



A study Analyzing the Career Path of Librarians

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This study aims to identify the career movement patterns of librarians, analyze factors influencing their career movements, and compare differences in such factors between librarians and chief librarians. Findings showed that the jobs with the highest retention rate were those in public libraries, that library automation system developers showed the highest rate of career movement, and that school library and the public library librarians had the highest rate of returning to the career and selecting the first career as the last one, respectively.

INTRODUCTION

A "career" is all the objective and subjective experiences a person has while on his or her career *path*.¹ Since a career comprehensively covers direct and indirect experiences at work, careers have been heavily researched for as long as a century ago. Major areas for research into career development have been as broad as occupational psychology, sociology, anthropology, organizational psychology, and business management.

Occupational psychology primarily focuses on how people choose and decide upon their career and how different they become depending on their career, while approaches to careers from the sociological perspective deal with how social status is attained through their careers. Also, research from the anthropological perspective provides empirical observations about the personal, daily work life, whereas industrial psychology and business management have focused their research on practicalities, assuming that the career is a tool to sharpen organizational competitiveness through the effective development of human resources.

Studies on career development in the circle of libraries and library and information are concerned with factors influencing the decision to become librarians,² the career development prospects of university librarians,³ or satisfaction with their direct supervisors or bosses.⁴ But analytical studies of librarians' career paths are rare. In particular, analyzing the career movement path is of great significance as it acknowledges the existence of certain career moving patterns and allows the associated careers to be understood.

Analysis on the career movement path of librarianship may answer the following research questions. Furthermore, additional research questions may be raised as this study discusses and compares career movement of librarians and chief librarians.

RQ 1: Is it possible to analyze the career movement path of librarians?

RQ 2: Will there be a difference between factors influencing the career movement path of librarians and library chiefs?

RQ 3: Will jobs with low turnover rate and high turnover rate be identifiable?

RQ 4: Will retention rate and return-to-first-job rate be identifiable?

In this regard, this study aims to identify the career movement patterns of librarians, analyze factors influencing their career movements, and compare differences in such factors for librarians and chief librarians.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Career and Career Movement

A career is a series of attributes including working activities, behaviors, attitudes, values, and ambitions occurring in a lifetime. Career movement

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largely occurs into and out of an organization, and basically it is vertical and horizontal and between the inside and the outside.

There are more than 30 theories on models or concepts related to career development. Among them, Kim⁵ in 2000 collected and systemically classified such theories before assessing key points of these theories. He also complemented or filled in limitations and gaps found while assigning these research activities into theories and concepts, to suggest a desirable research direction to adapt to environmental change in the 21st century (see Table 1).

This study reviews lifetime phase theory and career phase theory both included in theories on personal development as shown in the table supra, using which career development of librarians was analyzed. Lifetime phase theory (classification by age) takes the position that psychological traits, work attitudes and behaviors change as people get older, while career phase theory says that role and tasks, psychological issues and experience required by each career movement change are more important.

Table 1
Theory and Model of Career Development

Analysis Level	Resources Classified	Theory and Concept	Theoretical Systematization/ Characteristics	Ascertainability	Practicality
Individual	Personality	Theory on character-factor	Low/positivity-oriented	Inconsistent results	Middle
		Theory on job application	Very high/explanatory	Most support	Very high
		★ Theory on early decision of job selection	Middle/Narrative	Negative	Almost none
		Theory on job selection	Very high/Narrative	Most all support	Very high
		Model on career maturity	Middle/Positivity-oriented	Reasonability/Confidence Dissatisfaction	Middle
		★ Theory on career type	Middle/Narrative	Doubtful stability of type	Middle
		★ Model on psychology dynamics	Low/Narrative	Inconsistent results	Low
	Development	□ Theory on lifetime phase	Middle/Explanatory	Almost all support	Middle
		□ Theory on career phase	Middle/Narrative	Almost all support	Middle
		□ Theory on development of career desire	High/Explanatory	Inconsistent results	Low
	Learning	□ Theory on experience learning	High/Narrative	Almost all support	Average
	Selection	★ Theory on social learning to choose career	High/Explanatory	Most support	High
		□ Theory on career decision-making phase	Middle /Narrative	Lack of research	Very low
Organization	Structure	3-dimension model	Low /Narrative	Lack of research	Low
		★ Theory on career type	High/Normative	Lack of research	Middle
		★ Theory on career system	High/Normative	Lack of research	Middle
		★ Theory on career identity type	High/Normative	Lack of research	Middle
		Tournament model	Low/Narrative	Almost all support	Very low
		Model on career-oriented HR management	High/Normative	Lack of research	High
		□ Model on socialization of organization phase	Middle /Narrative	Almost all support	Middle
	Learning	□ Theory on learning of job experience	High/Explanatory	Lack of research	Very high
		□ Association model on desire of individual and organization	Low/Normative	Lack of research	Middle
	Interaction and Relationship	★ Model on relationship approach	High/Explanatory	Lack of research	Middle
		★ Model on political aspects	Low /Narrative	Almost all support	Very Low
		□ Theory on cycle of career success	High/Explanatory	Partially proven	High
	Result	★ Theory on the double-structure of labor market	Low /Narrative	Almost all support	Low
Society	Structure	★ Theory on women career development	High/Explanatory	Almost all support	Middle
	Learning	★ Theory on job-personality interaction	High/Explanatory	Most support	Low
	Interaction	□ Model on social status attainment	High/Explanatory	Most support	Low
	Result				

Note: □ indicates theories and models on content-related types, and ★ indicates theories and models on process.

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