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Networking and Women Academics' Career Success in the Malaysian Research Universities

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Abstract

Women career success is an important focus in today's research works. Past research reveals limited attention on the relationships between networking behaviors and women academics' career success. Thus, this study investigates the influence of networking behaviors on the objective and subjective career success of 146 women academics in two Malaysian research universities. The study utilized a descriptive - correlational study design and used a questionnaire for the data collection. From the regression analysis, active involvement in networking behaviors was found to contribute significantly to women academics' objective and subjective career success. This study enhances career success among women academics in the Malaysian research universities by highlighting the networking opportunities they have to achieve greater success in their careers. Therefore, these findings are useful to human resource development practitioners to include in their developmental programs and to encourage lifelong learning.

Keywords: Networking, Objective Career Success, Subjective Career Success, Research Universities, Malaysia

Introduction

Literature clearly shows the importance of networking concerning several individual outcomes involving being part of professional networks, contributing in social gatherings to aid the growth of individual, and professional prospects and utilizing the available valuable resources (Casciaro, Gino & Kouchaki, 2016; Forret & Dougherty, 2004; Wolff & Moser, 2009). Taking part in such conduct is viewed as essential for those seeking after successful career who depend on themselves, as opposed to their organizations, to shape their profession prospects. A few investigations propose that networking behaviors, for example, going out for drinks to examine business matters casually, going to meetings, or remaining in contact with previous partners, are vital to career success (e.g., Wolff &

Moser, 2008; Wolff, Weikamp & Batinic, 2018). In like manner, academic research has demonstrated that networking is directly related to objective and subjective measures of career success (Forret & Dougherty, 2004; Ganiron Jr, Ganiron & Ucol-Ganiron, 2012; Mohd Rasdi, Garavan & Ismail, 2011, 2013; Wolff & Moser, 2009). The purpose of this study is to investigate the network-related behaviors and how they influence women academics' objective and subjective career success.

Furthermore, past studies provide evidence that women lack the opportunity to access significant organizational connections and positions in their place of work (e.g., Alsubaie & Jones, 2017; Arokiasamy et al., 2011; Bertrand et al., 2018; Gupta, 2018; Jamil et al., 2019; Linge, VanRensburg & Sikalieh, 2010), especially, women academics in public higher education are underrepresented in the top level academic positions (Ortega-Liston & Soto, 2014) also, women academics stay distinguished in mid-level scholarly positions, low-level positions, or positions more border lined to advancement into top positions, for example, teachers and understudy administrations (Blau & Kahn, 2017; Jarmon, 2014) notwithstanding being as scholastically qualified as their male partners. Networking behavior has been believed to be particularly crucial since it is a technique women can use to get through the glass ceiling (Singh et al., 2006; Qureshi & Saleem, 2016; Wanigasekara, 2016). Networking behavior assists in building strong connections with others and may serve to broaden women's venture into the more elite classes of associations (Forret & Dougherty, 2004). Morley, Berma and Hamid (2017) in their investigation depicted networking behavior as an instrument for expanding collectivity among women. In any case, while women have been urged to take part in networking behavior, it is obscure in the case of networking behavior is as worthwhile for women for what it's worth for men.

The concept of networking has a strong foundation in literature. Forret and Dougherty (2004) defined networking as an instrument for career advancement. In particular, they conceptualized networking as people's attempts to create and keep up relationships with other people who can possibly help them in their work or career. Likewise, Wolff and Moser (2009) defined networking as "behaviors that are directed at creating, maintaining, and utilizing informal connections that has the (potential) benefit of facilitating work-related activities of individual by voluntarily granting access to resources and exploiting mutual benefits" (p. 196). More recently, Gibson, Hardy and Buckley (2014) defined networking as goal-directed behavior which happens both inside and outside of an organization, concentrated on making, developing, and using interpersonal relationships. Therefore, networking is operationalized in this study as women's attempts to build and maintain professional relationships with people in and outside the organization in the anticipation of receiving great benefits through those established relationships and therefore leading to career success.

Women are entering the workforce better educated and progressively ready to contribute as knowledge employees, yet regardless they are still held back from attaining certain important positions in the workplace (Rand & Bierema, 2009). Accordingly, the knowledge of the significance of networking behavior for women's career success is helpful for deciding effective career management techniques. This paper makes a few significant contributions to literature and practice. Firstly, while the career profile and needs of female academics is progressively perceived both in the literature and in practice, the overall influence of active involvement in networking has been overlooked. Therefore,

the main contribution of this study is to investigate the influence of networking on the career success of women academics. Secondly, the career success studies particularly involving women academics in the context of Malaysian research universities have not been widely covered (Hani et al., 2016), and most of the recent studies on women academics' career success have been carried out in other countries (Gasser & Shaffer, 2014; Obers, 2014; Parker et al., 2018). Hence, there is a need to further explore this area of interest in Malaysia. This study is significant as it gives new insight to readers from any background regarding career success among women academics and the importance of active participation in networking behaviors.

Networking in Academia

According to a popular saying, it's not just what you know, but also who you identify with that has a large group of implications for a lifelong career development. Therefore, for an academic career, it is vital that an individual is actively involved in professional networks. Toward the start of their careers, several academics in research as well as teaching look for possibilities to advance their profession improvement. In the academic field, mentoring by one key mentor all through the career was the conventional method for supporting early profession academics with career advancement (Iversen, Eady & Wessely, 2014), lately the attention has progressively been on the development of networks of mentoring connections as opposed to one definite mentor (Baker & Latucca, 2010; Christou et al., 2017). Because of the changing condition in the academia which includes globalization, expanded diversity on campus, pressure of publishing in high impact journals, increased demands on new academics workforce and expanded workforce mobility - academics' professions are no longer straightforward, but a series of learning cycles (Ansmann et al., 2014), and academics are at the focal point of the worldwide knowledge creation and worldwide academic enterprise (Kwiek, 2018; Teichler et al., 2013). Therefore, coordinated mentor-mentee relationships are never again practical or appealing, however academics need to gain experience and create associations with different others. In this unique situation, networking can be an effective tool for academics' career advancement. Within the academic community, networking has been found to impact the academics' research efficiency (Blau, Currie, Croson & Ginther 2010; Niehaus & O'Meara, 2014), grant throughput (Rawlings & McFarland, 2011), and progression on the tenure track (Bilimoria, Joy & Liang, 2008).

One of the essential ways that networking may improve career success is through improving the academics' social capital (Gonzales & Rincones 2008; O'Meara & Campbell, 2011). In the institutions of higher learning, the more social capital an individual has, the more status, acknowledgment, and authenticity the person in question can attain to progress in career (Niehaus & O'Meara, 2014). Social capital is the outcome of people's relationships with others. As Lin (1999) described it, "social capital is captured from embedded resources in social networks" (p. 28). Networking develops an individual's social capital by giving access to information, guidance, resources, and professional sponsorship (Njagi, 2012). While networking can improve social capital for employees, not all networks are made equivalent. Dissimilarities in network content and structure can significantly impact the advantages from those networks (e.g., Barnes et al., 2016; Barnes-Mauthe et al., 2013). Expectedly, academics would build up numerous networks across various settings, yet the truth of

the matter is that making great networks require some serious energy and time to create and sustain. In that capacity, academics need to invest their time and energy tactically so as to get the most noteworthy profit for that investment (Niehaus & O'Meara, 2014).

Networking Behaviors

Forret and Dougherty (2004) defined networking as an instrument for career advancement. In particular, they conceptualized networking as people's attempts to create and keep up relationships with other people who can possibly help them in their work or career. Likewise, Wolff and Moser(2009) defined networking as “behaviors that are directed at creating, maintaining, and utilizing informal connections that has the (potential) benefit of facilitating work-related activities of individual by voluntarily granting access to resources and exploiting mutual benefits” (p. 196). Networking behaviors comprise approaching others for casual guidance on business related issues, going out for beverages with associates, taking an interest in expert exercises, or remaining in contact with previous partners to up to date in business matters (Wolff, Weikamp & Batinic, 2018). Networking behavior captures the investment individuals make in creating and sustaining networks (Macintosh & Krush, 2014). Individuals gain value from these connections because it improves their “access to career, emotional coping, and task-related resources” (Van Emmerik, 2006). People participate in networking behaviors to perform their jobs better and create various progressive connections for their careers (Gibson, Hardy & Buckley, 2014; Wolff & Moser, 2009). The previous viewpoint describes networking behavior as a method by which people can access and activate social resources rooted in relational connections (Forret & Dougherty, 2001; De Vos, Clippeleer, & Dewilde, 2009); the more recent point of view centers around how viewers comprehend networking behavior and, from the judgments, draw deductions about progression recommendations (Radsj, Garavan, & Ismail, 2013).

Several empirical studies demonstrate that, through increments in social capital, networking behavior is directly connected with career satisfaction, advancement, and career success (e.g., Fryczyńska & Ivanova, 2019; Volmer & Wolff, 2018; Wolff & Moser, 2010, 2018). However, a few past investigations recommend that some people are more likely to take part in networking behavior than others. Forret and Dougherty (2001) established that men participate in more networking behavior than women. Women have more tendency to make close ties with relatives, who offer help and cooperation, when compared to men (Surngi, 2014). Ibarra (1997 as cited in Wanigasekara, 2016) studied network inclinations and discovered that high potential women had essentially more same-sex career and information ties than non-high potential women. Men, conversely, tend to create a larger number of ties that provide instrumental resources than women. Besides, it has been discovered that men expects associations from those men who likewise give access to organizational resources. Belliveau (2005) as well shows in his investigation that male instrumental ties might be more profitable than female instrumental ties because people get more significant instrumental rewards, for example, access to significant information. In addition, women have obstructions for networking in the social setting than men and incapable to devote the additional time outside of work hours because of their parenthood responsibilities (Broughton & Miller, 2009). Also, women have fewer number of associates and have limited opportunities to attain top positions (Seo, Huang

& Han, 2017). This study builds upon past investigations by examining how networking behaviors of women are related to career outcomes.

Networking and Women Career Success

Career success is defined as the collective positive work and mental outcomes resulting from one's work encounters (Seibert & Kraimer, 2001), which entails both subjective success and objective success. Objective career success is described as external rewards such as income and professional status (Kuijpers, Schyns & Scheerens, 2006). In addition, objective career success refers to society's perspective on accomplishment and achievement utilizing measures, for example, pay, advancements and status (Nabi, 2001). The second way that career success is operationalized is by factors that measure subjective or intrinsic career success (Judge et al., 1995). Subjective career success is in light of the person's own appreciation about their career accomplishment (Kuijpers, Schyns & Scheerens, 2006). Measures for subjective success are, for example, job satisfaction, career satisfaction, or relative judgments (Ng et al., 2005). A number of studies demonstrate that networking is correlated with both objective and subjective career success (Ganiron Jr, Ganiron & Ucol-Ganiron, 2012; Mohd Rasdi, Garavan & Ismail, 2011, 2013; Wolff & Moser, 2009). For example, Mohd Rasdi, Garavan and Ismail (2011) established that networking is positively correlated with both objective and subjective career success, and Spurk et al. (2015) found that the networks' gender structure is related with subjective career success and concluded that Men's networks comprise of a higher percentage of male to female groups, which, sequentially, was positively correlated with subjective career success.

This study is grounded in the theoretical foundation of social capital theory as theoretical basis for the study of career success (Ishak, 2015; Nikitkov & Sainty, 2014; Seibert, Crant & Kraimer, 2001). Social capital theory is defined as commitment of valuable resources, for example, standards, trust, and networks essential in social relations with expected returns (Lin, 2001). Nikitkov and Sainty (2014) study gives empirical evidence for the significance of social networking as an intermediary for the advancement of social capital, support in creating the connection between a group of social network profile attributes and one's career success. Mohd Rasdi, Garavan and Ismail (2013) in their study showed that networking is significantly correlated with career success. Wolff et al. (2009) investigated the impacts of networking on career success in a populace of employees from different companies in Germany in a longitudinal report over a time of three years. The outcomes of their study revealed that networking is correlated with concurrent career satisfaction, concurrent pay and the growth rate of pay after some time. A study showed that networking with numerous others is more advantageous for career success than mentoring by one mentor interactions alone (Ansmann et al., 2014). According to social network theory (Brass, 1992), a comprehensive network of "weak ties" can be more effective than too much attention on a few "strong ties", since from a wide range of people one accesses a more extensive pool of referrals and sources of information. Research on networking behavior and gender differences equally discovers that women have constrained access to important networks and less regularly utilize networking behaviors (Macintosh & Krush, 2017). Accordingly, they may require more assistance in strengthening professional networks. A number of research suggests that men often benefit more from professional networks than women do. For

instance, Forret and Dougherty's (2004) research reveals that despite the fact that women put as much energy into networking, they profited less as far as number of promotions and total reward. Greguletz, Diehl and Kreutzer (2018) study shows that women engage in less effective networking behavior when compared to men because of the existence of extrinsic barriers of work–family conflict and homophily that limit their network formation and threaten their enthusiasm for networking. Male networks in general have more range and assorted variety, giving men basically advantaged positions with more noteworthy access to information, support, and higher status contacts (McDonald, 2011), and Women are likely to obtain lower quality and fewer information (McDonald, Lin & Ao 2009). Clarke (2011) proposes that women are possibly going to benefit from professional networking in light of the fact that it gives greater chance to access same sex friends, role models, and mentors.

Furthermore, women's investment in professional networks is a developing pattern and offers opportunities to share experiences, acquire skills, build professional networks, and access other valuable resources (Durbin, 2011). In spite of the unattainable top positions due to glass ceiling, networking assumes a critical role in the career success of women (Qureshi & Saleem, 2016). Thus, increased access to valuable resources obtainable by women from participation in professional networking ought to not really be seen as an advantage over men, but instead an open door for women to narrow the opportunity gap that is available for men (McDonald 2011; Son & Lin 2012). Based on the above literature findings, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1a: There is a positive relationship between networking and women's objective career success

H1b: There is a positive relationship between networking and women's subjective career success

Methodology

Sample and Procedure

Women academics in the two selected Malaysian research universities was the target population for this study. Thus, the population for this research was narrowed down to the women academics who have moved their way to the top level of academia from the rank of a senior lecturer to a professor. This study involved Malaysian research universities. Two phases of sampling techniques were used in selecting the respondents of this study. At the first phase, the cluster sampling technique was used in grouping the five research universities, and the fishbowl technique was used in making selection of the two universities used in this study. Out of five Malaysian research universities, Universiti Putra Malaysia, and the University of Malaya were randomly selected in this study. In the second phase, simple random sampling was used in this study among the two selected research universities from the cluster using a table of random numbers. Probability sampling was used because every element of the population clusters had an equal chance of being selected. Questionnaires were distributed to the top position/ranked women academics working with the two selected research universities. They were requested to complete the questionnaire form that was distributed directly to them.

The sample size was obtained using G*Power analysis (Erdfelder et al., 1996). Using G*Power analysis, particularly for *F*-test in Multiple Regression, (effect size, $f^2 = 0.15$; $\alpha = 0.05$; power = 0.95; number of predictors/independent variables = 6). The values of Alpha and power were satisfactory for social science research, and the sum of independent variables was determined by the current

research framework. G*Power is a general power analysis program that performs high precision statistical power analyses for the most common statistical tests in social science research. Furthermore, G*Power is intended for sample size calculation. In this research, a sample size of 146 was obtained to represent the targeted population. A total of 50 questionnaires were sent out by hand, and a total 1,920 questionnaires were sent out through online using Google form. A total of 168 was returned and responded to after one week. From the completed and returned questionnaires, only a total of 155 (92.3%) was usable for analysis, but a total 146 was selected for the data analysis.

Instrument

Most of the items are in interval scale of measurement and were assessed on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 “totally disagree” to 5 “Totally agree”. The components in the questionnaire included respondents’ socio-demographics, objective career success, subjective career success, and networking behaviors. Objective career success was assessed using 3-items scale developed by Gattiker and Larwood (1986). Subjective career success was measured using 4-items scale developed by Greenhaus, Parasuraman and Wormley (1990). Networking behaviors were assessed using 28-items scale developed by Forret and Dougherty (2001). The scale consists of five types of networking behaviors: (1) maintaining contacts; (2) socializing; (3) engaging in professional activities; (4) participating in community activities; and (5) increasing internal visibility.

Pre-testing of Instrument

The pre-testing used a total of 15 sets of questionnaires, and they were distributed to the women academics at a public university having similar characteristics. All constructs are said to have internal consistency reliability if the result passed the minimum acceptable level of 0.6 (Sekaran, 2003). The reliability test results indicated clearly that all the constructs showed high-reliability coefficients of more than .7. The subjective career success recorded a Cronbach’s alphas, $\alpha = .77$, and the Cronbach’s alphas recorded for the five types of networking behaviors were .83 (maintaining contacts), .86 (socializing), .93 (engaging in professional activities), .91 (participating in community activities), .87 (increasing internal visibility), and .95 (overall networking behaviors), which indicated an acceptable and a good internal consistency of the instrument used in measuring the construct. Thus, all instruments were accepted for the data collection in the actual study.

Data Analysis

After the completion of data collection, codes were assigned for each respondent before the data was entered into the system for analysis. Data was analyzed using the SPSS program at univariate, bivariate, and multivariate levels of analyses. In this study, data were analyzed using the parametric statistical tests such as the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient, and Multiple Linear Regression.

Test of normality was used to observe the assumption that the data are drawn from a normal distribution. Test of normality was determined using the normal Q-Q (probability) plot. Based on the plots for each dependent variable component, the points fall more or less on a straight line.

Furthermore, the normality test was ascertained using skewness value. George and Mallery (2003) stated that “a skewness value between ± 1.0 is considered excellent for most psychometric purposes, but a value between ± 2.0 is on many cases also acceptable, depending on the particular application.” Based on the skewness values and the normal Q-Q (probability) plot, the normality assumption for the data used in this study was met.

Results and Discussion

The mean age of the respondents was 42.09 years. The youngest was 28 years, and the oldest was 62 years. The majority (82.2%) of the respondents was married, and only 11.6% of the respondents were still single, fewer (4.8%) were divorced, and the lowest (1.4%) were widowed. For those who were married, the majority (76.7%) reported having 0–3 children and only 23.3% have 7-10 children, which therefore reveals that only a lesser percentage of the women academics have large family sizes.

For an educational level, a more significant percentage (85.6%) have a Ph.D. degree, and only fewer percentage (14.4%) have a Masters degree. A total of 69.9% were at the position of senior lecturer, 23.3% were at the position of associate professor, and very few (6.8%) at the position of professor, indicating a lower percentage of women academics at the professorship level in the research universities.

The result also showed that 54.8% of respondents were working with university putra Malaysia, while the remaining 45.2% were working with University of Malaya. The majority (50.7%) of the respondents have worked as academics for 0-10 years, 40.4% (11-20 years), 6.8% (21-30 years), and only 2.1% have worked for 31-40 years as academics.

Additionally, the majority (52.1%) of the respondents have achieved 0-10 journal publications, and the least, only 1.4% have achieved up to 51-60 journal publications, thus as regards to a number of promotions achieved, the majority (66.4%) of the respondents have achieved not more than 0-1 promotion.

A total of 19.9% of the respondents in this study reported low involvement in networking, 74.7% of the respondents agreed that they were moderately involved in networking activities and only a total of 5.4% indicated high participation in networking behaviors. A total of 83.6% of the respondents earn gross income of between RM6, 001 and RM11, 000, the mean value of the gross incomes was RM8, 402.069.

Table 1 indicates that networking behaviors (NB) ($r = .150$) was found to have a positive and negligible correlation with monthly gross incomes.

Table 1
Pearson Correlation Coefficients of Relationship between networking and Monthly Gross Incomes (MGI)

	Y
MGI (Y)	
Networking behaviors (X_1)	.150*

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

Table 2 shows that networking behaviors ($r = .248$) have positive and low correlation with number of promotions.

Table 2
Pearson Correlation Coefficients of Relationship between networking and Number of Promotions (NP)

	Y
NP (Y)	
Networking behaviors (X_1)	.248**

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

Table 3 shows that networking behaviors ($r = .288$) have positive and negligible to low correlation with number of journal publications.

Table 3
Pearson Correlation Coefficients of Relationship between networking and Number of Journal Publications (NJP)

	Y
NJP (Y)	
Networking behaviors (X_1)	.288**

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

Table 4 presents that networking behaviors ($r = .363$) have positive and low to a moderate relationship with subjective career success.

Table 4
Pearson Correlation Coefficients of Relationship between networking and Subjective Career Success (SCS)

	Y
SCS (Y)	
Networking behaviors (X ₁)	.363**

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

Effect of Networking in Explaining women’s Career Success

The section presents the summary results of the Multiple Linear Regression between the networking behaviors and women’s objective and subjective career success.

Objective Career Success

In this study, objective career success was measured using the three indicators; monthly gross incomes, number of promotions, and number of journal publications.

Monthly Gross Incomes

A multiple linear regression model consisting of one independent variable; networking (X₁) was proposed to explain the women’s monthly gross incomes (Y). The proposed model was as below (equation 1):

$$Y (MGI) = b_0 + b_1(X_1) + e$$

The result indicate that networking behaviors were not significant in explaining the variation in monthly gross incomes (Y). The findings suggest that the data did not support the proposed multiple linear regression model for monthly gross incomes. The result reported in Table 5 was obtained using the enter method.

Number of Promotions

A multiple linear regression model consisting of one independent variable; networking behaviors (X₁) was proposed to explain the women’s number of promotions (Y). The proposed model was as below (equation 1):

$$Y (NP) = b_0 + b_1(X_1) + e$$

The result indicate that networking behaviors (X₆) ($t = 2.022, p = .045$) contributed significantly to the variation in number of promotions. The findings suggest that the data provided full support to the proposed multiple linear regression model for number of promotions. The findings are reported in Table 5.

Table 5
Estimates of Coefficients for the Model of Number of Promotions

Dimension	B (Unstandardized Coefficients)	Std. Error	Beta (Standardized Coefficients)	t	p-value
Constant	-2.372	.753		-3.151	.002
Networking Behavior (X ₆)	.246	.121	.162	2.022	.045

Notes: $R = .435$; $R^2 = .189$; $Adj. R^2 = .154$; $F = 5.397$, $p = .002$

Table 5 shows that the estimate of the model coefficient for $b_0 = -2.372$, and $b_1 = .246$. Thus, the final estimated model for number of promotions was written in equation 2. So, as women academics' networking behaviors increase, the women's number of promotions will increase.

Equation 2

$$Y (NP) = -2.372 + .246 (X_1) + e$$

Table 5 also shows that networking behaviors (X₁) have explained 15.4% of the variance in number of promotions (*Adjusted R² = .154*).

Number of Journal Publications

A multiple linear regression model consisting of one independent variable; networking behaviors (X₁), were proposed to explain the women academics' number of journal publications (Y). The proposed model was as below (equation 1):

$$Y (NJP) = b_0 + b_1(X_1) + e$$

The results indicate that networking behaviors (X₁) ($t = 3.257$, $p = .036$) was significant in explaining the variation in number of journal publications (Y). The findings suggest that the data fully supported the proposed multiple linear regression model for number of journal publications. The findings are reported in Table 6.

Table 6
Estimates of Coefficients for the Model of Number of Journal Publications

Dimension	B (Unstandardized Coefficients)	Std. Error	Beta (Standardized Coefficients)	t	p-value
Constant	-41.110	9.509		-4.323	.000
Networking Behavior (X ₁)	3.257	1.534	.163	2.123	.036

Notes: $R = .510$; $R^2 = .260$; $Adj. R^2 = .229$; $F = 8.161$, $p = .000$

Table 6 shows that the estimate of the model coefficient for $b_0 = -41.110$, and $b_1 = 3.257$. So, as women academics' networking behaviors increase, the women's number of journal publications will increase.

Equation 2

$$Y (\text{NJP}) = -41.110 + 3.257 (X_1) + e$$

Table 6 also shows that networking behaviors (X_1) explained 22.9% of the variance in number of journal publications (*Adjusted R² = .229*).

Subjective Career Success

Women academics' career success was also measured using subjective career success. A multiple linear regression model consisting of one independent variable; networking behaviors (X_1) was proposed to explain the women academics' number of journal publications (Y). The proposed model was as below (equation 1):

$$Y (\text{SCS}) = b_0 + b_1(X_1) + e$$

The results indicate that networking behaviors (X_6) ($t = 2.797$, $p = .006$) was significant in explaining the variation in subjective career success (Y). The findings suggest that the data fully supported the proposed multiple linear regression model for subjective career success. The findings are reported in Table 7.

Table 7
Estimates of Coefficients for the Model of Subjective Career Success

Dimension	B (Unstandardized Coefficients)	Std. Error	Beta (Standardized Coefficients)	t	p-value
Constant	-.523	.430		-1.215	.226
Networking Behavior (X_6)	.194	.069	.180	2.797	.006

Notes: $R = .694$; $R^2 = .482$; $Adj. R^2 = .459$; $F = 21.520$, $p = .000$

Table 7 shows that the estimate of the model coefficient for $b_0 = -.523$, and $b_1 = .194$. So, as women academics' networking behaviors increase, the women academics' subjective career success will increase.

Equation 2

$$Y (\text{SCS}) = -.523 + .194 (X_1) + e$$

Table 7 also shows that networking behaviors (X1) explained that 45.9% of the variance in subjective career success (*Adjusted R*² = .459).

Discussion

The main objective of the study was to determine the relationships between networking behaviors and both objective and subjective career success among women academics in the Malaysian Public Research Universities. Networking is operationalized in this study as women's attempts to build and maintain professional relationships with people in and outside the organization in the anticipation of receiving great benefits through those established relationships and therefore leading to career success. Furthermore, Participation in networking behaviors were conceptualized as maintaining external contact, socializing, engaging in professional activities, participating in community activities, and increasing internal visibility. The study found that active involvement in networking behaviors was significantly correlated with both measures of objective and subjective career success. The previous section presented that networking behaviors correlated positively and significantly with objective and subjective career success. About 74.7% of the respondents in this study agreed that they were moderately involved in networking activities. These results provided full support for H1a and H1b. Thus, the findings in this study were supported by the studies that found networking to be positively related to objective career success (e.g., Ganiron Jr, Ganiron & Ucol-Ganiron, 2012; Mohd Rasdi, Garavan & Ismail, 2011, 2013; Wolff & Moser, 2009).

This study also found the importance of networking to women academics' subjective career success based on the Adjusted R² value of 45.9% which represent the total number of explained variance by networking behaviors in subjective career success. Therefore, individuals who engage in networking behaviors are more satisfied with their careers. According to Wanigasekara (2016), women use networking associations for progression in their careers. Spurk et al. (2015) found that the networks' gender structure is related with subjective career success and concluded that Men's networks comprise of a higher percentage of male to female groups, which, sequentially, was positively correlated with subjective career success. A study concluded that networking behavior is related to subjective career success of individuals (Langford, 2000). It has been confirmed that networking is one of the significant features in career development of an individual. Networking has positive relationships with several crucial job related constructs, for example, "salary, career success, career satisfaction, motivation, career goals, performance, received mentoring, organizational mobility and promotions" (Spurk et al., 2015).

Limitations

Firstly, a significant problem that was not eliminated during the process of generating information was respondents' bias. Respondents' bias is where respondents may not be willing to participate fully in the survey because answering the questionnaires will not be rewarding and might take their time.

Another limitation was that respondents were drawn from only two public research universities. Additionally, data drawn from only a few public universities were not representative of generalizing

the results of the study to other public universities as regards to the factor contributing to the career success of women academics.

Finally, the number of independent variables was another limitation of this research study. The study evaluated only one independent variable (networking behaviors) effect on the career success of women academics in the Malaysian research universities.

Conclusions and Implications for Organizations

In this study, both objective (number of promotions, number of journal publications) and subjective measures were used to assess the career success. Previous studies have proposed that many individuals who are extrinsically successful (objective) do not necessarily feel successful or satisfied with their accomplishments (subjective) (Boudreau et al., 2001; Judge et al., 1995; Korman, Wittig-Berman & Lang, 1981; Kadir, Johari, & Hussin, 2018; Anghelache, Anghel, Dumitrescu, Avram, 2018). Thus, it is necessary to consider both objective and subjective assessments of career success in any career success study (Abele, Spurk & Volmer, 2011). Using data from the women academics in the Malaysian research universities, Pearson Correlation Coefficients analysis revealed that networking was found to have positive relationship with both measures of career success which ranged from negligible to moderate correlation. This study went further to conduct Multiple Linear Regression analysis to determine the effect of networking in explaining women's career success and the results showed that networking was not significant in explaining the variations in monthly gross incomes as the data did not support the proposed multiple linear regression model for this measure. Additionally, networking contributed significantly to the variations in number of promotions, number of journal publications and subjective career success. Therefore, the data fully supported the proposed multiple linear regression models for number of promotions, number of journal publications and subjective career success. Consequently, the findings of this study revealed the importance of networking behaviors to women academics' career success. The findings suggested that active participation in networking behaviors was found to contribute significantly to women academics' objective and subjective career success. Accordingly, women academics active involvement in networking behaviors can help them build and maintain professional relationships with people in and outside the organization which will lead to great benefits through those established relationships and therefore contribute to their career success to close the gap of underrepresentation of women in top positions in the workplace.

Individuals are believed to be accountable for their career success. However, at the same time, it is in the benefits of organizations as the employers, to provide an empowering atmosphere for such success to be attained. Additionally, an individual's career success contributes to organizational sustenance and success. Organizations could involve their human resource division to explore and discover employees with low objective and subjective career success and develop strategies through networking activities to enhance their abilities to attain desired success in their careers.

The knowledge of the effect of networking behaviors on individual career success among women academics could help organizations to have a better understanding of the career success components

that need to be included in their training, organizational development, and career development plans for women academics.

The challenging nature of academics' work and lower number of women academics reaching certain important positions brought about the need to determine the effect of networking on objective and subjective career success in this study. According to Gonzales and Rincones (2008), and O'Meara and Campbell (2011); Moradi et al., (2014), one of the essential ways that networking may improve career success is through improving the academics' social capital by commitment of valuable resources, such as standards, trust, and networks essential in social relations with expected returns. Therefore, this study would add to the existing career literature with respects to both objective and subjective career success particularly from the Malaysian research university's context. Specifically, the findings of this study established that: (i) the definition of the measurements of career success should include both objective and subjective career success, and these two measures need to be studied distinctly. Furthermore, this study also contributed to social capital theory by: (i) showing that the women academics career success and networking capabilities could be explored using this theory, (ii) addressing to a certain extent the limited studies completed in the past on the significance of networking behavior as effective career management technique for women's career success, (ii) obtaining results and findings of the effect of networking on women academics career success in the Malaysian context. In general, social capital theory was found to be useful in clarifying the women academics' career success and networking behaviors.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study ought to be viewed as a fundamental investigation, and further broad research work is required to validate the causal relationships between the networking behaviors and both objective and subjective career success. Since this study was a correlational study, there can be differing results in the relationships between the independent variable and dependent variable when different respondents are employed. Secondly, with regard to the effects of the networking subscales on career success, further study should be conducted and more independent variables such as education level, self-efficacy, work experience, and personality dimension should be further explored. Accordingly, future studies on women academics' career success should be conducted involving more public research, and non-research universities. Furthermore, the present study also used a highly educated sample (women academics who have achieved masters, and Ph.D. level). It is additionally proposed that future research ought to survey whether the present discoveries can be used for people with lower education level. It would also be exciting if future studies on women academics' career success could be done qualitatively because this kind of research could generate facts based on experiences of the respondents relating to their career success and the extent of their involvement in networking activities.

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