their abilities and optimistic about prospects. Employees who are motivated by career achievement, guided by defined objectives, and committed accountability are ready for advancement, albeit expressing concerns regarding fairness in promotions and salary levels. Regression analysis reveals significant relationships between personal factors and career goals, as well as between career goals and career advancements, rejecting the null hypothesis. A propose strategic investments in professional development initiatives, the implementation of tailored career advancement programs, frequent wage reviews, improved communication channels, and creating a tailor fit intervention to enhance employees' confidence and promote career advancement opportunities.

KEYWORDS

self-efficacy; outcome expectations; BPO; Career Advancements; employees; motivation

1. INTRODUCTION

With over 1.3 million Filipinos working for nearly 1,000 corporations as of 2019, the Philippines accounts for 10–15% of the worldwide BPO sector, and employment is growing by 8–10% annually (Talmage-Rostron, 2023). Young Filipinos are drawn to this industry by its attractive pay, benefits, and prospects for professional advancement, which is causing a change in the workforce toward knowledge-based and service-oriented positions (DelaCruz, 2023).

Non-essential business operations are delegated to an outside company with the requisite resources and experience by the business process outsourcing (BPO) sector (Muyesu and Kimaku, 2023). Due to historical relations with Western nations, the Philippines has become a desirable location for outsourcing, offering a wide range of job opportunities, particularly for undergraduates, while preserving Eastern traditions (Cabello, 2022; Gallimore, 2023).

BPO companies prioritize career growth and leadership development through internal promotions, training, and culture of long-term success aligning with the goals of decent work and economic growth (Marcelo, 2019). This strategy is vital for attracting, motivating, and retaining talent by enhancing skills, increasing responsibilities, offering salary increase and promotions (Louie, 2013; Zikode, 2020). Call center agents can swiftly transition to supervisory or management positions in the Philippine BPO sector, which is known for providing substantial career growth prospects (Reyes, 2023). With a clear professional path that enables them to set and accomplish goals, many employees begin their careers in entry-level roles.

In the article authored by he highlighted the industry's commitment to career development, providing various workshops, certifications, and training programs for skill enhancement (Reyes, 2023). These career progression opportunities have attracted young individuals and college graduates, positively impacting working conditions, fostering increased engagement, motivation, and commitment among employees. Overall, skilled individuals are attracted and choose to stay due to the industry's focus on promoting career progression, fuelling both sector's growth and the Philippine's economic development (Reyes, 2023).

This study stems from a perceived gap in understanding the significance of personal factors in shaping career advancement goals among tenured call center employees in Lipa City, Batangas. This gap interferes our comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of career advancement in the BPO industry, potentially limiting the effectiveness of strategies aimed at supporting professional growth and fulfillment among call center employees.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Career management models operate on the premise that, much like other professional objectives, career goals play a central role in steering an individual's focus, time, and energy. These goals serve as a vital framework that influences and directs career-related decisions, acting as an essential standard to motivate or constrain choices regarding the strategies employed to attain desired career outcomes (Greco and Kraimer, 2018). Relating it to the study, clear and realistic career goals enable employees in Lipa City's call center landscape to design their own trajectory in the

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Website:
www.mjhrm.com.my

DOI:
10.26480/mjhrm.01.2025.35.40

face of changing difficulties and possibilities.

Motivation serves as a deciding factor for an individual to make decisions or take actions aimed at fulfilling a desired need (Greco and Kraimer, 2018). It is the driving force that motivates individuals to improve their performance in order to reach and accomplish the company's goals. It is an internal and external force that motivates people to attain their goals (Niati et al., 2021). High motivation leads to a strong sense of identity integration with a profession, as driven individuals incorporate their own identity with the qualities, principles, and experiences related to their line of work. One's professional identity is formed and developed as a result of these self-relevant procedures. Lack of motivation prevents an individual from actively pursuing career advancement or being genuinely attached and committed to their identified occupation.

Career growth or Career Advancement is the progression to higher employment levels, positions, and titles within an organization's hierarchy, as well as increase in earnings or income (Jauhar and Lau, 2018). Promotion is mostly in the interest of employees because promotion does not only show the dynamics of the job but also other aspects that are given in line with the job description (Rinny et al., 2020). Job satisfaction, and this is closely linked to improved job performance (Rinny et al., 2020). Although, there exist a practice which gained popularity specially during the pandemic which is called the "Dry Promotion". Dry promotion is when an employee is given a title change and additional responsibilities without corresponding pay increase. The effect of compensation on performance is positive, meaning that the more satisfied the employee is with compensation, the better the performance will be (Syaharudin1 et al., 2022).

Thously recognized in career theories and discovered to influence career growth (Lent et al., 2006). Another theory that supports this study is the Expectancy Theory by Victor Vroom. This theory specifies that the belief that their efforts will result in desired outcomes ne of the motivating factors of an individual (Vroom, 1964). Specifically, the theory implies that an employee's motivation is based on three factors: expectancy, instrumentality, and valence. Expectancy refers to the believe that exerting effort will yield to a specific level of performance. Instrumentality is the perception that improved performance will result into a desired reward, and valence refers to the extent to which employees value the rewards linked to their performance (Fang, 2023).

In terms of career advancement, attractive compensation not only acknowledges employees' efforts, but also empowers them to exercise their rights and advance their careers. Moreover, work advancement acts as a catalyst for future professional development, allowing individuals to utilize their abilities, experiences, and skills in fulfilling their responsibilities. When employees achieve job satisfaction through these aspects, it significantly correlates with improved performance, thereby fostering a positive connection to career advancement (Rinny et al., 2020).

3. RESEARCH METHODS

The study is a quantitative descriptive -correlational research. It was also cross-sectional research. The three hundred forty-five (345) respondents were BPO employees with an agent role from Lipa City and who had been with their company for at least six months. The researchers used adapted questionnaires and some of the questions was taken from different studies related to the variables. The questions included on the survey form will be based on the topics of personal factors affecting the career growth of call center employees in Lipa City. Responses to the items in self-efficacy and outcome expectations were coded through the scale ranging from 1 (No confidence at all) to 5 (Complete Confidence) based on the CDSE scaling (Lent and Brown, 2006). Career goals and Career advancement were coded through a scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Personal Factors

Variables	Mean	Interpretation
Self-Efficacy	4.58	Complete Confidence
Outcome Expectations	4.74	Complete Confidence
Overall	4.66	Complete Confidence

Table 1 shows the mean scores for two key personal factors affecting

career goals: Self Efficacy and Outcome Expectations. The tables illustrate a high level of confidence among surveyed call center agents in both self-efficacy (mean=4.58) and outcome expectations (mean=4.74), with an overall mean score of 4.66. This suggests that employees commonly believe in their abilities to attain their goals and expect positive results from their efforts at work (Sheu et al., 2018). These findings have significant effects on corporate practices and employee development initiatives. It is essential to recognize that the results presented in Table 4 are indicators of perceived self-efficacy and outcome expectations, not guarantees of actual career success. External factors such as economic conditions, organizational dynamics, and personal situations can all have an impact on career results, regardless of an individual's confidence in their abilities or ambitions.

4.2 Career Goals

Table 2 depicts the mean scores for three variables related to Career Goals: Motivation, Direction, and Accountability. The mean scores indicates that respondents have a generally favourable attitude toward their job aspirations, with all variables lying between "Agree" and "Strongly Agree". The high overall mean score (mean=4.53), implies consistent agreement across all criteria, demonstrating respondents' strong overall orientation towards career aspirations (Jemini et al., 2023). This reflects harmonious alignment of individual goals with organizational support, which can help to improve employee satisfaction, retention, and organizational effectiveness (Maan et al., 2020). Although, it is important to remember that these findings reflect reported attitudes and may not fully capture the intricacies of individual experiences and organizational situations.

Variables	Mean	Interpretation
Motivation	4.34	Agree
Direction	4.52	Strongly Agree
Accountability	4.73	Strongly Agree
Overall	4.53	Strongly Agree

4.3 Perception of Call Center Employees towards Career Advancement

Variables	Mean	Interpretation
Promotion	4.29	Strongly Agree
Salary Increase	3.99	Agree
Job Satisfaction	4.45	Strongly Agree
Overall	4.24	Strongly Agree

The data from Table 3 shows the mean scores for Perception on Career Advancement across all three variables: promotion, salary increase, and job satisfaction, as well as an overall mean score. The mean score lies in the "Agree" to Strongly Agree range, showing that respondents have a generally positive attitude on career advancement. The high overall mean scores of 4.24 indicates a strong agreement across all variables underscoring the positive perception of career advancement within the organization as research revealed that career advancement was positive and significant to job satisfaction (Mwiti et al., 2021).

Table 4a: Personal Factors and Career Goals in terms of Motivation

Model Fit Measures				
Model	R	R ²		
1	0.946	0.896		
Model Coefficients - Motivation				
Predictor	Estimate	SE	t	p
Intercept	0.198	0.1506	1.31	0.192
Self-Efficacy	0.478	0.0436	10.96	<.001
Outcome Expectation	0.465	0.0416	11.17	<.001

Table 4a of Model Fit Measures suggest a good correlation (R = 0.946, R² = 0.896) between self-efficacy and outcome expectation and career goals. This shows that the model explains a significant part (about 89.6%) of the variation in career goals based on these personal factors. The coefficient estimate for self-efficacy is 0.478, with a standard error (SE) of 0.0436 and a statistically significant t-value (t = 10.96, p < 0.001). Similarly, the coefficient estimate for outcome expectation is 0.465, with a standard error (SE) of 0.0416 and a statistically significant t-value (t = 11.17, p < 0.001).

Table 4b: Personal Factors and Career Goals in terms of Direction				
Model Fit Measures				
Model	R	R ²		
1	0.907	0.822		
Model Coefficients - Direction				
Predictor	Estimate	SE	t	p
Intercept	0.221	0.2075	1.07	0.288
Self-Efficacy	0.272	0.06	4.53	< .001
Outcome Expectation	0.658	0.0574	11.47	< .001

The data from Table 4b of the model fit measures reveal that the predictors self-efficacy and outcome expectation, alongside the outcome variable of direction, demonstrate a satisfactory fit with the dataset. The correlation coefficient (R) is 0.907, indicating a strong relationship between predictors and the outcome variable, whereas the coefficient of determination (R²) is 0.822. This implies that the model explains roughly 82.2% of the variance in the result variable using the predictors contained in the model. This high R² value signifies that a significant portion of the variability in direction.

The coefficient estimate for self-efficacy is 0.272, with a standard error (SE) of 0.0600 and a statistically significant t-value (t = 4.53, p < 0.001). This suggests that Self-Efficacy correlates positively with Direction. The coefficient estimate for Outcome Expectation is 0.658, with a standard error (SE) of 0.0574 and a statistically significant t-value (t = 11.47, p < 0.001). This suggests that Outcome Expectation has a significant positive association with Direction, suggesting that when individuals expect positive outcomes, they are more likely to pursue a favorable direction in their careers. This supported the study that individuals with high expectations for the results of their labor are more likely to have a clear career path (Minor, 2019).

Table 4c: Personal Factors and Career Goals in terms of Accountability				
Model Fit Measures				
Model	R	R ²		
1	0.875	0.766		
Model Coefficients - Accountability				
Predictor	Estimate	SE	t	p
Intercept	0.528	0.2341	2.25	0.026
Self-Efficacy	0.160	0.0677	2.36	0.020
Outcome Expectation	0.702	0.0647	10.85	< .001

The model fit measures on Table 4c suggest that the predictors (self-efficacy and result expectation) alongside the outcome variable, (accountability) demonstrate an acceptable alignment with the data set. The correlation coefficient (R) stands at 0.875, while the R² is 0.766. This implies that approximately 76.6% of the variability in the outcome variable accounted for by the predictors in the model. The coefficient estimate for Self-Efficacy is 0.160, with a standard error (SE) of 0.0677 and a statistically significant t-value (t = 2.36; p = 0.020). This aligns with assertion that employees who embrace accountability experience a notable increase in self-efficacy and confidence (Finkelstein's, 2023). For outcome expectation, the coefficient estimate for is 0.702, with a standard error (SE) of 0.0647 and a statistically significant t-value (t = 10.85, p < 0.001).

Table 4d: Personal Factors and Career Goals				
Correlation Between Personal Factors and Career Goals				
Variables	rho	degree	P	Verbal Interpretation
Personal - Career Goals	0.831	Strong	<0.001	Significant

Table 4d exhibits the correlation between the variables: Personal Factors to Career Goals, and Career Goals to Career Advancement. The correlation coefficient rho between personal factors and career goals is 0.831, indicating a strong positive relationship. The p value of less than 0.001 suggests that this correlation is statistically significant. Furthermore, this

also suggests that personal factors like self-efficacy and outcome expectations have a substantial influence on career goal setting.

Table 5a: Career Goals and Career Advancement in terms of Promotion				
Model Fit Measures				
Model	R	R ²		
1	0.965	0.931		
Model Coefficients - Promotion				
Predictor	Estimate	SE	t	p
Intercept	-0.12	0.144	-0.839	0.404
Motivation	-0.316	0.125	-2.52	0.013
Direction	0.697	0.239	2.912	0.004
Accountability	0.622	0.175	3.567	< .001

The Table 5a presents a strong relationship between the predictors (motivation, direction, and accountability) and the outcome variable (promotion). The correlation coefficient (R) is 0.965, whereas the coefficient of determination (R²) is 0.93. This implies that the model explains about 93.1% of the variation in promotion based on the factors included in the model. Motivation's coefficient estimate is -0.316, with a standard error of 0.125 and a statistically significant t-value (t = -2.520, p = 0.013). This negative coefficient indicates that higher levels of motivation are related with a decreased chance of promotion. Direction's coefficient estimate is 0.697, with a standard error (SE) of 0.239 and a statistically significant t-value (t = 2.912, p = 0.004). This positive correlation shows that those who have a clear understanding of their job goals are more likely to be promoted. The coefficient estimate for Accountability is 0.622, with a standard error (SE) of 0.175 and a statistically significant t-value (t = 3.567, p < 0.001).

Table 5b: Career Goals and Career Advancement in terms of Salary Increase				
Model Fit Measures				
Model	R	R ²		
1	0.889	0.79		
Model Coefficients - Salary Increase				
Predictor	Estimate	SE	t	p
Intercept	-0.0286	0.282	-0.101	0.919
Motivation	-0.8358	0.247	-3.387	0.001
Direction	1.9309	0.471	4.099	< .001
Accountability	-0.1271	0.343	-0.37	0.712

Table 5b of the model fit measures shows a substantial relationship between the predictors (motivation, direction, and accountability) and the outcome variable (salary increase). The correlation value (R) is 0.889, with a R² of 0.790. Based on the included factors, the model appears to explain approximately 79.0% of the variance in pay growth. Previous study supports that salary increases have a significant impact on staff motivation and productivity in the implementation and completing the work salary increases when compared to other factors like motivation and accountability (Setiawan et al., 2018; Achim et al., 2019).

Table 5c: Career Goals and Career Advancement in terms of Job Satisfaction				
Model Fit Measures				
Model	R	R ²		
	0.85	0.723		
Model Coefficients - Job Satisfaction				
Predictor	Estimate	SE	t	p
Intercept	-0.1781	0.333	-0.534	0.594
Motivation	-0.4909	0.291	-1.686	0.095
Direction	1.4226	0.556	2.558	0.012
Accountability	0.0634	0.405	0.157	0.876

The data from Table 5c provides the model fit metrics between the predictors (motivation, direction, and accountability) and the outcome variable (job satisfaction). The correlation coefficient (R) is 0.850 whereas the coefficient of determination (R²) is 0.723. This means that the model,

using the provided predictors, explains approximately 72.3% of the variance in satisfaction with work. The coefficient estimate for Motivation is -0.4909, with a standard error (SE) of 0.291 and a statistically insignificant t-value ($t = -1.686, p = 0.095$). This suggests that motivation may not significantly impact job satisfaction in this context. However, previous research suggests that intrinsic motivation often correlates with higher job satisfaction (Omar et al., 2021). The lack of a significant association in this model may indicate the need for additional research or consideration of other variables that may influence job satisfaction.

The Direction coefficient estimate is 1.4226, with a standard error (SE) of 0.556 and a statistically significant t-value ($t = 2.558, p = 0.012$). This positive correlation shows that people who have a clear sense of purpose in their careers are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs. The coefficient estimate for Accountability is 0.0634, with a standard error (SE) of 0.405 and a statistically insignificant t-value ($t = 0.157, p = 0.876$).

Table 5d: Correlation Between Career Goals and Career Advancement				
Variables	rho	degree	P	Verbal Interpretation
Career Goals - Career Advancement	0.715	Strong	<0.001	Significant

The correlation coefficient (rho) between career goals and career advancement is 0.715, presented in Table 5.4 indicates a strong positive relationship. The p value is less than 0.001, confirming statistical significance. This implies that clear and ambitious career goals are strongly linked to career advancement.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and analysis, the following conclusions have been drawn. Employees have strong belief in their abilities and positive expectations for outcomes in the workplace which serve as key motivators for pursuing career advancement. They feel prepared for higher-level roles and see opportunities for advancement, although there are some concerns about fairness in promotion process and current salary level. Regression analysis confirms significant relationships between personal factors (self-efficacy and outcome expectations) and career goals rejecting the null hypotheses. The following are recommendations by the researcher based on the findings and conclusions. Companies may invest in professional development programs. These programs can focus on improving skills and abilities related to career promotion, allowing individuals to pursue higher-level jobs within the firm. They may also implement career development programs that emphasize motivation, direction-setting, and accountability. In addition, they may conduct frequent wage reviews to guarantee equitable compensation practices and encourage open communication and feedback sessions. Using the findings of this study, future researchers may further explain not only the relationships between selected variables but also causality to further support the claims in accord with the social cognitive career theory.

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