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THE EFFECT OF SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE ON CAREER PLATEAU REDUCTION WITH THE MEDIATING ROLE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL

EL EFECTO DE LA INTELIGENCIA SOCIAL EN LA REDUCCIÓN DE LAS PLANTAS DE CARRERA CON EL PAPEL MEDIADOR DEL CAPITAL PSICOLÓGICO

Seyed Ali Hoseini¹
E-mail: hircania92@gmail.com
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3016-8798>
Bozorgmehr Ashrafi¹
E-mail: shu.management@gmail.com
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8987-5318>
¹ Shahroud University of Technology. Iran.

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ABSTRACT

Human resources are one of the most important and valuable assets of an organization, they cannot achieve success without efficient and quality personnel. Today, the horizontal structures of organizations and the fluid process of working life make it less possible for people to benefit from their full potential, creating a context for the subjects' professional plateau, therefore, an obstacle to the advancement of the organizations. The study investigated the effect of social intelligence in reducing the professional plateau with the mediating role of psychological capital. The method applied was descriptive-correlational. The results showed that social intelligence and psychological capital had a significant and inverse relationship with the professional plateau. Social intelligence has a direct and positive impact on the psychological capital of employees. In other words, increasing the level of social intelligence and psychological capital among employees can reduce the professional plateau

Keywords:

Social Intelligence, career plateau, psychological capital, gas company.

RESUMEN

Los recursos humanos son de los activos más importantes y valiosos de una organización, estas no pueden lograr el éxito sin un personal eficiente y de calidad. Hoy, las estructuras horizontales de las organizaciones y el proceso fluido de la vida laboral hacen que sea menos posible que las personas se beneficien de todo su potencial, creándose un contexto para la meseta profesional de las sujetos por tanto, un obstáculo para el avance de las organizaciones. El estudio, se investigó el efecto de la inteligencia social en la reducción de la meseta profesional con el papel mediador del capital psicológico. El método aplicado fue descriptivo-correlacional. Los resultados mostraron que la inteligencia social y el capital psicológico tenían una relación significativa e inversa con la meseta profesional. La inteligencia social tiene un impacto directo y positivo en el capital psicológico de los empleados. En otras palabras, aumentar el nivel de inteligencia social y capital psicológico entre los empleados puede reducir la meseta profesional

Palabras clave:

Inteligencia social, meseta de la carrera, capital psicológico, compañía de gas.

INTRODUCTION

As organizational structures become horizontal, job development has become more competitive and challenging in terms of vertical progress. As such, most employees often reach a career plateau before reaching their career goals. The career plateau is not a new phenomenon. However, a matter of concern is the growth process that is prevalent in many organizations. Many researchers on organizational jobs believe that career plateau is rapidly becoming an essential managerial and organizational issue that needs to be managed to avoid employee dissatisfaction. Due to changes in the business environment, restructuring, small size, and equity in employment, career plateau is likely to become one of the most important occupations of the next decade (Salami, 2010). Rahim, et al. (2017), defines social intelligence as the ability to be aware of social conditions and is defined as a set of practical barriers to understanding attitudes, feelings, creating, and maintaining positive relationships in social settings. Thorndike states that social intelligence is the ability to understand one's situation, others, others' motivations and behaviours, and to function optimally through this information (Thorndike, 1920). Psychological capital offers a framework for understanding human capital that can activate human potential. Research shows that psychological capital provides ways to help individuals not only deal with anomalies but also to progress effectively during and immediately after anomalies. Psychological capital appears as an effective way to understand and encourage optimal human performance in the workplace (Goertzen & Whitaker, 2015). New organizational structures are changing rapidly, and conditions for human development are becoming more complex, and the human resources of the organization have been affected by various factors and threats, including career plateau. Horizontal organizational structures and uniform trends in people's work-life make it less possible for individuals to take advantage of their full potential and create the context for a career plateau.

On the other hand, social interactions that play an essential role in organizations are skills that need to strengthen the organization's staff. One of the things that improve interaction with colleagues in the workplace is social intelligence, which helps people to adapt and adapt to different situations. Social intelligence can help people make the right decisions in complex and challenging situations. Psychological capital also provides ways to help individuals not only deal with anomalies but also to progress effectively during and immediately after anomalies. Psychological capital continues the effort to change stressful situations and prepares one for uncertain and difficult situations. It can be said that career plateau had

become an important issue for managers and organizations today since it affects the morale and motivation of employees and affects their performance. From a psychological point of view, it is an inevitable necessity.

Thorndike (1920), was one of the leading scholars who put forward the idea of social vision and referred to three types of intelligence (abstract, mechanical, and social). He defined social intelligence as the ability to communicate effectively with others. It also includes the ability to understand and treat others in the social environment. Goleman (2006), has argued that a full understanding of social intelligence requires non-cognitive skills and defines social intelligence as social awareness, which includes empathy, adaptation, and social cognition, and social relations (communication management).

Self-presentation is interaction, influence, and concern for others. Also, Albrecht (2006), defines social intelligence as the ability of the individual to, perceive, and act wisely in interacting with individuals in social situations; as a result, this leads to social acceptance and personal success. Social and professional life. According to Goleman, we can measure social intelligence in individuals because social intelligence is *knowledge acquired* that improved through education in individuals and not inherited (Goleman & Boyatzis, 2008). Martinussen (2001), considers social intelligence to have three distinct components: social information processing, social awareness, and social skills. The first two factors are related to the cognitive aspects of understanding and interpreting ambiguous social information. However, social skills are very different and relate to positive beliefs about one's social functioning abilities (Friborg, et al., 2005).

The term "career plateau" refers to the feeling of hopelessness and psychological deficiency of employees who are exposed to temporary or permanent stagnation in their professional development. Chang (2003), identifies three types of career plateaus: Structural, Content, and Life Plateau. The structural plateau marks the end of progress in an organization and is a point where the potential for additional hierarchical staff development is meagre. A content plateau occurs when a person has learned a good job but is not motivated by their daily activities because it is no longer exciting. The plateau of life occurs when committed individuals feel unsuccessful in their work, and this feeling of failure extends to one's life (Burke & Mikkelsen, 2006). Employees may use three types of strategies to tackle career plateau: defence, reevaluation, and transition. In the first strategy (defence), one tries to reduce the intensity of stress. The focus of a defensive strategy is to eliminate or modify stress levels (trying to minimize discomfort) through rationality. That is, one focuses more on

denial or optimism than on one's activities. The second strategy (reevaluation) focuses on reducing hopelessness through cognitive responses such as changing needs and values, ignoring a level of the career plateau, or adapting to current conditions. The third strategy (transition), rather than reassessment, acts as a behavioural confrontation, focusing on changing job roles to eliminate/overcome the career plateau. The actions of this strategy include moving to a new role in the company or leaving and moving to a new profession or job (Foster, et al., 2004). Rotondo & Perrewé (2000), argue that these two strategies can have positive or negative effects on the job performance of individuals and organizations. For example, reassessment can be more effective because of the staff's efforts to change or adapt to their environment. It can also make them more effective when moving between different roles. However, if employees leave, the company may lose valuable human capital (Rotondo & Perrewé, 2000).

Psychological capital is one aspect or derivative of positive organizational behaviour. Luthans, et al. (2007), have done the conceptualization of psychological capital. Today, psychological capital defined as the positive state of individual development that is characterized by the following characteristics. Having the faith, belief, and confidence to do the work and strive to succeed in challenging tasks (self-efficacy); creating positive traits about present and future success (optimism); Stability in set goals and if needed redirect to achievement (Hope); And to have perseverance in the face of adversity and difficulties to achieve success (flexibility). Psychological capital offers a framework for understanding human capital that can activate human potential. Research shows that psychological capital provides ways to help individuals not only deal with anomalies but also to progress effectively during and immediately after anomalies. Psychological capital appears as an effective way to understand and encourage optimal human performance in the workplace (Goertzen & Whitaker, 2015). Psychological capital is neither psychological "states" (e.g., emotions) that change in momentary situations, nor "traits" (e.g., personality traits, intelligence) that are constant and unchangeable, but that they have distinct capacities and are therefore flexible. Initial research supports the flexibility of psychological capital, and its useful components (self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and flexibility) can enhance through human resource interventions (Luthans, et al., 2007). Psychological capital enhances employees' efforts to achieve organizational goals and maximize their benefits, as well as cohesion, collaboration, and positive change in the organizational culture (Liu, 2010).

Malik & Fatimah (2016), in a study of psychological capital and career plateau with a sample of 220 people, concluded that there is a negative relationship between psychological capital and career plateau (content).

Rehman, et al. (2016), in a study examining the relationship between psychological capital and job burnout among faculty members of technical and vocational education institutions, found that job burnout was significantly related to the performance of technical institute colleges and capital. Psychological capital moderates this relationship. The findings of this study showed that psychological capital characteristics are an essential factor in job burnout and performance among faculty members. Psychological capital reduces the negative effect of burnout on performance outcomes. Positive personality traits such as psychological capital can help individuals to perform new tasks in a changing environment.

Fayyazi & Ziaei (2014), In research entitled, Influence of job plateau on burnout and tendency to leave librarians' service, showed that job burnout rate (structural and content plateau), job burnout, and tendency to quit librarians were above average. Also, gender did not make a significant difference in perception of plateauing, while perceived career plateau was higher in employees with more work experience and less education. Also, regression analyses revealed that perceived career plateau had a significant effect on job desirability and job burnout; in other words, librarians who perceived plateauing Job burnout and a tendency to quit work have also reported.

Khajepour, et al. (2015), in a study on the causal relationship between psychological capital with job intention, job burnout, and job performance with mediating role of job stress, concluded that psychological capital on job intention, job burnout and job performance. It has a direct effect, and psychological capital has an indirect effect on job intention and job burnout through job stress. Also, the results showed that psychological capital through job stress had no significant effect on job performance.

Norouzi, et al. (2016), in a study entitled Factors Affecting career plateau in the Faculty of Physical Education Faculties with the statistical sample of 189 people, concluded that, In Iran's public universities, unfavourable social relationships with colleagues, intelligence, and personality traits are Affect in career plateau.

Research hypotheses

The main hypothesis:

Social intelligence, with the mediating role of psychological capital, has a decreasing effect on the career plateau.

Subsidiary Hypotheses

- 1) Social intelligence has a decreasing impact on career plateau.
- 2) Social intelligence has an impact on psychological capital.
- 3) Psychological capital has a decreasing impact on career plateau.

Accordingly, according to the theoretical foundations expressed and by the research hypotheses, the conceptual framework is presented in Figure 1:

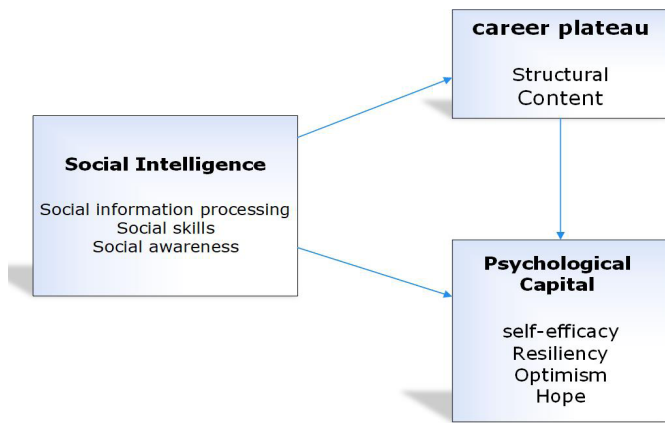


Figure 1. Conceptual Model of Research.

Research method:

The research method applied in terms of purpose, and in terms of method and nature of the survey, it is a descriptive survey type. The statistical population of the study consisted of Golestan Province Gas Company, consisting of staff and managers of the central headquarters, with a total of 109 employees. Using a simple random sampling method, comprising a sample of 85 employees and managers. Library and field studies have used for data collection. The essential tool of this research is a questionnaire in which all questions have standard validity and reliability. For analysis, SPSS software 25 and Smart PLS version 3 used.

Research findings

Descriptive statistics of demographic variables

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of demographic variables.

		Abundance	Abundance percentage(%)
Gender	Man	61	71.8
	Woman	24	28.2

Age	Less than 25 years	1	1.2
	25 to 35 years	28	32.9
	36 to 45 years	44	51.8
	46 to 55 years	9	10.6
	More than 55	3	3.5
Education (degree)	Diploma	3	3.5
	Associate Degree	5	5.9
	Bachelor	40	47.1
	MA	34	40
	PhD	3	3.5
Work experience	Less than five years	4	4.7
	5 to 10 years	26	30.6
	11 to 15 years	35	41.2
	16 to 20 years	12	14.1
	More than 20	8	9.4
marital status	Single	10	11.8
	Married	75	88.2

As shown in Table 1, Descriptive statistics analysis showed that 71.8% of the respondents were male, and 28.2% were female. Among respondents aged 36-45 years with 51.8% (n = 44), bachelor's degree with 47.1% (n = 40) and master's degree with 40.0% (n = 34) and work experience between 11-15 years 41.2% (35 people) had the highest Abundance. 75% of the respondents were married.

Before examining the path coefficients and concluding the research hypotheses, it is necessary to examine the quality of the model fit.

As shown in Table (2), the AVE index (Average variance extracted) for all variables is higher than 0.5. The CR index (composite validity coefficient or Dillon-Goldstein coefficient) was higher than 0.7 for all variables indicating the utility of the measurement model. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which indicates the reliability of each construct, was reported above 0.7, indicating the reliability of the measuring structures. Thus the quality of the measurement model was confirmed.

Table 2. Criteria for measuring measurement model.

Variable	AVE	CR	Cronbach's alpha
Psychological capital	0.598	0.714	0.941
Career plateau	0.576	0.703	0.766
Social intelligence	0.506	0.749	0.801

Whenever one or more features are measured, the correlation between these measurements provides two important validity indicators. If the correlation between factor loadings is high, the questionnaire has convergent validity.

In general, convergent validity is acceptable when:

CR > 0/7

AVE > 0/5

CR > AVE

As we have seen in Table (2), the above three relationships existed in all constructs, and thus convergent validity is established for the research model.

Divergent validity is another measure of the quality of the measurement model that uses the Fornell-Larcker (1981) criteria. According to this criterion, the acceptable divergent validity of a model implies that one structure in the model has more interaction with its indices than the other structures.

Table 3. Research Correlation Matrix for Investigating Fornell-Larcker Criteria.

Variables correlation matrix	1	2	3
1- Psychological capital	0.773		
2- career plateau	0.250	0.759	
3- social intelligence	0.772	0.314	0.712

As shown in Table 3, the elements on the main diameter of the correlation matrix are all greater than their corresponding row and column values except one. Given the validity of other tests of the measurement model and the small amount of discrepancy in the matrix, it can be ignored and attributed to the data scatter. As a result, the model is in good condition, and thus divergent validity is confirmed.

Table 4. Investigation of Stone & Geisser(1975)(Q²) coefficient and determination coefficients (R²).

Variable	R2	Q2
Psychological capital	0.830	0.133
career plateau	0.106	0.219
social intelligence	----	----

As shown in table 4, the values of Q² are positive, indicating a desirable validity of the measurement model. Also, the model coefficient of determination (R²) indicates that a few percents of the dependent variable changes are affected by the independent variable, and the rest of the dependent variable changes is related to other factors. As a result, 83% of the changes in psychological capital, as well as 10% of the variations of the occupational plateau variable, were explained by the independent model variable, which is a desirable value indicating good model validity.

In this section, we consider the effect size (F²). Effect size addresses the question of whether an independent latent variable has a significant effect on a dependent variable or not.

Table 5. Effect size criterion (F²).

Variable	F2
Psychological capital → career plateau	0.197
social intelligence → Psychological capital	0.872
social intelligence → career plateau	0.480

The effect size (Table 5) greater than 0.15 obtained and indicating the reasonable validity of the model.

Now that the optimal fit of the model has confirmed, we examine the output of the theoretical research model. Figures (2) and (3) show the output of the theoretical research model in standard coefficients and significant coefficients, respectively.

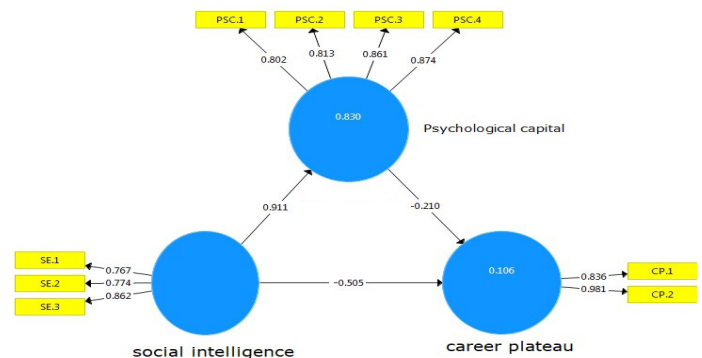


Figure 2. Theoretical Model of Research in Standard Coefficients.

In figure 2, the standard path coefficients are numerical between -1 and 1, in which the positive sign above indicates a positive relationship, and a negative number indicates a negative relationship between the research variables. To statistically evaluate these coefficients, we use the t-value statistic corresponding to each coefficient, which is visible in Figure 3.

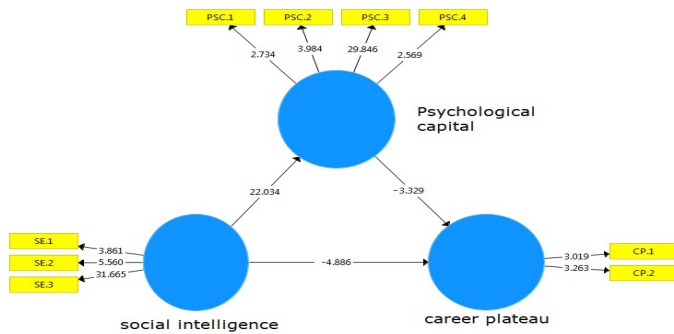


Figure 3. Theoretical Model of Research in Significance Coefficients (t-value).

As shown in figure 3, all t-statistics are higher than 1.96 (or smaller than -1.96), which means all path coefficients at a 95% confidence level are significant. To decide on the assumptions, we must decide on the same values.

Before deciding on research hypotheses, let us examine the Goodness of fit model indices that added to new versions of SmartPLS software. Table 6 shows the desired values and observed values of these indices.

Table 6. Goodness of fit models.

Result	The value obtained	Acceptable range	Index
Proper fit	0.071	Less than 0.08)Hu & Bentler, 1999(SRMR
Proper fit	0.594	Less than 0.95 (Henseler et al., 2015)	d_ULS
Proper fit	0.691	Less than 0.95 (Henseler et al., 2015)	d_G
Proper fit	2.331	Less than 3 (Kenny et al., 2014)	X2/df
Proper fit	0.945	More than 0.9)Bentler & Bonett, 1980(NFI

As shown in table 6, all the fit indices of the main model of the research show that the model fits well, and we can continue to investigate the results and analyze the path coefficients. Thus, the results of the research hypothesis test shown in Table 7.

Table 7. Results of research hypotheses.

Hypothesis	Structural path	Path coefficient (β)	meaningful)T-Value(Test result
H1	social intelligence → career plateau	0.505 -	4.886 -	Accept
H2	social intelligence → Psychological capital	0.911	22.034	Accept
H3	Psychological capital → career plateau	0.210 -	3.329 -	Accept

In the following, we report the direct, indirect, and total effects in Table 8.

Table 8. Results of direct and indirect model effects.

Structural path	direct impact	Indirect effect	Total effect
social intelligence → career plateau	0.505 -	0.191 - (0.911 * 0.210 -)	696/0-
social intelligence → Psychological capital	0.911	---	0.911
Psychological capital → career plateau	0.210 -	---	0.210 -

As shown in Table 8, social intelligence has an adverse effect on the career plateau of -0.505, and an indirect effect in this respect obtained from the product of the other two path coefficients is -0.191; And, the total effect is -0.669. Therefore, considering psychological capital as a mediating variable and paying attention to it will increase the reverse effect of social intelligence on the career plateau.

Investigation of the main hypothesis (mediator role significance test):

To investigate the role of the mediator variable, three tests used: Sobel, et al., the results of which presented in Table 9.

Table 9. Significant test results for mediating effects.

Hypothesis	Structural path	Significance level) P-Value(Result
		Sobel test	Aroian test	Goodman test	
main	social intelligence → Psychological capital → career plateau	0.011	0.023	0.001	Accept

The significance level of all three tests for the mediator role of psychological capital was less than 0.05; this means that psychological capital plays a mediating role in the relationship between social intelligence and career plateau, and so the main hypothesis of the research can also be confirmed.

Conclusions

Increasing the social intelligence of the employees of Golestan Gas Company can reduce career plateau and increase their psychological capital. Social intelligence helps individuals be able to communicate effectively and expand their social relationships and have a more

productive interaction with others in the workplace, and finally, they can reduce the harmful effects of the career plateau. As the results showed, social intelligence had a good effect on other variables; And it was a good predictor for other variables. Therefore, training and enhancing social intelligence, as one of the essential aspects of intelligence, is one of the critical things that organizations can have long-term planning. Planning and organization require spending, but it is a kind of investment for the future of the organization. As organizations create a more dynamic environment and encourage people to work in groups and enhance social interactions within the organization, it can enhance the social intelligence of employees and ultimately lead to organizational growth.

On the other hand, with the increase in psychological capital caused by increased social intelligence, Employees have a greater sense of self-efficacy and confidence, and hope, and optimism for the future of employees will increase. And this increases employees' motivation to work in the workplace. However, psychological capital, despite its effectiveness in reducing the career plateau, did not adequately predict its changes. Given the essential dimensions of psychological capital, the researcher's impression was that this variable had good predictability for the career plateau. However, the results showed that more variables were needed to predict factors affecting career plateau. It is due to the complexity and importance of career plateau. Here the increasing importance of planning and the earnest efforts of organizations to prevent this phenomenon are highlighted. This result highlights the increasing importance of planning and serious measures taken by organizations to prevent this phenomenon. Therefore, in order to investigate the factors affecting career plateau, it is necessary to evaluate the impact of several factors simultaneously in order to identify the best practical factors.

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