



Designing Strategic Career Pathways: A Competency-Based Approach to Progression Management in The Educational Context of a Corporate University in Thailand

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ABSTRACT

This research article presents the competency-based career path design and career path management at Panyapiwat Institute of Management, a higher education institution. The study units included the Faculty of Management Science, Office of Strategy and Innovation Management, and PIM HR Excellent Center, covering teaching, research, academic service, and administration/support roles. A content analysis of the competency system data used by the institute was conducted through focus group discussions involving 15 executives from various departments. The research explores different approaches to designing career progression within the organization. The joint path of the Faculty of Management Science, Office of Strategy and Innovation Management, and PIM HR Excellent Center is divided into two paths: human resource management and strategy management, innovation, and work process development. A career progression management system was established, incorporating an analysis of key workgroups aligned with strategic goals, career goals in management, high-talent recruitment assessment, and personalized development planning. Although the study is limited to only three units, each with a different mission, it provides an excellent model for the development of a system of career progression that is applicable to the entire institution. The research investigates competency-based career path design and management at Panyapiwat Institute of Management, offering valuable insights for improving human resource management systems and creating compelling career paths in other higher education institutions.

Keywords: Career Progression, Career Path, Career Development, Career Management, A Competency-Based Approach

Introduction

Career progression management, also referred to as career management, career path, or career development, plays a crucial role in organisations. According to Deloitte's survey in 2020, it ranked as the second priority among ten human resource management issues, following the recruitment and selection of talented individuals, highlighting the significant attention given to effectively managing and nurturing employee career development (Deloitte, 2020). Research consistently demonstrates a close link between career progression management and leadership development (Noe, 2013). Well-structured career progression strategies not only assist personal growth but also foster the leadership capabilities necessary for organisational success. It can be averred that career progression administration is the most essential element within its components. (Zenger, Folkman, & Edinger, 2011).

Moreover, career progression management serves as a critical factor in attracting talent to organisations. It supplies openings for focused expansion that are consistent with the demands of both individuals and the enterprise (Kaliannan et al., 2023). Ensuring that career progression aligns with organisational requirements is vital, as it meets the aspirations of individuals while also fulfilling organisational needs (Yarnall, 2008). In the modern age, organisations are striving to create a competitive advantage through the capabilities of their personnel, which has led to the popularization of competency based management of human resources (Noe, 2017; Ratnawat, 2018). Competency-based management of human resources is an approach that identifies and develops specific skills, knowledge, and behaviors essential for success in a particular job. It involves creating a framework of competencies, integrating them into recruitment, performance management, and training processes to ensure employees possess the required capabilities for their roles, fostering organizational success. This approach supports ongoing assessment, development, and alignment of individual and organizational goals. Career paths are often designed based on competency frameworks, which help align individual development with the required skills and capabilities for success within the organisation (Bonder et al., 2011; Ratnawat, 2018; Zenger et al., 2011).

This research article presents the results of a study conducted at Panyapiwat Institute of Management (PIM), a cooperate university in Thailand, aiming at the assembly of a competency-based career path and its introduction within the organisation. PIM, known for its real-world human resource performance, provides a suitable environment for examining career progression management. The study endeavors to devise a design which is both diverse and inclusive, incorporating individual aspirations, organisational requirements, and market trends. It investigates the impact of competency-based career path design on talent attraction, retention, and organisational success. Through practical insights and recommendations, this research contributes to the fields of human resource management and educational management, benefiting both academia and practitioners.

To conclude, this research elucidates the significance of career advancement management and its intimate association with aptitude-centered tactics. By analyzing the experiences and outcomes of personnel at PIM, the research proposes effective strategies for aligning career development with individual aspirations and organizational needs. The findings provide valuable insights for organizations seeking to enhance employee engagement, job satisfaction, and overall organizational performance. This research serves as a valuable resource, offering practical guidelines for implementing competency-based career progression management in diverse organizational contexts. The study also integrates two key initiatives: the development of a Competency-Based Career Path Framework, providing a clear roadmap aligning individual skills with organizational objectives, and the formulation of an Effective Career Progression Management Process, establishing a systematic approach for continuous performance assessment and addressing potential challenges.

Research Objectives

The research is guided by these two primary objectives:

1. Developed a Competency-Based Career Path Framework: We created a clear roadmap for a competency-based career path framework, aligning individual skills with organizational objectives.
2. Formulated an Effective Career Progression Management Process: We established a systematic approach for continuous performance assessment, addressing potential challenges.

By pursuing the aforementioned objectives, this research endeavors to furnish valuable insights and offer pragmatic recommendations in the domain of human resources management (HRM). The outcomes of this study have been intentionally crafted to serve as a compass for organizations seeking enhancements in their career management practices, talent management, and the cultivation of a nurturing environment conducive to employee development and achievement.

Scope of the Study

The research conducted in this study focuses on the scope of career progression path design within the context of the Panyapiwat Institute of Management (PIM), a cooperative university in Thailand, and its departments. PIM, like many other educational institutions, is driven by a core mission encompassing teaching and learning management, research, and academic services (Panyapiwat Institute of Management, 2020c). Within the PIM framework, the research explores three distinct areas of work.

Firstly, it delves into the realm of learning, teaching, and research, leveraging the resources and expertise offered by the Faculty of Management Sciences. This entails examining how career progression paths can be designed to facilitate growth and development in these areas. Secondly, the study investigates the domain of academic service, focusing on the specialized PIM HR Excellence Center. Lastly, the major investigation of this research is to determine how the management of career progression can be adapted to the unique requirements of academic services. The research focuses on the administrative functions and the support functions of the PIM and uses the Office for strategic management and innovation as an area of study. This aspect seeks to uncover effective approaches to career progression within these auxiliary areas.

Acknowledging Limitations and Generalizability: While this research is conducted within the framework of the PIM department, it's important to recognize that variations in departmental characteristics and requirements in different institutions could lead to diverse outcomes. To enhance the applicability of the findings, future research may consider a broader selection of educational institutions as case studies.

Theoretical Foundation: The theoretical foundation guiding this study is based on established theories of competency-based career path design and progression management within the context of human resource management. These theories provide a framework for understanding and structuring the research, ensuring that the study aligns with established academic principles.

Practical Implications and Recommendations: This study offers actionable recommendations to enhance career progression in education. These practical strategies benefit both academic communities and institutions by improving career development, efficiency, and fostering a positive environment for growth and achievement.

Competency-Based Career Path Design: In this study, we conducted a thorough analysis, added critical perspectives, seamlessly integrated research findings, discussed research challenges, and suggested future research directions in the Competency-Based Career Path Design section. These enhancements offer valuable insights and recommendations for the academic community and beyond.

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Although the research was specifically carried out within the framework of the PIM department, the results and insights obtained could have a wider impact on the development of career development in other institutions of higher education. By taking into account the individual characteristics and requirements of different departments, this study offers valuable recommendations and guidelines that can be adapted and implemented to enhance career progression management across diverse educational settings.

By exploring the intricacies of career path design and progression management within PIM, this research contributes to the existing body of knowledge in the field of human resource management. The outcomes present advantageous intelligence on constructing capability-based occupational trajectories and recommend a thorough career advancement oversight procedure. Moreover, the research extends beyond the boundaries of PIM, providing a foundation for further exploration and implementation of effective career development practices in educational institutions. The ultimate goal of this study is to advance the body of knowledge and nurture professional advancement opportunities for the academic community.

The Competency-Based Career Path Design

Superior organisational performance is one of the most important objectives in various systems of human resources management, such as the work-progression system under study in this study. Scholars (Spencer & Spencer, 1998; Byham & Moyer, 2020) have posited that competence encompasses essential components: skill, motive, trait, self-concept, past success experience, and future potential. These components are demonstrative of the capabilities sought by the organisation.

In the context of human resource management, competencies are commonly categorized into three distinct groups, as highlighted by the Corporate Executive Board (2015a) and Suthamanon (2017). First, there is a set of competencies that conform to the requirements of the organisation, often called organisational competence or core competence, which must be held by all employees of the organisation. Secondly, competencies based on roles or positions, known as job/role competency, are tailored to specific managerial positions. In some instances, certain competencies, such as leadership competency, are exclusively assigned to specific groups of managers. Lastly, specific or individual skills, referred to as personal skills or functional skills, are required for effective performance in a job.

These three categories play pivotal roles in shaping the architecture of human resources systems within an organization and are integral to their effective management. They serve as key components in various human resources functions, including but not limited to, the processes of selection, performance management, training and development. Notably, these categories significantly influence the design of career progression, constituting the primary focus of the study.

In conclusion, this investigation emphasizes the relevance of utilizing competency-based approaches in career path design to facilitate exceptional organisational performance. Drawing upon the insights of Spencer and Spencer (1998), Byham and Moyer (2020), the Corporate Executive Board (2015a), and Suthamanon (2017), the research illuminates the three categories of competencies relevant to human resource management. By investigating the combination of these competencies in career progression design, the study aims to offer practical recommendations for optimizing human resource systems and achieving exceptional organisational performance.

The Career Path

The career path within an organisational structure typically comprises three levels: junior level, middle level, and senior level, often organized in a pyramid structure (Corporate Executive Board, 2015b). Traditionally, career progression has adhered to a linear trajectory, commencing at the operational level devoid of subordinates and advancing to middle management with team responsibilities. The apex of this trajectory entails reaching senior management roles, characterized by broader responsibilities and oversight of larger teams. Nevertheless, the pyramid structure inherent in this model frequently imposes constraints on upward mobility, a phenomenon attributed to the scarcity of higher-ranking positions in comparison to lower-level roles. Additionally, Morgan (2014) also perceived larger organisational structures with greater elasticity and a prominence on education and training.

Various career path designs exist to address these challenges. One approach is the dual career path (Yarnall, 2008), facilitating individuals to ascend either as business executives or as trained specialists. This design enables employees and organisations to maximize the potential of personnel. Nonetheless, it may not effectively foster growth and cross-education chances that are indispensable in modern organisations.

To address these identified deficiencies, it becomes imperative to consider alternative trajectories, taking cognizance of the dynamic organizational and employee needs. The design imperatives should be adaptive, attuned to individual competencies and proclivities, concurrently affording opportunities for continual development and professional growth. This research aspires to meticulously examine various career path models, proffering a competency-based paradigm that intricately aligns individual aspirations with organizational imperatives. The proposed approach thus positions itself as a strategic avenue for optimizing talent management strategies within organizational contexts.

In summary, traditional linear progression in pyramidal organisational structures presents challenges in the facilitation of upward movement. The dual career plan offers some advantages, but it may not be fully responsive to the dynamic needs of modern organizations. To address these limitations, alternative career path designs need to be explored, focusing on competency-based approaches that align individual aspirations with organisational needs. This research explores to enrich our understanding of how to effectively design career paths that will foster mutually employee advancement and organisational success.

The second research model, proposed by the Corporate Executive Board (2015b), introduces a framework aimed at advancing more diverse workgroups within the organisation. The model, illustrated in Figure 1, emphasizes the importance of promoting diversity and inclusivity across various levels of the organisation.

Figure 1: *The Research Model for Advancing Diverse Workgroups in Career Path Design*

Marketing Top Function	Sales Top Function	Business Development Top Function
Regional Marketing Manager	Regional Sales Manager	Business Development Senior Manager
Brand Manager	Key Account Leader	Business Consultant
Marketing Associate	Sales Executives	Business Analyst
Marketing Officer	Sales Officer	Business Associate

Figure 1 illustrates a career progression path for top executives in the marketing field. The journey begins as a 'Marketing Officer' and involves both vertical and horizontal progression. Individuals can advance vertically to the role of 'Marketing Associate' or opt for horizontal progression to become 'Sales Executives' at the same level. Further advancement leads to the Business Development Group as a 'Business Analyst' and a subsequent cross-job promotion to the position of 'Key Account Leader'. Executives then have the opportunity to lead and transition across different workgroups, culminating in the role of 'Regional Marketing Manager' and eventually reaching the pinnacle of the 'Marketing Top Function'.

The articulated career trajectory presents myriad advantages as it affords staff the opportunity for meaningful engagement, skill manifestation, and comprehensive experiential learning. Simultaneously, the organization can harness its full potential, fostering the development of managers endowed with profound job knowledge. Nonetheless, it is imperative to acknowledge that the extant structure of these career progression paths may inadequately cater to opportunities for personnel advancement. This realization underscores an opportune moment for organizations to refine their talent management strategies, thereby unlocking the latent potential of their workforce. Through a meticulous re-evaluation and fortification of career development programs, organizations can cultivate an environment conducive to sustained professional growth and advancement.

A third progression path design has been proposed, known as the Diamond career path (Corporate Executive Board, 2015b; Yarnall, 2008; Carter et al., 2009). Presently, enterprises are distinguished by ever-growing intricacy and a range of teams. Nevertheless, it is vital to adjust comprehensive occupation training responsibilities in order to uphold individual worth (Corporate Executive Board, 2015b). Consequently, the design of the career progression path must allow individuals to grow and progress across different workgroups, assuming both executive and expert roles (Yarnall, 2008).

Furthermore, the Diamond career path recognizes the need for a multifaceted approach to career development, accommodating the diverse talents and expertise of individuals within the organisation (Carter et al., 2009). By engaging with different work groups and a variety of roles, people gain valuable insight and skills and foster a comprehensive understanding of an organisation (Corporate Executive Board, 2015b). This design encourages inter-disciplinary collaboration, thus contributing to the personnel advancement and worth of personnel (Yarnall, 2008).

The implementation of the Diamond Career Path enables organisations to maximise their workforce potential, and fosters a continuous learning culture and development culture (Carter et al., 2009). As organisations evolve, this career progression model, as illustrated in Figure 2, offers a strategic framework for aligning individual aspirations with organisational goals, resulting in stimulating and rewarding occupations for staff and advancing organisational achievement (Corporate Executive Board, 2015b).

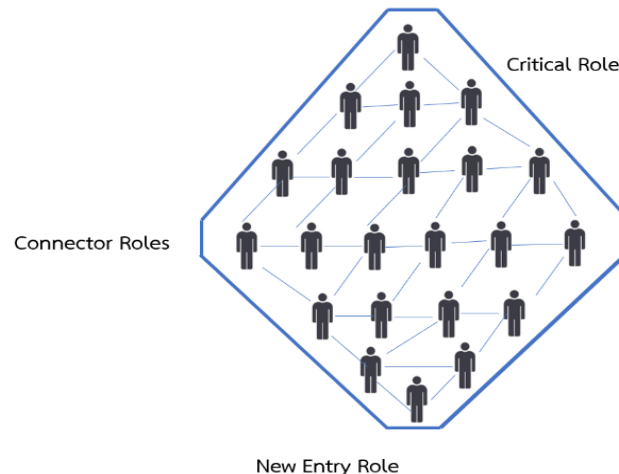
Figure 2: The Diamond Career Path

Figure 2 illustrates the career progression path starting from an entry-level role and offers opportunities for advancement within the same job family or across different lines of work. Connector roles and critical roles play a significant role in facilitating progression to higher levels within the organisation, based on the increased acquisition of competencies.

The design of career progression paths is currently closely related to the organisational structure design. Traditional organisational structures with distinct hierarchical levels are being reimagined and replaced by agile team-based organisational designs (Aghina et al., 2018; Denning, 2018). These new structures tend to be flatter, which may reduce vertical career growth opportunities. However, they enable the development of advancement systems with a fresh perspective. Horizontal career growth becomes more prominent, allowing for broader job advancements based on competency-based career path designs.

The design of a competency-based career path incorporates a consideration of the varied skills and abilities of individuals, offering a structured framework for their advancement within the organization. This approach is in harmony with the dynamic nature of evolving organizational structures and underscores progression based on performance. Prioritizing competencies allows employees to demonstrate their capabilities, actively contributing to the organization's success, thereby fostering a more dynamic and fulfilling career trajectory.

The Career Path Management

The management of career progression paths is a crucial aspect of aligning individual career development with the strategic needs of the business. By integrating multiple management systems, organisations can effectively implement and operationalize career progression paths (Bersin by Deloitte, 2014; Carter et al., 2009; Hedge & Rineer, 2017; Rothwell, 2016). The following steps outline how organisations can put career progression paths into action:

Figure 3: Career Progression Management Process

As illustrated in Figure 3, career progression management must design a progression path that supports the company strategy to ensure that the organisation has personnel in key workgroups to drive the strategy to success and then recruit the expected talent personnel will have the right potential (Talent selection) to receive a specific career development according to the designed career progression path. This is an investment in development that should not be separated from the management of performance and career growth that make working and career progression the same thing and keep those talent personnel (Talent Retention) from being lost along the way.

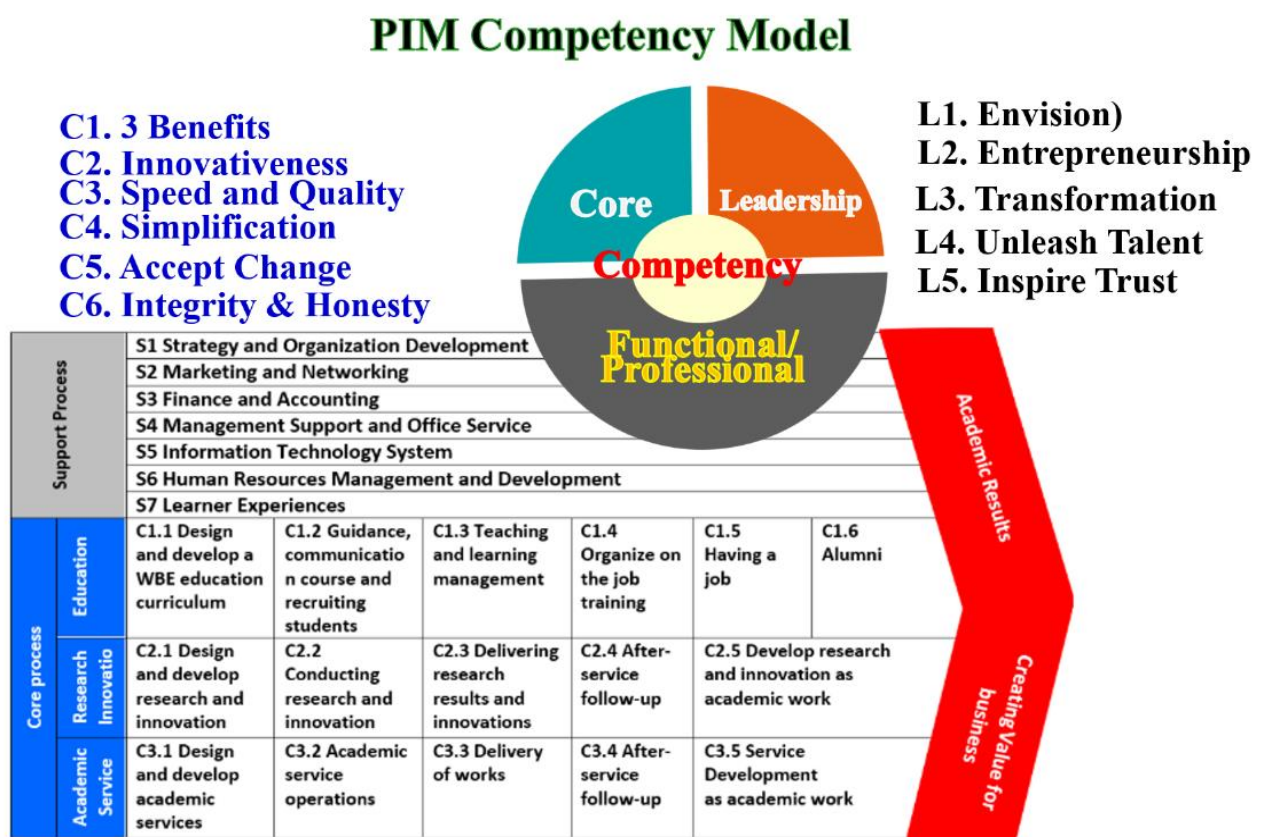
Human Resource Management System Based on Competence of Panyapiwat Institute of Management (PIM's Competency-based HRM)

For over two decades, scholars in human resource management have advocated for a shift from the traditional job-based HR system to a competency-based HR system, particularly for organisations that rely on the capabilities of knowledgeable employees (Dubois & Rothwell, 2004).

The Panyapiwat Institute of Management, as a higher education institution, is a suitable candidate for implementing this human resource management system design. Nonetheless, the institution still maintains a traditional system design. The design of this human resource management system follows the organisational function structure, with each level of position defined and accompanied by a functional description.

This design directs to establish a competency-based foundation for human resource management (Panyapiwat Institute of Management, 2021b). The components of competencies within this system can be envisioned in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Panyapiwat Institute of Management Competency Model



As illustrated in Figure 4, the competency can be divided into 3 types:

1. Core competency requires that all personnel at every level must have 6 competencies, namely C1-C6 respectively.
2. Leadership competency requires that all personnel at every level must have 5 leadership competencies, namely L1-L5 respectively.
3. Functional competency has been grouped according to value chain, where the core business consists of teaching, research, and academic services. This is the main mission of higher education institutions. Various agencies are classified in the said value chain.

As for the positioning level of Panyapiwat Institute of Management (2020c), it is defined according to roles at 4 levels and can be compared to both work groups in the core business process and support process as follows:

Figure 5: PIM Positions and Roles for Competency Proficiency Identifications

Positions and Roles for Competency Proficiency Identifications				
	Operational/ Professional (Officers/Senior Officers/lecturer)	Specialist & Supervisory (Manager – Assistance Director/Branch Head- Assistant Dean) / Asst. Prof.- Assoc. Prof.	Expertise & Top Functional Agency executives (Deputy Director- Director/ Associate Dean-Dean) / Professor	Strategist Senior management (Assistant-Vice President, Administration /Academic)
Adminis- tration and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learned principles, theories, and perform as required very well - Collaborate with teams and between teams - Propose knowledge and ideas to develop work - Self-improvement with change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Study well and embark on an expert work - Build recognition for the leadership role/expertise - Provide advice and guidance to improve the work of the team - adapt and apply expertise to the situation - Motivate the team to produce work/ learning - Lead the team and create cooperation between teams/organizations/networks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create innovate/new knowledge to use in the work - Plan, organize and manage work to achieve strategic goals - Bring changes to terms/organizations with direction - Inspire (Passion) team, and between teams, and networks to create work together 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understand the future of business and education and present the institution's strategic issues - Transfer strategies into plans and management strategies - Bring changes to the institute as a whole - Create an innovative organization
Academic (lecturer, Asst. Prof., Assoc. Prof., Prof.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learned principles, theories, and perform as required very well - Collaborate with teams and between teams - Propose knowledge and ideas to develop work - Self-improvement with change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Study well and embark on an expert work - Build recognition for the leadership role/expertise - Provide advice and guidance to improve the work of the team - adapt and apply expertise to the situation - Motivate the team to produce work/ learning - Create cooperation between teams/ organizations/networks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create innovate/new knowledge to use in the work - Plan, organize and manage work to achieve strategic goals - Bring changes to terms/organizations with direction - Inspire (Passion) team, and between teams, and networks to create work together 	

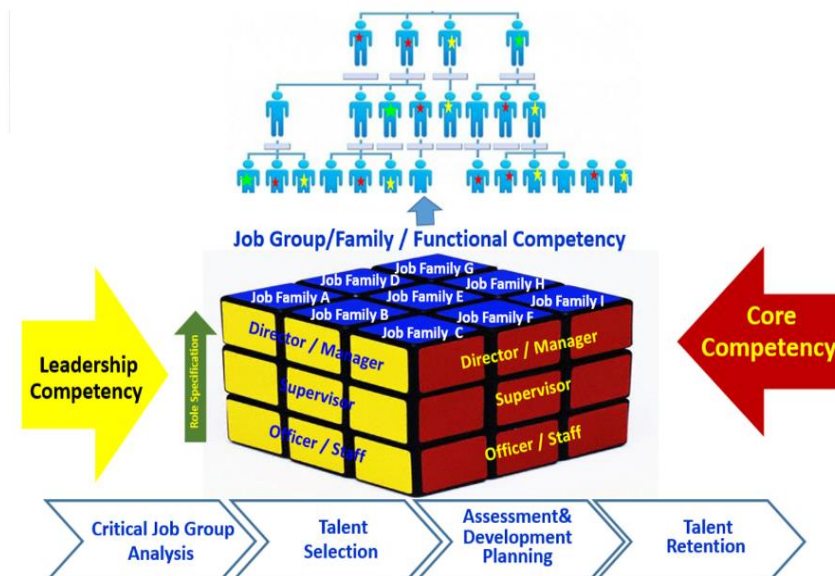
Note: Panyapiwat Institute of Management organizes personnel competency in 3 types with 4 competency proficiency levels, according to the position level with different roles from the traditional job level design from the job value.

Research Conceptual Framework

Career progression design is an integration of career grouping and defining core competencies, competencies for leaders, and competencies specific to vocational groups that have already been implemented. Employee progression path routing is carried out by analyzing whether specific abilities are specific to a specific occupation or work group that can be learned by the time the organisation expects its personnel to be able to, for example 3 to 4 months, and then implementing a progression path can be divided into 3 types:

1. Vertical movement career progression path, direct line in the original work group can move on at a higher level
2. Horizontal movement career progression path, other lines of work can move on at the same level
3. Diagonal movement of career progression path, other lines of work can move on to closer and higher levels.

To make it easier to understand how to use competencies to design career paths, the following image is illustrated:

Figure 6: Career Path Design and Management System

The figure 6 illustrated that the job grouping or called job family, which uses the core competencies and leadership competency together. It is for the functional competence only. Some career paths that are similar is to use competencies in specific workgroups that can learn to cross quickly can be laid as a path for advancement across career paths. While some professions only must grow from within, whereas there is a big difference, it takes longer to learn and growth in their professional than the organisation can wait for their growth. Assigning the move to work in a work group (job family) determines the period of learning the job when working in other similar lines of work at a moderate level, defined as 3 periods as follows:

1. Personnel can be transferred to work in a short period of time, taking time to learn the job quickly. This is a career field with very similar professional competence.
2. Personnel can be transferred to work in a medium period, take the time to learn the work within the acceptable amount of time. This a similar career field of competence at the medium level.
3. Personnel can be transferred to work in the long term, and it took longer than the organisation to wait, which is a line of work that has few similar career competencies.

A learning period exceeding three months is regarded as indicative of a role with limited alignment with comparable career competencies. In such cases, transferring personnel to work in this specific role may not be deemed suitable for the organization. Nevertheless, the appropriateness of the duration as a criterion for evaluation is contingent upon the unique context of each organization.

Figure 6 delineates a pre-designed career path management system comprising four pivotal processes:

1. Critical Job Group Analysis and Future Leadership Risks Assessment (3-5 Years): This process involves an in-depth analysis of critical job groups, evaluating the potential risks associated with cultivating future leaders within a 3-5 year timeframe.
2. Recruitment of High Talent (Talent Selection) from Internal Sources: Emphasizing internal talent, this step underscores the recruitment of high-potential individuals from within the organization before considering external candidates.
3. Competency Assessment Development Planning Aligned with Item 1: This process focuses on competency assessment and development planning, aligning with the target positions identified in the first item for strategic career progression.
4. Maintenance of Competent Personnel (Talent Retention) in Accordance with Development Plans: Aimed at talent retention, this step involves strategies to keep competent personnel within the organization, in alignment with their individualized development plans.

Research Methodology

The research methodology employed in this study aligns with the field of educational management and comprises the following components:

Selection of Study Units and Designing Career Paths: The study units chosen for investigation were the Faculty of Management Science, Office of Strategy and Innovation Management, and PIM HR Excellent Center. These units were strategically selected to encompass the key job characteristics prevalent in educational institutions, including teaching, research, academic service, and administration/support roles. By including these units, the research aimed to develop a comprehensive understanding of career paths within the context of educational management. The design of career paths utilized a competency-based system, which was achieved through focus group meetings involving executives at the highest departmental level and one level below. The inclusion of 3-4 participants per unit, totaling 12 participants, allowed for diverse perspectives and insights into career progression.

The primary objective of these meetings was to conduct a comparative analysis of competencies within specific workgroups and departments, evaluating the viability of learning and transitioning between distinct roles within a 1–3-month timeframe. The aim of this competency analysis was to create a framework applicable across diverse professional domains. Executives from the three departments participated in two rounds of discussions, and their comments were synthesized into a comprehensive comparative table 1.

Table 1 Comparison of the learning periods for functional competencies

Group 1 _____		Group 2 _____		Group 3 _____	
List of competencies for specific tasks		List of competencies for specific tasks		List of competencies for specific tasks	
1	X1	1	Y1	1	Z1
2	X2	2	Y2	2	Z2
3	X3	3	Y3	3	Z3
4	X4	4	Y4	4	Z4
5	X5	5	Y5	5	Z5
6	X6			6	Z6
7	X7			7	Z7
				8	Z8
Learning period (months)		Learning period (months)		Learning period (months)	
Group 2	Group 3	Group 1	Group 3	Group 1	Group 2
.....

The Career Progression Management Process was enhanced through an additional focus group meeting, incorporating 2 participants from the Office of Human Resources Management, thereby totaling 15 participants. This expanded group composition aimed to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. Data gathered from the meeting underwent content analysis, a method commonly utilized in educational management research, enabling a systematic examination to derive meaningful insights. The objective of this process was to formulate a systematic framework guiding future career advancements within the organization.

The design of progression paths within the organization took into consideration the unique characteristics of educational management. The collaborative career path involving the Faculty of Management Science, Office of Strategy and Innovation Management, and PIM HR Excellent Center was divided into two distinct paths: the human resource management path and the strategy management path, with a focus on innovation and work process development. In addition, a comprehensive career progression management system was implemented. This system encompassed the analysis of key workgroups aligned with strategic organizational goals, the establishment of career goals in management, assessment criteria for recruiting high-potential talent, development planning initiatives, and the formulation of personalized treatment plans for employees.

By adhering to this research methodology, the study aimed to contribute to the academic field of educational management by proposing a comprehensive career progression management process and system that would effectively support the career growth and development of professionals within educational institutions.

Results

The research results were presented in two parts, aligned with the research objectives:

Part 1 Career Path Design

The three departments, Faculty of Management Science, Office of Strategy and Innovation Management and PIM HR Excellent used in this study were from both academic affair groups and academic service, which is the core business process and the Office of Strategy and Innovation Management, which is a support business process has details of subgroups within each unit (Panyapiwat Institute of Management, 2020c) as follows:

Office of Strategy and Innovation Management

- Strategy and risk management
- Knowledge management
- Innovation organisation development
- Work process development

PIM HR Excellence Center

- Consulting work on human resource management systems
- Human resource development

Faculty of Management Sciences

- Central Administration work of the faculty
- Real Estate and Building Management Program
- Hospitality and Tourism Program
- Aviation Business Management Program
- People Management and Organisational Strategy Program (Master's degree)
- Human Resource Certified Center in Panyapiwat Institute of Management

Progression paths can be arranged as 1) Career progression path for Human resource management, and 2) Career progression path in Strategic management, Innovation and System development.

I. Career progression path for Human resource management: the group meeting concerned with pathway for career progression, there was a consensus that highly competent personnel in the original work group, be able to learn the job and takes less than 3 months to move up to work at the middle level. A career progression path can be presented as shown in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Human Resource Career Progression Path

Faculty of Management Sciences			Strategic Management and Innovation office		PIM HR Excellence Center	
Human Resource and Organization Management	People Management and Organization Strategy	PIM HR Excellence Center	Strategy Management	Innovation Organization Development	Consulting work	Human resource development
Director	Head Dept.	Director	Manager	Manager	Manager	Manager
Operator Level 2 Lecturer	Operator Level 2 Lecturer	Operator Level 2 Lecturer	Operator Level 2	Operator Level 2	Operator Level 2	Operator Level 2
Operator Level 1 Lecturer	Operator Level 1 Lecturer	Operator Level 1 Lecturer	Operator Level 1	Operator Level 1	Operator Level 1	Operator Level 1

Note: MS1, Chief Executive of Faculty of Management Sciences; MS2, Executives at subordinate level from top management of Faculty of Management Sciences; EX1, Chief Executive of PIM HR Excellence Center; EX2, Executives at subordinate level from chief executive of PIM HR Excellence Center; SI1, Chief Executive Officer, Office of Strategy, and Innovation Management; SI2, Executives at subordinate level from Chief Executive Officer, Office of Strategy and Innovation Management; HR, Chief Executive Office, office of Human Resource.

Figure 7 demonstrates the outcome of the initial focus group discussion, where participants identified a common career path that allows for internal transfers within their respective workgroups and across the seven sub-units of the three departments. Highly competent individuals from their original workgroups were found to be capable of learning and performing at a "moderate" level within 1-3 months.

"Teaching in human resource, both bachelor's and master's degrees, Human Resource Certification Centers can migrate internally and can recruit personnel from PIM HR Excellence Center immediately." (MS-1)

"The limitation is only for instructors in bachelor's degree programs (Human Resources and Organisation strategy), Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research, and Innovation stipulates that the quality of education must be in accordance with the regulations, that is having direct or similar educational qualifications as well." (MS-21)

"Office of Strategy and Innovation Management manage by competency-based with unlimited qualifications. Therefore, we can accept personnel from other departments." (SI-1)

"PIM HR Excellence Center personnel must have expertise in service and marketing which were set in the core leadership competency, the competency-based performance system must be really good." (HR EX-1)

The findings from this section suggest that the speed of learning new tasks based on performance is more important than having direct experience, performance, or competence relevant to the job.

II. Career progression path in Strategic management, Innovation and System development

Figure 8: Career progression path in Human resource management, Strategic management, Innovation, and System development

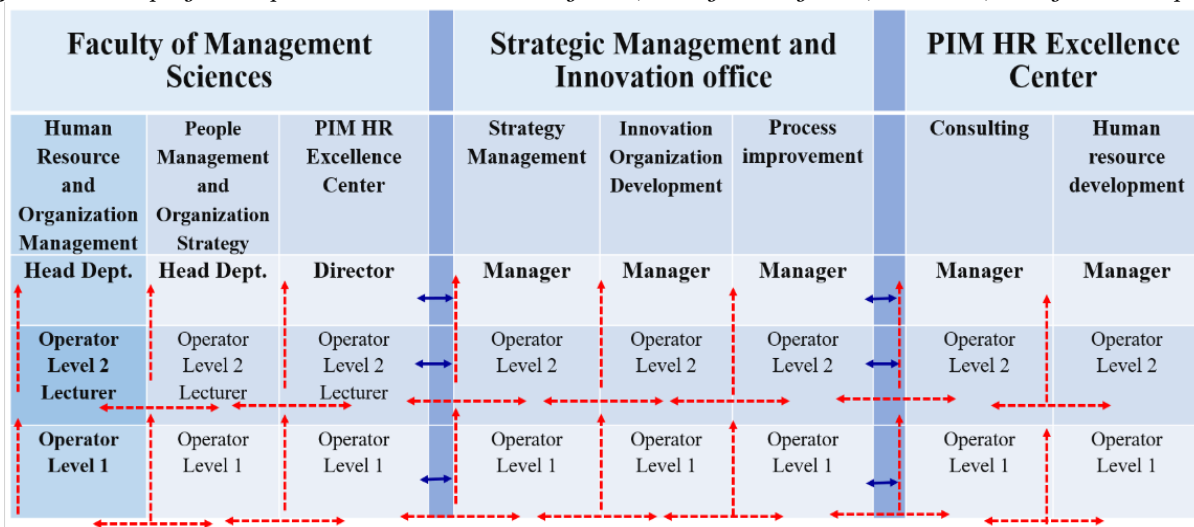


Figure 8 depicts the outcomes derived from the second round of focus group discussions, indicating the potential establishment of a collaborative career path termed "Strategic Management, Innovation, and System Development" spanning across the three departments. This envisioned career trajectory not only fosters career progression within the Office of Strategy and Innovation Management but also facilitates the advancement of adept individuals from both the Faculty of Management Sciences and the PIM HR Excellence Center.

"Personnel with high leadership competences as defined by the Institute will be able to grow in strategic work, innovation, and work system development" (HR EX-1)

"Technical knowledge in strategy, innovation, and system development for those who are smart and interested can only learn within 1-3 months." (MS-1)

"The key competencies required in strategy management, innovation, and process improvement come largely from the core leadership that PIM defines." (SI-1)

The finding points out that the ability to successfully perform tasks requires core competency, leadership competency, and functional competency.

Part 2 Career Management Process

To provide career advancement paths can be used in further management. Therefore, this research will propose the development of progression path management system as follows:

Critical job group analysis, career progression path management is a preparation for the future. It is a long-term human resource development that requires a lot of resources. Therefore, you should choose to operate in a job group/family that is important to corporate strategy, by considering the two dimensions. The task force will remain important to our strategic goals over the next 3 - 5 years. The personnel development in traditional management system is not in time as well as insufficient, or there may be a risk of personnel development, competing (Talent war) in the labor market. The implementation of a comprehensive career management process enables the organization to proactively plan and develop its human resources, ensuring that the right personnel are in place to support long-term strategic objectives.

"Both careers are important according to the PIM 2030 Strategy." (SI-1)

"Academic service is still PIM's future business that must create jobs today, and there are few internal personnel to do this job." (EX-1)

"HR should organize a review of key workgroup 1-2 times a year, every year" (HR)

The findings emphasize the significance of foresight in career progression planning, as it requires a long-term investment that prioritizes the specific needs of each career field within the organization. By taking into account the future demands of the business, the career management process can effectively align the development of personnel with strategic goals, ensuring a sustainable and successful workforce. This proactive approach enables the organization to anticipate and address potential challenges and opportunities, ultimately fostering the growth and success of both individuals and the overall business.

Talent selection is the search for talented target groups have interest in self-improvement from various departments with development goals for advancement in a career path that has been clearly analyzed.

“Everywhere, including PIM, is trying to manage talent and the goal of progress is unclear. However, this is an opportunity for us to establish a key strategic work group. This will make the goal of talent creation clearer.” (EX-1)

“We need to integrate the talent system and career progression path management into one thing.” (HR)

“Talent selection, it’s not just only considered internal talent personnel. If the analysis of manpower shown that there are not enough internal talents who are interested in developing the career progression path that the institute wants. This may cause to connected to an external recruitment plan.” (SI-1)

Target personnel assessment and development planning when there are talents in the target group, two things should be done. Assessment of interest in career progression by human resource managers, head of the affiliated department, and the head of the target career unit doing career interest conversation.

“It must be the interest of the target talent as well.” (HR)

“The composition of the attention discussion must consist of three parties: department itself, the HR department, and the new target department.” (EX-1)

The finding suggests that career progression planning is a common task of the organisation, target personnel. The focus must be on the interest in the job (Career interest) as well as the competence that exists.

After passing the steps the prepared competency of the position in the target occupation was assessed to determine the development GAP and to implement an individual development plan, mentor, and communication system.

“Assessing performance for target positions is a bit difficult because it was a position he had never worked in at that point.” (HR)

“Proposed as a joint performance assessment of current supervisors and supervisors in the target career path.” (SI)

“An individual development plan must be prepared.” (MS-1)

“HR must allocate sufficient resources to support the development plan.” (EX-1)

“Communication during the assessment and make a plan that must be done together between the original affiliation department and the target department according to the career path. It may be a mentor together.” (HR)

The finding is a new dimension in performance assessment. In the past, it was assessed from the past performance and work behavior that were clear to evaluate the future potential.

Retaining target personnel who are capable (Talent retention) must have a system for managing the development plan and taking care of personnel according to the plan as a special case including monitoring and evaluation, and present to top management at regular intervals, about 3 months at a time where there is a career conversation between the two departments and the human resources manager every month.

“There must be a system in place to closely monitor the development plan.” (SI-1)

“There should be a discussion between head of two departments which often acts as a mentor with the HR team, for example 1-2 time a month.” (EX-1)

“Monitor, evaluate and present the progress of senior management every 3 months.” (HR)

“Propose HR to arrange learning resources and budget for official approval only for this matter.” (SI-1)

The findings indicate that effective career advancement management requires the establishment of a dedicated management service system, along with the allocation of necessary resources. It is crucial to have the active participation and support of senior management in order to ensure the success of career progression initiatives. By providing the necessary tools, guidance, and resources, organizations can create a supportive environment that fosters career growth and development for their employees. Senior management's involvement is vital in

setting the direction, creating policies, and allocating resources to facilitate the implementation of career advancement programs and initiatives. Their commitment and support demonstrate the organization's dedication to nurturing the potential and maximizing the opportunities for career progression within the institution.

Conclusions and Discussions

The findings from this research are the introduction of competency-based human resource management system (Competency-based HRM) of educational institutions that are clearly driven by human resources. Rather, it tends to provide a narrow organisational structure and career progression only within one's profession. Three departments that this research study able to design career paths even if the diamond career path is not yet fully formed. There are opportunities for advancement across the three departments through two paths, namely "Human Resources" and "Strategic Management, Innovation and Work system development", and be able to design career progression paths within the three departments with many more paths.

The research also laid out a system for managing career progression to make the career progression path designed can be put into practice. Employees will be motivated to work harder, if they perceived formal, clearly defined opportunities for advancement. They will be more likely to stay with their organisation longer. (Hedge & Rineer, 2017, p. 3). Since the analysis of future key workgroups, recruit talented personnel into the assessment system to develop the target personnel, and retaining personnel in the target group.

Career progression path design as the Diamond career path is not yet possible as proposed by the Corporate Executive Board (2015b), Yarnell (2008), and Carter et al. (2009) as it should. Because of the Thai higher education system also determines the academic career path, instructors must also have qualifications that match the subject of teaching make the application of the principal competency-based career progression path design is not yet fully achievable. Although higher education institutions have a policy to develop students to be competent and ready to work. The most important element is having the right teachers and staff members. Human resource management in higher education institutions should therefore be based on competency based human resources management, do not put a lot of weight on teacher's educational background. As shown in the higher education curriculum standards (Ministry of Education, 2015) that stipulates those teachers must have direct or relevant qualifications. Even though educational qualifications are not the same as personnel competencies as Spencer and Spencer's globally influential proposition (Spencer and Spencer, 1998).

Although it is recognized that arranging a diamond-shaped career path provides opportunities to harness the capabilities and potential for human resources to the maximum. In addition to the organisation changing to competency-based human resource management, the organisational structure design of Panyapiwat Institute of Management must have agile organisation characteristics according to the proposal of Aghina et al. (2018) and Denning (2018). It has been established that job advancement can occur both vertically and horizontally career growth in competency-based career path design, as proposed by Carter et al. (2009) and Rothwell (2016).

However, the study, under the limitations set out above, also proposes a possible system for career advancement, so that the chosen career path can be implemented. Since the analysis in the future of the key work groups, the recruitment of talent in the assessment system, the development of the target staff, and the retention of personnel in target groups.

Recommendation

Higher education organisations are often managed by many personnel working in a single career field. From the start of work until the end of working life in the organisation, there is no opportunity to try other work, even though the situation has changed. The organisation also wants to use the potential of its personnel to the maximum according to the changes that occur. This is due to the main reason is the design of the human resource management system based on the Job-based HR System, such as career advancement that is based on organisational structure, position level determination, performance management according to job description, development according to specific job qualifications causing the organisation to lack in the use of the highest potential that personnel have. Therefore, it is time to reform the Career Path Design System and other relevant human resource management systems in higher education institutions. From the original design on the job (Job Based HR System) to base on the performance (Competency Based HR System), it is very necessary, or if it can't be done immediately, use a combination of methods like this research.

This research is just the lead of both departments and support lines, and academics of higher education institutions to design career progression paths based on competence in only three departments, allowing to define career paths in which personnel grow across departments or work groups to increase to two career paths. If the entire institution is operating, there might be more career paths like this, and the management of career progress could be similar to a diamond career track according to the modern organisation, allowing organisations and staff to use the full potential of their own.

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Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s)

Ethical statements

This research study was conducted with the IRB approval no. *PIM-REC 012/2566* from Panyapiwat Institute of Management (PIM), and adhered to all ethical standards and guidelines set forth by the institutional review board.

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