Career Development in an Era of Ambiguity

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ABSTRACT

Career development in an era of ambiguity is becoming increasingly important in the modern era of uncertainty and rapid environmental change. The ever-changing business, social, and technological environments pose new challenges for individuals seeking to develop their careers. This research aims to identify career development strategies in the face of an ambiguous work environment, as well as to explore the concepts and practices of career development that exist in this era of ambiguity. This research uses the literature method or literature study, which is by utilizing various literature sources to obtain data. A qualitative approach was chosen because the data produced is in the form of descriptions or words. The results showed that career development is very important in the era of ambiguity, and each individual needs to integrate flexibility, adaptability, and understanding of uncertainty in their career development strategy. With a deep understanding of ambiguity and the ability to adapt, individuals can maximize their career potential in this era of change. Organizations can also support employees by creating an environment that enables growth and development amidst rapid change.

Keywords: *Ambiguity, Career, Development*

INTRODUCTION

Human resources are a company asset because human resources play an important role in the company's progress. The success of a company in achieving its expected goals depends on the quality of the human resources the company has. Basically, human resources are closely related to the productivity of a company, namely the ability of employees to work or produce something, therefore the performance of human resources still needs to be improved, one of which is through education and training programs. Education and training programs should be carefully prepared and based on scientific methods and guided by the skills needed by the organization now and in the future. Education and training aims to improve capabilities so that the performance of human resources can increase according to the skills they have acquired, so that it is possible for human resources to develop themselves and enable them to gain the opportunity to obtain

higher positions (Maulyan, 2019). Employees are a resource that plays an active and dominant role in company activities (Suwito & Yolanda, 2013). The human resources needed by the company are human resources who are loyal and able to help the company in any situation so that the company will provide rewards by increasing employee job satisfaction. Employee job satisfaction cannot be separated from employee career development (akhmal, 2018).

Career development is a very important journey because with hard efforts within the company to develop their careers, employees can occupy appropriate positions that match their competencies and qualifications. An employee's career journey is a series of efforts starting from the first time they work at the company until the end of their term of office. So that employees have a desire to improve their performance in the Company (Syahputra, 2020). (Martoyo, 2010) states that the efficiency and effectiveness of an organization really depends on the good and bad development of human resources/members of the organization itself. Thus, it is clear that employee career development programs in organizations are very important in order to advance the organization concerned, especially if knowledge and technology are developing rapidly. Career development as an HR management activity basically has the aim of improving and increasing the effectiveness of work implementation by employees so that they are increasingly able to make the best contribution in realizing company goals. Generally, management has the same responsibilities and duties, namely planning, organizing, directing and controlling (Syahputra, 2020). Career development in the company is stated to be good based on formal education, work experience, work performance, work skills, work productivity, promotion, career advancement, employee training, career path and work planning (Bahri, 2017). Career development that is not managed well will result in low work commitment and a high desire to leave the organization among employees. The results of a survey by John Madigan, 2009, found that of employees who had left the organization, ninety percent of people who left of their own accord expressed a lack of career and professional development and the support provided by their managers in this regard (Ramli, 2018).

In the era of VUCA (volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity), there are many opportunities for individual career development but also more challenges and pressure. As time progresses, humans experience developments where significant changes occur in terms of technology and many things cannot be predicted by humans. Although rapid technological developments make human life more comfortable than before, living in the information age brings turbulence and uncertainty (Abdillah, 2020). These changes and uncertainties cause the career planning process to become directionless and will impact career patterns in the future. Apart from that, according to Modestino in (Ramdhan & Salim, 2020) a lack of insight and information regarding the world of work will be a problem in the process of searching and developing an individual's career because it is related to how he can recognize himself or the environment around him. Recognition of what things can be used as "opportunities" in facing the world of work will influence the process of choosing the career one wants. With a dynamic organizational environment and unlimited career development, individuals place more importance on subjective feelings in

work and career management, and assess career success based on criteria, needs, values, career stages and personal aspirations (Colakoglu, 2011). In an environment of ambiguity, it is important to collect relevant data, analyze risks carefully, and plan various scenarios to deal with uncertainty. Collaboration and innovation are also key to overcoming challenges in this complex and rapidly changing environment. In the context of individual careers, an environment of ambiguity requires strategic thinking and a willingness to continuously learn and adapt, so that individuals can develop successful careers amidst the uncertainty that surrounds the world of work today.

Research Methods

This research uses library research methods, namely a series of activities related to library data collection methods. This research was carried out by collecting data contained in literature books and other reading sources related to the problem under study. In this research, secondary data was found and collected by conducting a literature study, namely collecting data based on literature books, while primary data was obtained from journals and previous writings.

Result and Discussions

A. Result

Definition of Career Development

Development is personal improvement carried out by a person to achieve a career plan and improvement by the personnel department to achieve a work plan in accordance with the path or level of the organization. Career is the entire position/job/position that a person can occupy during their working life in an organization or in several organizations. From an employee's point of view, position is a very important thing because everyone wants a position that suits their wishes and wants the highest possible position according to their abilities. Higher positions usually result in higher salaries, greater responsibilities, and better knowledge, which is what employees usually expect. Therefore, when a person enters the world of work, that person may ask whether his career goals (as the highest position he hopes for) will be achieved in the organization where he works. If someone sees that their career goals cannot be achieved in the organization, that person may not have high morale or be motivated to work or will even leave the organization.

According to Handoko (2014) in Putri (2019), career development is personal improvement that a person makes to achieve a career plan. Hasibuan (2016) in Yapary (2013) states that career development is an effort to improve employees' technical, theoretical, conceptual and moral abilities in accordance with the needs of the job or position through education and training. Meanwhile, according to Sumitro (2001:272) in Sulu (2022), career development is a condition that shows an increase in a person's level or status in their work. According to Veithzal Rivai (2009:274) in Maulyan (2019), career development is the process of increasing an individual's work ability which is achieved in order to achieve the desired position, status and position. And according to Marwansyah (2012:208) in Marpaung (2018) career development is self-development activities undertaken by someone to realize their personal career plans.

Career Development Goals

Handoko (2001:134) suggests that the objectives of employee career development are:

1) To ensure employees who are not promoted that they are still valuable and will be considered for further promotions, if they are qualified.
2) To explain why they were not selected
3) To show what career development activities should be taken.

According to Mangkunegara (2013) in Akhmal (2018) the goals of career development are as follows:

1) Helps in achieving individual and company goals.
2) Shows the relationship between employee welfare
3) Help employees realize their potential abilities
4) Strengthen the relationship between employees and the company
5) Reduce turnover and staffing costs.

Forms of Career Development

a) Education and training; is a company activity intended to improve and develop the attitudes, behavior, skills and knowledge of employees in accordance with the wishes of the company concerned.
b) Promotion; is a change in position or position from a lower level to a higher level, this change will usually be followed by an increase in a person's responsibilities, rights and social status.
c) Mutation; is part of an activity process that can develop a person's position or status in an organization. The term mutation itself or what in some literature is referred to as transfer in a narrow sense can be formulated as a change from a position in one class to a position in another class whose level is not higher or lower (which is the same level) in the salary plan. Meanwhile, in a broader sense, the concept of mutation is formulated as a change in position/position/place/work carried out both horizontally and vertically (promotion/demotion) within an organization.

Stages of career development

A person's self-development in the context of employees in an organization is often considered career development. Career includes all the activities undertaken by an individual during his or her employment period that provide structure, order, and value to his or her life as an employee. In general, a person's career journey can be divided into four stages: exploration, consolidation, contribution, and decline.

This career development usually goes hand in hand with a person's age. According to Soekidjo Notoadmojo (2019: 170) in Carnela (2016) there are several stages of career development, namely as follows:

a) At the age of 15-24 years, which is often the period when someone is still in education (as a student or university student), individuals begin to think about jobs that suit their interests and potential. Some in this age group may even have entered the workforce or have work experience. Even though some are already working, they

may still be looking for opportunities to try different jobs. At this stage, they are exploring various career options.

b) At the age of 25-44 years, in general a person has consolidated himself in the chosen job. They are no longer interested in changing jobs frequently, unless certain situations occur such as layoffs. Factors such as age and economic considerations for the family are usually the main considerations.

c) At the age of 45-60 years, individuals tend to maintain a career or job that they have worked diligently on. At this stage, they focus on developing the quality of work and responsibilities they carry out in the organization or institution where they work. Generally, they no longer consider changing jobs and focus more on their careers and responsibilities, which also contributes to the continuity of their families.

d) At the age of over 60 years (in Indonesia: over 55 years), a person has passed the peak of his career and entered a stage of decline. Typically, individuals look forward to retirement and may have stopped their career development efforts.

Career Development Indicators

Kasmir (2015) indicates that career success is influenced by a number of factors that play an important role in a person's career journey. The following are the factors put forward:

a) Performance; Good performance at work is one of the main factors influencing career success. Consistent and superior performance can open up opportunities for promotion and recognition in the workplace

b) Work Motivation; A person's level of motivation to work well and achieve their career goals plays an important role. High motivation can help individuals to stay focused and committed to achieving career goals.

c) Commitment; The level of commitment to the job and the organization where a person works can influence career advancement. Individuals who are loyal and committed tend to get more support and career opportunities.

d) Job Satisfaction; Job satisfaction reflects the extent to which a person feels satisfied with his job. High job satisfaction can increase motivation and performance, as well as create a positive environment for career development.

e) Discipline; Discipline in carrying out one's duties and responsibilities is an important factor. Discipline helps a person to maintain a consistent level of performance and respect deadlines.

f) Compensation; Compensation factors, including salary and other benefits, influence motivation and job satisfaction. Compensation that is fair and in line with one's contribution can be a boost in career development.

g) Loyalty; A person's level of loyalty to the organization and superiors can influence opportunities for promotion and recognition. Loyalty can also create strong relationships in a career context.

h) Education and Training; Continuous education and training improves a person's skills and knowledge relevant to their job. This may open the door to a higher role or greater responsibility.

i) Leadership; The ability to interact and work with leaders or superiors can also influence career development. Good leaders can provide guidance and opportunities for their subordinates.

j) Work Effort and Spirit; Work High work effort and strong work spirit are key factors in achieving career success. High morale encourages individuals to do their best in their work.

Overall, these factors are interrelated and contribute to a person's career success. Understanding the role of each of these factors can help individuals plan and manage their career development more effectively.

Definition & Characteristics of Environmental Ambiguity (environmental uncertainty)

An environment of ambiguity refers to a situation or context in which the information, rules, or parameters required for decision making or action are unclear or uncertain. This is the type of environment where understanding and managing risk becomes more complicated due to high levels of uncertainty. Ambiguity environments can occur in a variety of contexts, including business, politics, science, and everyday life.

Environmental uncertainty is a condition where a person aims to predict the situation around him which results in him taking action to deal with this uncertainty. Uncertainty has three types that can be distinguished, namely the effect uncertainty type which means the inability to predict future environmental influences on the organization, then there is the response uncertainty type which is defined as the inability to predict the consequences of decision choices to respond to the environment, and the stated uncertainty type which is defined as something that is always connected to environmental uncertainty as perceived by Cookson & Stirk (2019).

The following are the characteristics of an Ambiguity Environment:

a) Information Uncertainty; Information needed to make a decision or action is unavailable or incomplete. This can make it difficult to predict the outcome or consequences of decisions.

b) Knowledge Gaps; There is a knowledge gap between what is known and what needs to be known to resolve a particular situation.

c) Various Interpretations; People involved in an environment of ambiguity may have different interpretations of the same situation or data.

d) Rapid Change; Ambiguity environments often relate to rapid changes, such as changes in technology, regulations, or market trends, that are difficult to predict or follow.

e) Complexity; These environments are often very complex, with many factors that are interrelated and influence each other.

f) Unstructured; Situations in an environment of ambiguity are often unstructured or do not have clear guidelines to follow.

Steps to Address Environmental Ambiguity

For organizations and individuals, navigating an environment of ambiguity can be challenging. However, there are steps that can be taken to overcome an environment of ambiguity:

1) Adapt: Try to remain flexible and adaptive in the face of change and uncertainty.
2) Data Collection: Collect as much relevant information and data as possible to reduce uncertainty.
3) Risk Analysis: Conduct careful risk analysis to understand the potential impact of various scenarios.
4) Collaborate: Work together with peers and experts in an environment of ambiguity to gain different perspectives and gain input.
5) Innovation: Encourage innovation and creativity in the development of solutions to complex challenges.
6) Planning: Scenarios Plan several scenarios based on possible uncertainties and prepare an action plan for each scenario.
7) Continuous Learning: Continuously learn from experience and make adjustments based on the results of actions taken

B. Discussions

How to face and resolve situations of ambiguity in a job, and how does this contribute to one's career development?

Facing and resolving ambiguous situations at work is an important factor in successful career development. Various strategies can be used to deal with ambiguity, such as increasing understanding through research and consultation with experienced colleagues. It is also important to step out of your comfort zone and take risks in dealing with ambiguous situations. Effective communication with coworkers and superiors also helps reduce ambiguity. Additionally, developing strong decision-making abilities is key in dealing with situations of ambiguity. Success in resolving ambiguity may reflect adaptive leadership, which is highly valued in career development. Take advantage of opportunities that arise from ambiguous situations, and don't be afraid to learn from failure. These capabilities will help you develop and achieve success in your career in a variety of work contexts.

What concrete steps must be taken to continue developing oneself in unclear or changing situations in the work environment?

To continue developing yourself in unclear or changing situations in the work environment, you can take the following concrete steps:

a) Continuous research and learning; Make a commitment to always learn and understand the changes that occur. Keep up with the latest developments in your industry and learn about ongoing trends.
b) Networking and collaboration; Build a strong professional network. Discuss challenges and opportunities with colleagues, superiors, or mentors to gain different perspectives.

c) Improve cognitive abilities; Practice problem solving, data analysis and critical thinking skills. This will help you deal with complex and ambiguous situations.

d) Adaptation to change; Develop a mentality that is open to change. See change as an opportunity for growth and development, not as a threat.

e) Manage stress; Learn how to manage the stress and pressure that may arise in unclear situations. Meditation, exercise, or other relaxation techniques may help

f) Plan with flexibility; Create a flexible work plan. This means having a clear goal but being ready to adjust your steps as the situation develops.

g) Improved communication skills; Good communication skills are very important. Practice interpersonal communication skills, and make sure you can explain your thoughts and ideas clearly.

h) Take the initiative; Don't wait for instructions. Take the initiative in solving problems or identifying opportunities that may arise in changing situations.

i) Evaluate and learn from experience; After encountering an uncertain situation, conduct a thorough evaluation. What works? What doesn't work? Learn from your experiences to grow better in the future.

j) Consider training and development; Consider taking relevant training or courses to improve your skills in dealing with change and ambiguity.

k) Keep asking; Don't hesitate to ask. If you're not sure about something, ask your coworkers or boss. Questions can help clarify the situation.

l) Stay motivated; Set career goals that motivate you and use them as a driving force to continue growing even in uncertain situations.

How to identify and take advantage of opportunities that arise in career development in situations full of uncertainty or ambiguity?

Identifying and exploiting opportunities for career development in the face of uncertainty or ambiguity requires a proactive and flexible approach. The first thing you can do is self-analysis, namely by carefully considering all your strengths, weaknesses, interests and personal values. The second is by monitoring changes in the work environment. Monitoring changes in the work environment carefully enables individuals to remain relevant in identifying opportunities and taking the necessary steps to face all changes and uncertainty. The next step is to build interactions with colleagues or mentors, discuss with colleagues and mentors about the changes and opportunities they see. They can provide valuable insight into career paths that may suit the current situation. Then engage in continuing education, that is, by learning continuously, taking courses, attending training, or obtaining new certifications to develop skills that are relevant in the current situation. Apart from that, we must also have sensitivity or awareness of opportunities, sometimes opportunities come in unexpected forms, develop self-awareness which allows us to recognize opportunities that arise. On the other hand, we also have to consider all the risks and benefits of these opportunities carefully, so we need the courage to act quickly without ignoring all the risks that might arise.

What skills and competencies must be possessed to encourage career development in facing this era of ambiguity?

Encouraging career development in the face of an era of ambiguity requires a number of relevant skills and competencies. Below, I will list some key skills and competencies that can help individuals succeed in an environment full of uncertainty:

a) Adaptation Skills; Ability to adapt quickly to change and uncertainty, and to be flexible in approach and thinking.

b) Creative Problem Solving; Ability to identify problems, formulate creative solutions, and seek alternatives when faced with unprecedented obstacles or challenges.

c) Continuous Learning Ability; Willingness and ability to continue learning and developing new skills, including independent learning and lifelong learning.

d) Communication Skills; Ability to communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing, with a variety of stakeholders.

e) Data Analysis Capabilities; An understanding of data analysis and statistics can help in making decisions based on evidence.

f) Technological Capabilities; Knowledge and skills in using the latest technology and software relevant to your job.

g) Strategic Thinking Ability; Ability to see the big picture, formulate long-term goals, and plan strategies to achieve them.

h) Time Management Ability; Ability to manage time efficiently, set priorities, and avoid procrastination.

i) Decision Making Skills; Ability to make good decisions in situations full of uncertainty, including understanding risks and benefits.

j) Collaboration Ability; Ability to work together in a team, share knowledge, and build strong working relationships.

k) Ability to Understand Consumers and Markets; For people in marketing or business, understanding market trends and consumer needs is very important.

l) Ability to Manage Stress; Overcoming pressure and stress that may arise in situations full of uncertainty.

m) Professional Ethics; Have a strong work ethic and commitment to conducting business with integrity.

Are there risks associated with developing a career in an era of ambiguity and how can they be overcome?

Yes, there are some risks associated with developing a career in an era of ambiguity. In the face of uncertainty and rapid change, individuals may face the following risks:

1) Job uncertainty; in an era of ambiguity, jobs may no longer be permanent. The risk of job loss or unstable contracts may increase. The way to overcome this is to build financial security by having emergency fund reserves and continuing to improve skills that make us more flexible in the job market.

2) Strong work bonds; if one is too attached to one job or organization, one may face risks when unexpected changes occur. The way to overcome this is to consider developing a diverse work portfolio or taking on side jobs as a safety net.

3) Not in accordance with changes; some people may have difficulty adapting to change or uncertainty, which can hinder career development, and how to overcome this is by

building adaptation skills, participating in training, and having strong social support can help overcome these problems.

4) Overwhelm and stress; an era of ambiguity can create stressful situations, which can lead to stress and burnout. The way to overcome this is to maintain a balance between personal and professional life, practice stress management, and seek mental and emotional support when necessary.

5) Changes in ethics and values; Organizational or industry values and ethics may change, which may not align with our personal values. The way to overcome this is to evaluate whether the organization's values still match your personal values, and if not, consider looking for a more suitable job or environment.

6) Losing focus on career goals; Uncertainty can make individuals lose focus on their long-term career goals. The way to overcome this is to set clear and flexible goals, and carry out regular evaluations to ensure we stay on the right track.

7) Overlearning or Underlearning; response to uncertainty can lead to overlearning (overlearning) in areas that may not be relevant or underlearning (underlearning) in areas that are important. The way to overcome this is to set learning and development priorities to ensure focus on the most important skills.

Conclusion

Career development is an important aspect of a person's professional life, even in an era full of uncertainty and ambiguity. Even though work environments are becoming more complex, individuals still need to plan and manage their career development. Forms of career development such as education, training, promotions and transfers remain relevant in helping individuals achieve their career goals. However, in an era of ambiguity, flexibility and adaptability are key in selecting and implementing career development strategies.

Career development goals remain relevant for motivating employees, encouraging professional growth and achieving higher qualifications. In an environment of ambiguity, career goals can also help individuals face uncertainty with more confidence. The benefits of career development, such as increased achievement, motivation, and availability of experts, still apply in an era of ambiguity. Organizations that support employee career development can retain quality talent and overcome the challenges posed by rapid change.

Factors that influence career development, such as performance, commitment, and education, continue to play an important role in an individual's career path. However, in the face of uncertainty, individuals must be more open to change and consider various scenarios. The era of ambiguity emphasizes the importance of understanding and dealing with uncertain environments. Data collection, risk analysis, collaboration, innovation, and scenario planning are relevant steps in overcoming uncertainty in career development.

In developing a career in an era of ambiguity, individuals must maintain adaptability, continuous learning, and flexibility in responding to change. A willingness to innovate and seek opportunities in uncertain challenges will be a valuable asset. In conclusion, career development remains important in an era of ambiguity, and individuals

need to integrate flexibility, adaptability, and an understanding of uncertainty in their career development strategies. Organizations can also support employees by creating an environment that enables growth and development amidst rapid change.

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