CAUSES, CONSEQUENCES, AND MODERATING FACTORS OF CAREER PLATEAUING

by

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Career plateauing occurs when an individual has limited potential for upward movement in his or her career (Ference, Stoner, & Warren, 1977). Career plateauing is receiving increasing attention in the literature and is viewed by some researchers as the most pressing problem facing business in this decade (Bardwick, 1983, 1986; Greller & Nee, 1989). The success of many companies depends largely on the performance of plateaued employees (Bardwick, 1986; Carnazza, Korman, Ference, & Stoner, 1981). In addition, almost all employees face plateauing at some point in their careers due to the nature of the organizational pyramid which has a declining number of positions at the top of the company (Slocum, Cron, & Yows, 1987). A recent survey of over 600 human resource managers indicates they perceive slightly over one-third of the workforce to be career plateaued which clearly indicates the magnitude of this problem (Rosen, 1988).

Increasing Importance of Career Plateauing

Although career plateauing is already an important phenomenon, a number of economic, organizational and demographic factors are likely to significantly increase the incidence of plateauing in the future (Bardwick, 1986; Driver, 1985; Greller & Nee, 1989). Economically, the U.S. has a slowing growth rate and faces increasing international competition in many industries (Bardwick, 1986). The demands of shorter product life cycles, more complex technologies, and greater service requirements have created a need for more horizontally oriented organizational structures (Mohrman, Mohrman, & Lawler, 1991) with fewer positions available for upward movement for employees in the organizational pyramid. In addition, mergers and acquisitions and extensive organizational downsizing have also decreased the number of available promotion opportunities.

Demographically, the huge baby boom cohort, now aged approximately from 30 to 45, is lodged in the middle and upper levels of organizations. This huge population cohort creates greater competition for the declining number of open positions in the organizational hierarchy (Bardwick, 1986; Driver, 1985; Greller & Nee, 1989; Hall & Richter, 1990). In

addition, the growth of women and minorities (Ahlburg & Kimmel, 1986; Morrison & Von Glinow, 1990) has increased competition for promotions. Finally, while many individuals still value promotions highly they often face conflicting pressures with dual-career and family issues which may reduce their ability to accept promotions which involve relocation or much higher levels of responsibility (Sekaran & Hall, 1989). In addition to the United States, many of these factors are present in varying degrees in many other advanced industrial countries. For these reasons career plateauing is also expected to be a significant phenomena in Canada (Driver, 1985), Western Europe (Gerpott & Domsch, 1987), Japan (Wakababyashi & Graen, 1989), and South Korea (Milliman, Min-Kim, & Von Glinow,1991).

Although career plateauing does not affect all employees negatively, a number of negative relationships have been found with employee attitudes and behaviors, including performance, motivation, organizational commitment, various facets of job satisfaction, career attitudes, and in some nonwork attitudes (Bardwick, 1986; Chao, 1990; Near, 1983). In addition, career plateauing has been found to directly and indirectly negatively impact departmental

and organizational effectiveness (Rosen, 1988). Thus, career plateauing has important implications for both individuals and organizations.

Job-Content Plateauing

Thus far, career plateauing has been conceptualized narrowly only in terms of upward hierarchical movement. However, the task design research (Hackman & Oldham, 1980) and career theorists (Derr, 1986; Driver, 1985; Hall & Richter, 1990; Schein, 1978, 1987) assert that many employees place a strong importance on job content as an important factor in their careers. Bardwick (1986) coined the term "content plateauing" to describe employees who have little challenge, interest, or motivation in their work. Content plateauing has been hypothesized to have a strongly negative impact on individual attitudes and behaviors (Bardwick, 1986).

Building on the work of Bardwick (1986) I propose that a second type of plateauing be termed "job-content plateauing" which can be defined as when an individual experiences a low level or a significant decrease in challenge, meaningfulness, interest, or learning in their job. Job-content plateauing complements the focus of career plateauing on

extrinsic aspects of one's career (e.g., pay, status, and recognition, etc.). While the main focus of this dissertation was on career plateauing, this study represents the first attempt to empirically research job-content plateauing and analyze the joint effects of both types of plateauing on employees.

Limitations in Career Plateauing Research

Although there have been a number of studies on career plateauing, this research has a number of limitations. First, few conceptual articles have been devoted to career plateauing and thus there has been little model building or theoretical development in this area. Second, career plateauing has primarily been operationalized by job tenure which may misclassify many employees (Chao, 1990). Most of the research has simply divided employees into career plateaued and non-plateaued and conducted t-tests on differences in employee attitudes. Third, mediating or moderating factors at both the individual and organizational levels have not been adequately considered in the research (Gerpott & Domsch, 1987). For example, with the exception of Slocum et al.'s (1985) study of business strategy, few organizational contextual factors have been studied. In addition,

few individual level factors such as career attitudes, personality, demographic variables, professional status, etc., have been considered as to how some employees may react differently to plateauing than others. In essence, the career plateaued have been simplistically treated as one large homogenous group of employees (Feldman & Weitz, 1988).

To address these limitations, this dissertation attempted to improve the conceptualization of career plateauing by proposing a comprehensive model of the plateauing process. A goal of this dissertation was to improve the operationalization of plateauing by developing psychometrically sound perceptual measures of career plateauing and job-content plateauing. An objective of this dissertation was to empirically test with more sophisticated research methods (e.g., hierarchical regression) the causes, consequences, and moderators of career plateauing with both a perceptual measure and the traditional job tenure measure. Presented below is a brief overview of how this dissertation was organized to accomplish these purposes.

Overview of Chapter 2

Chapter 2 contains a literature review of career plateauing. As mentioned previously, one major limitation is that career plateauing has been mainly been operationalized by job tenure on a dichotomous basis. Most studies have simply divided employees into two groups based with the career plateaued defined as those who have been at their current job for 5 years or longer. However, job tenure rates vary widely by occupation, organization, industry, etc. and in conjunction with a dichotomous classification scheme does not present a sophisticated means of operationalizing career plateauing.

Two other principal methods for operationalizing career plateauing are suggested which should be utilized in conjunction with job tenure. First, an individual perceptual measure is important for determining the employee's self-assessment of his or her plateauing status (Chao, 1990). Second, organizational methods of defining career plateauing are discussed, including both a perceptual measure by the employee's supervisor as well as archival data from company records on the employee level of responsibility (Feldman & Weitz, 1988) and job history patterns.

Another major limitation is the lack of organizational contextual variables or moderating factors considered in the empirical research. In addition, with the exceptions of Feldman and Weitz (1988) and Elsass and Ralston (1989), there have been few conceptual articles on career plateauing and little model building or integration of the literature on promotions in general with career plateauing. As such, a review of the literature from both career plateauing and promotion is organized into a three-part comprehensive model of the career plateauing process.

The first part of this model draws on research from both the sociological and psychological discipline bases to illustrate how organizational and individual level factors jointly affect and determine the promotion potential or career plateauing status of employees. Organizational level factors such as market power, business strategy, organizational life cycle, and human resource management practices affect the number of opportunities for hierarchical movement available to employees. Individual level variables including performance, motivation, career attitudes, and demographic characteristics affect the employee's promotability or ability to obtain promotions.

The second part of the model indicates the consequences of career plateauing. Career plateauing is hypothesized to affect the fundamental individual organizational behavior criterion variables such as performance, organization commitment, and job satisfaction. In addition, through its impact on these employee attitudes, career plateauing can be expected to negatively impact organizational effectiveness which, in turn, is likely to decrease the future number of organizational opportunities available for upward movement.

The third part of the model discusses both individual and organizational level moderators of the relationship between career plateauing and employee attitudes. For example, the degree one's supervisor actively plans and discusses an employee's career is likely to affect how an employee responds to their career-plateauing status. Individual level moderators proposed in this dissertation include promotion aspiration, willingness to relocate for a new job in another organization, and growth need strength (GNS). For example, it would be expected that employees who have high promotion aspiration or growth need strength would be more likely to be adversely affected by being career plateaued than those who place a relatively low

emphasis on the importance of promotions or need for growth and development in one's job. A number of hypotheses are proposed concerning the three parts of this model and are summarized in Chapter 2.

Overview of Chapter 3

The research methodology is discussed in Chapter 3. The principal means for empirically investigating career plateauing in this dissertation are through the survey method and face-to-face interviews. Interviews with top managers at each site were designed to obtain specific information about the organizations as well as feedback regarding the survey results. Data on career plateauing, employee attitudes and behaviors, and moderators were collected through the survey.

The target population consisted primarily of managerial- and professional-level employees, although some clerical personnel are included. Particular interest was placed on obtaining a significant portion of women and minorities. For this reason, a large health care organizational (sample size 210) and a small materials company (97 participants) were selected for inclusion in the study. The third employee group included in the sample consists of a diverse group of 145 professional and managerial

employees who were students or graduates from the University of Southern California executive masters of business administration (EMBA) program. Thus, the total sample included approximately 450 employees.

A summary of the psychometric properties of the items used for the various independent, criterion, and moderating variables is also presented in Chapter 3. Most of the dependent and moderator variables were taken from previous research studies. The author developed perceptual measures for the independent variables, career plateauing (both in one's own organization and in all other organizations) and job-content plateauing. These variables were tested for reliability and validity through factor analysis, inter-item correlations, Cronbach's alphas, test-retest correlations, and correlations with related measures and criterion variables. In addition, perceptual measures were developed for an important moderator, promotion aspiration, and a number of the organizational cause variables (factors causing or leading to plateauing). Descriptive statistics for these variables are shown for each of the three employee groups and the entire sample. Finally, a summary of the statistical procedures utilized is presented.

Overview of Chapter 4

Chapter 4 describes the various statistical analyses conducted and presents the results of the various hypotheses tested. The two principal types of analyses used were correlations and hierarchical regression. First, zero-order correlations between the independent and dependent variables were analyzed. Second, hierarchical regressions were conducted with employee attitudes as the dependent variables and with a number of control variables entered into the regression equation before the independent variables of career plateauing and job-content plateauing.

The hypotheses were grouped into three major research questions concerning the causes, consequences, and moderators of career plateauing. First, five hypotheses were tested regarding organizational level factors leading to career plateauing. These factors include employee perceptions of the organization's growth rate of new job positions, the frequency of promotion rates, the extent that seniority is emphasized in promotion decisions, the degree that the organizations hire candidates from outside the company for open positions, and the power or influence of the employee's department in the organization.

Four hypotheses were tested concerning individual level factors which may lead to career plateauing. These hypotheses postulate that age is positively related to career plateauing while growth need strength and level of educational attainment are negatively related to career plateauing. In addition, in order to test the glass ceiling effect, it was hypothesized that females and minorities will be more likely to be career plateaued than white males. In addition, stepwise multiple regression was utilized to determine which of the individual- and organizational-level factors are most important in predicting career plateauing.

Seven hypotheses relating to eleven criterion variables were tested concerning the consequences of career plateauing and job-content plateauing. Most of the empirical research on career plateauing has not utilized sophisticated methodologies (Feldman & Weitz, 1988) and have often focused on career attitudes or only a subset of the major organizational behavior criterion variables. In addition, job-content plateauing has not been tested. In this dissertation hierarchical regression with a number of control variables was utilized to empirically test for the relationships of both career and job-content

plateauing to the major organizational behavior criterion variables. These criterion variables include organization commitment, intention to quit, job involvement, performance (last appraisal rating score recalled by the respondent), number of hours worked, and five major facets of job satisfaction: pay, promotion, work, supervisor, and company. In addition, a career attitude--promotion aspiration--was tested as a dependent variable.

Both zero-order correlations and hierarchical regression analyses were used to test the relationships of career and job-content plateauing to these employee attitudes. In the hierarchical regression with employee attitudes as the dependent variable, the following variables were entered into the equation before career plateauing: age, gender, ethnicity, performance, and job tenure. In addition, an indicator variable that specifies which of the three employee groups the respondent belongs to (EMBA, health care organization, and materials company) was entered to control for potential differences between the three groups. These six variables were entered first in order to determine what was the additional variance explained in the criterion variables by career plateauing beyond these individual level work

background and demographic variables. Another purpose of this hierarchical regression was to test which variable is a better predictor of employee attitudes: the traditional measure of career plateauing, job tenure, or the author's perceptual measure of career plateauing.

The final six hypotheses concern what factors moderate the relationship between career plateauing and employee attitudes. As mentioned previously, with the exception of Chao (1990) who tested only one variable, no moderator variables have been empirically investigated in the career plateauing research. Moderating effects were tested by placing an interaction term or cross product (e.g., career plateauing times the moderator) in the last step of the hierarchical regression equation. For example, it was hypothesized that promotion aspiration is a moderator of the relationship between career plateauing and employee attitudes. That is, it was expected that career-plateaued employees with a high promotion aspiration will have less positive work attitudes than career plateaued employees who place a low importance on promotions. To test for this effect, promotion aspiration was added as a main effect in the regression equation followed by the

cross product of career plateauing times promotion aspiration. A significant beta coefficient or change in R square for the cross-product indicates a moderating effect (James & Brett, 1984; Stone, 1988).

Overview of Chapter 5

Chapter 5 includes a discussion of the results and conclusions of the study. First, the findings and limitations of the past career plateauing research are summarized. Then the potential contributions of this dissertation involving the conceptual development of the model of the career plateauing process, operationalization of perceptual measures, and empirical testing of the causes, consequences, and moderators of plateauing are then summarized and discussed in relation to the limitations of the past research. Limitations of this study and recommendations for future research are advanced. Finally, a discussion is presented on how research should proceed on developing effective managerial interventions and solutions for career plateaued employees from both the individual and organizational level of analyses.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW, MODEL OF CAREER PLATEAUING, AND RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Overview

Career plateauing is receiving increasing attention in the literature and is viewed by some researchers as one of the most pressing problems facing business in this decade (Bardwick, 1983, 1986; Greller & Nee, 1989). Given these developments, a number of studies on career plateauing have appeared in the last decade. The purpose of this chapter is to critically review these studies as a guide for future research as well as to resolve several major limitations of the work on career plateauing. First, the meaning and measurement of career plateauing, which has been treated narrowly, is examined.

Another serious limitation is that plateauing has been defined only in terms of hierarchical advancement and typically has not included the nature of one's job or job content. In addition, career plateauing has not yet been placed in the context of a model that proposes a network of individual and organizational variables that may be associated with it. To address

these issues I propose a comprehensive model to guide future research which involves the antecedents, consequences, and moderators of career plateauing and a typology of career and job content plateauing to predict the joint impact of plateauing on performance and employee attitudes.

Definition and Operationalization of Career Plateauing: Prior Research and Suggested Refinements

Definition of Career Plateauing

Career plateauing is defined as "the point in a career where the likelihood of additional hierarchical promotions is very low" (Ference, Stoner, & Warren, 1977, p. 602), where a promotion is defined as "an upward movement within an organization's hierarchy that is normally defined and recognized as such" (Sanborn & Berger, 1990, p. 5). Promotions involve increases in one or more of the following: pay, benefits, formal authority and responsibility, status, security, work group affiliation, job content, physical environment, or future opportunities (Sanborn & Berger, 1990).

Traditionally, career plateauing has referred to older employees who have virtually no upward movement potential. However, career plateauing also includes employees at mid-career (Hall & Rabinowitz, 1988) and younger employees at a relatively early career stage (Bardwick, 1986). For these employees career plateauing indicates that they will remain at one level in the corporate hierarchy for a long period of time (Hall & Rabinowitz, 1988), and does not necessarily imply that they will have no future upward mobility. Thus, career plateauing refers to employees who either have virtually no upward movement as well as those who have reduced promotion potential, but eventually will move upward in the organizational hierarchy.

Operationalization of Career Plateauing

Figure 1 lists the major empirical career plateauing studies, including the method of operationalization, number and type of employees in the sample, and the percent of people classified as plateaued. An important conclusion to be drawn from Figure 1 is that the varying proportion of career plateauing employees reflects differences in organizations, employees, industries, etc., but also

Figure 1

Summary of Major Career Plateauing Empirical Studies

Researcher	Industry/employees	Definition	Percent Plateaued
1. Carnazza et al. 1981	376 managers in one industrial firm	Self and organization perceptual measure	58% (each
2. Chao	1,700 MBA graduates	Perceptual measure	Did not classify
3. Gerpott et al. (1986)	258 professionals 5 U.S. & British R&D firms	Tenure is 1 S.D. above the mean tenure ($\geq$ 5 years	15%
4. Gerpott et al. (1987)	618 professionals 11 West Germany R&D firms	Tenure is 1 S.D. above the mean tenure	23%
5. Gilbert & Evans (1984)	52 managers in British financial organization	Based on age and rank in firm ($\geq$ 10 years)	58%
6. Gould & Penley (1984)	Public agency (414 professional clerical & managers	Tenure in current job is $\geq$ 7 years	28%
7. Hall (1985)	119 engineers in engineering firm	Tenure in job is 5 years or more	48%
8. Near (1985)	1971 study of managers from all over the U.S.	Not likely to be promoted in 20 years or more	7%
9. Slocum, Cron et al. (1985)	496 salespeople in two large companies	No promotion or lateral moves for 5 years	66%* 25%**
10. Slocum, Cron et al. (1987)	187 salespeople in chemical company	No promotion or lateral moves for 5 years	25%
11. Stout et al. (1988)	122 salespeople in building products	No promotion for for 5 years or more	71%*** 84%****
12. Veiga (1981)	1,733 managers in 3 manufacturing firms	No promotion or lateral moves for 5 years	20%

*For firm with defender strategy.
**For firm with analyzer strategy.
***At time period 1
****At time period 2 (3 years later)

variations in operationalizing the construct. The differing measures suggest a number of issues involved in the operationalization of the career plateauing construct.

Job-tenure method. The majority of researchers have operationalized plateauing on the basis of job tenure. The most common measure is classifying plateaued individuals as those who have been in their current job position for five years or more (Chao, 1990). There is some evidence in the career plateauing literature supporting the validity of the five-year job-tenure approach. Several studies indicate that supervisors do perceive a significant difference in the promotion potential of employees based on the five year rule (Slocum, Cron, Hansen, & Rawlings, 1985; Stout, Slocum, & Cron, 1988). In addition, the job tenure method is generally consistent with recent findings on career movement (Sheridan, Slocum, Buda, & Thompson, 1990; Veiga, 1983) and Rosenbaum's (1979, 1984) tournament mobility theory which states that individuals who have a longer job tenure at lower organizational levels are subsequently less likely to move up in the hierarchy.

Despite this support, it has been recognized that the five year job-tenure measure essentially

represents an arbitrary point of classifying plateaued employees. First, job tenure varies significantly by occupation, industry, organization, and level in the organizational hierarchy within a given company. This becomes an even larger concern when applied in international settings, where job tenures may vary significantly from those in the United States. As such, the five year and related rules may misclassify the plateauing status of many employees (Chao, 1990). Because of this problem Gerpott and Domsch (1987) defined career plateaued individuals as those whose job tenure is one standard deviation above the mean job tenure for the company in order to take into account the specific nature of the firm. However, a disadvantage of this method is that it automatically results in one-third of all employees being classified as career plateaued.

A second problem is that, with the exception of Chao (1990), the classification of career plateaued employees in all of these studies has occurred on a dichotomous basis (either plateaued or not plateaued). Accordingly, these studies do not take into account the fact that the potential for future upward movement is a probability (e.g., between 0 and 1) for most individuals (Chao, 1990). In other words, most

employees would assess their promotion potential as a probability between 0% and 100%, while the dichotomous classification either labels an employee as plateaued (0% chance of being promoted) or non-plateaued (100% chance of being promoted). Essentially individuals are likely to assess career plateauing far more subtly than researchers have.

Employee perceptions as an alternative. Three studies have operationalized career plateauing via employees' perceptions (Carnazza, Korman, Ference, & Stoner, 1981; Chao, 1990; Near, 1985). Chao (1989) observes that an individual's self assessment of their promotion potential is essential for determining career plateauing's impact on employee attitudes and behaviors:

> The subjective evaluation of future career development is the appropriate focal point because it emphasizes how the individual perceives, assesses, and reacts to the present work situation. Thus, if an individual believes that the likelihood of future promotions is very low; it will be that perception, and not the eventual reality of the future that will affect current attitudes, behaviors, and plans for the future. (Chao, 1989, p. 4)

In illustrating the validity of the individual's assessment, Chao's (1990) perceptual measure of career plateauing accounted for a much larger portion of the

variance in four criterion variables than the traditional job-tenure measure. These individual assessments do have limitations, however. First, Carnazza et al.'s (1981) study also included the supervisor's perception of the promotion potential of the subordinate, but found only a 50% agreement between the two assessments of the subordinate's promotion chances. Second, only one or two item scales were utilized to measure perceptions of career plateauing in these three studies. Third, with the exception of Near (1985) it is not clear that these scales measure longer-term perceptions of future promotion opportunities as opposed to past success in promotions or near-term promotion potential. Despite these limitations, perceptual measures represent an important method of measuring career plateauing. Chao (1990) recommends that future research utilize job tenure as a limited, but objective, measure of plateauing in conjunction with a new perceptual measure of career plateauing.

Organizational assessment as an alternative.

While it is important to determine plateauing status from the employee's point of view, researchers may also be interested in organizational assessments of career plateauing for three reasons. First,

organizational perceptions may be more objective than individual self-assessments. Second, assessing the mutuality of the promotion potential between the individual and the organization can provide additional insight into employee attitudes and behaviors (Carnazza et al. 1981). Third, organizational assessments of promotion potential may also be useful for succession planning, studying the impact of selection and training on promotion potential, etc. Organizational assessments of future promotion potential can be gathered through perceptual measures from the employee's supervisor, performance appraisals, management succession planning, promotion committees, etc.

There are two potential limitations of these organizational assessments. First, the organizational assessments are not likely to provide as much insight into the employee's attitudes since it is the individual's self-perception of their promotion potential which primarily influences behavior. This is particularly true if the individual is unaware of the organization's assessment or it differs significantly from the organization. Second, organizational assessments may be difficult to obtain in research, particularly due to the potential legal

ramifications and sensitivities associated with promotion decisions.

Promotions can also be measured by a variety of objective sources. Archival data of employee job histories can be utilized to analyze employee movement in organizations in terms of both job tenure at different organizational levels and degree of movement up the organizational hierarchy (Sheridan, Slocum, Buda, & Thompson, 1990). In addition, the level of job responsibility may provide insights into upward movement since promotions typically involve increases in responsibility. Responsibility can be measured objectively by such data as the size of budget controlled, number of employees supervised, and level of assets managed (Feldman & Weitz, 1988).

Job Tenure Versus Job Content

As Figure 1 and the preceding discussion indicate, the previous operationalizations of career plateauing have been guided by a definition of the construct in terms of upward movement in the organizational hierarchy. The construct has mainly been measured using job tenure while totally ignoring job content (e.g., the characteristics of the job and their capacity to shape employees' internal motivation

and job satisfaction). This narrow focus ignores several accepted findings in the literature. One, the concept of a career indicates a number of work-related experiences, not just upward hierarchical movement (Hall & Richter, 1990). Two, task design research (Oldham & Hackman, 1980) and career literature (Derr, 1986; Driver, 1985, 1988; Hall & Richter, 1990; Schein, 1978, 1987) indicate that many individuals define their career success in ways other than upward movement such as job content. Three, job-content rewards appear to often have more durable effects on employee motivation than the impact associated with promotion and financial rewards (Kerr, 1988).

Building on the work of Bardwick (1986) I propose a second type of plateauing, namely job content plateauing. Job content plateauing occurs when an individual experiences a low level or a significant decrease in challenge, meaningfulness, interest, or learning in his or her job. This experience involves an extended period of time (e.g., more than one year) and/or involves an assessment of this condition continuing in the future. Essentially, job content plateauing focuses on employees who are plateaued in terms of the intrinsic aspect of their jobs while career plateauing focuses on the extrinsic aspects of

one's career (e.g., pay, status, recognition, etc.). Career plateauing and job content plateauing can thus be considered as complementing each other. While the main focus of this dissertation is on career plateauing, I will develop further the importance of job content plateauing and its relation to career plateauing, and illustrate how research on both types of plateauing can provide greater insights into employee job attitudes and performance.

Summary Refinements in Career Plateauing

To summarize, career plateauing has primarily been operationalized as an arbitrarily fixed (e.g., job tenure over five years) and dichotomous variable (plateaued or not plateaued) with an emphasis solely on hierarchical movement. I suggest that when possible, career plateauing be operationalized with multiple measures including both perceptual and objective data from at least the individual employee. A perceptual measure of career plateauing should also address whether plateauing involves only the employee's current company or all other organizations in which the employee may apply for a job (Chao, 1990). The traditional job-tenure measure should be utilized as an additional source of objective data on

career plateauing status and to link new studies with past research. However, for most organizations, it is not recommended as the primary method of operationalizing the plateauing construct (Chao, 1990).

Career-plateauing research should target employees from a variety of occupations (e.g., technical staff, professionals, and supervisors), not just managers and executives and include all age groups, not just older employees. In addition, career plateauing should be viewed as a dynamic concept in which an individual may change occupations, jobs, or organizations and move from being non-plateaued to plateaued and vice versa a number of times over one's career. For example, an employee may be plateaued, but return to school for more education and subsequently experience an increase in upward mobility. Finally, future research should also consider both career and job-content plateauing in order to examine the impact of plateauing on the two fundamental aspects of work--extrinsic and intrinsic. A summary of the various changes suggested in the definition and operationalization of career plateauing are shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2

Proposed New Definitions and Operationalization of Career Plateauing

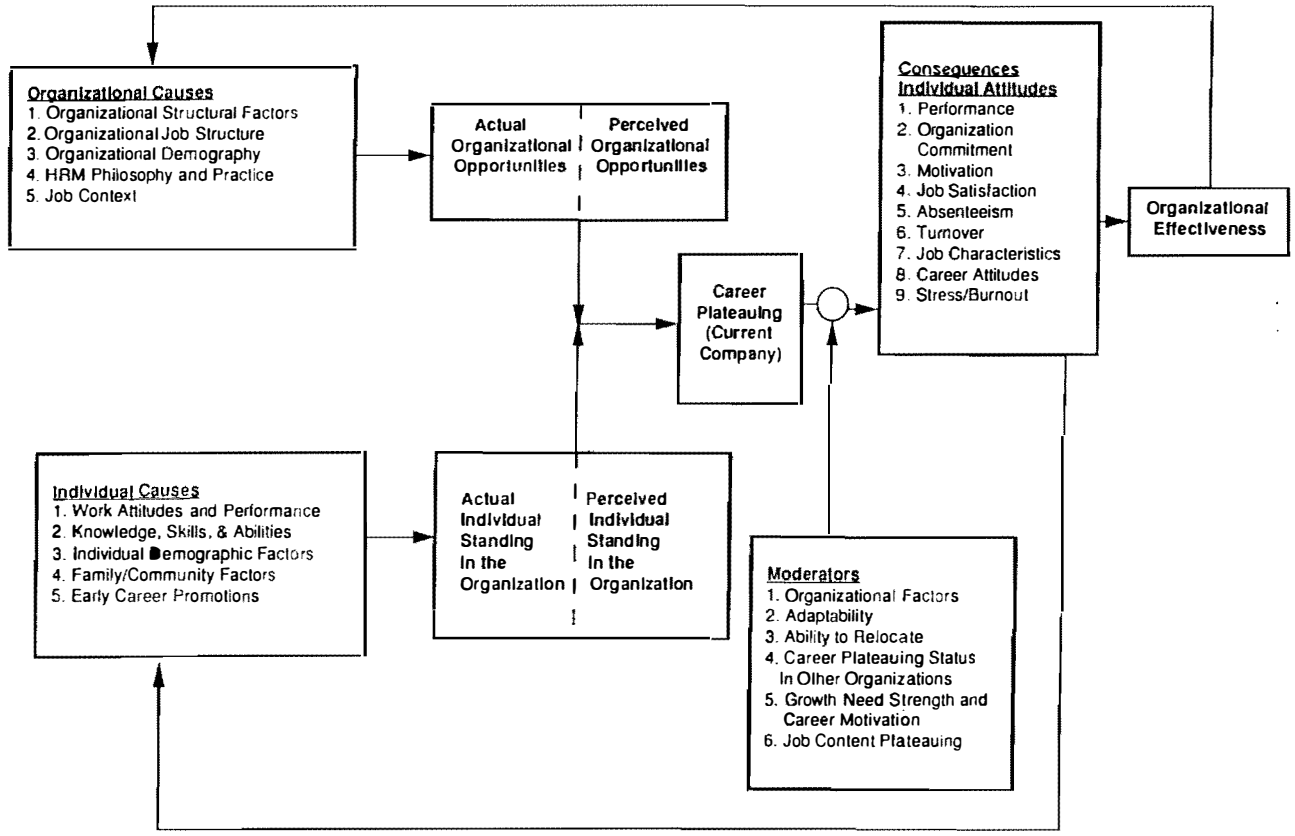
Dimension	Previous	Recommended Change
Definition of career plateauing	Very low likelihood of any additional upward movement	Include also employees who may remain at one level of the hierarchy for a long period of time, but will have some future upward mobility
Operationalization of career plateauing for empirical studies	Main one used: Job tenure rule of being in current position for 5 years or more	1. Individual: Develop multiple item perceptual measures of employee self-assurance 2. Job tenure: Continue to use as a secondary objective data source 3. Organizational: A. Develop perceptual measure by supervisor, promotional committee, etc. B. Measure responsibility by the number of employees supervised, size of budget controlled, etc. C. Archival data on history of employee movement in organizational jobs and hierarchical levels
Boundaries of organizational plateauing	Intra-organizational	Inter- and intra-organizational boundaries need to be considered
Age of career plateaued employees	Primarily older employees	Can be employees of all ages
Direction of movement	Non-plateaued to plateaued	Can be in either direction
Job content plateauing	Not considered in empirical research	Low level of challenge, meaningfulness, or learning in one's job for an extended period of time

Model of Career Plateauing

Figure 3 shows the relationship between career plateauing and relevant antecedents, consequences, and moderators. Few individual differences or organizational contextual factors have been considered in the empirical research on career plateauing. Conceptual work has tended to deal with subsets of the plateauing process, such as employee reactions to plateauing (Elsass & Ralston, 1989) or managerial interventions for solutions to plateauing (Feldman & Weitz, 1988; Rosen, 1988). The model presented in this dissertation attempts a comprehensive treatment of individual and organizational variables through an integration of the career plateauing and promotion literature. Although career plateauing essentially represents reduced promotion potential, there has been little cross-referencing between the empirical research in plateauing and the large body of literature on related topics in promotions (e.g., mobility, opportunities, equity, motivation, etc.). This is not a new problem as the career literature has been criticized previously for being fragmented and defined narrowly by discipline (Driver, 1988). The model attempts to reduce this fragmentation by integrating what Hall (1986) identified as the

Figure 3

Model of Causes, Consequencies, and Moderating Factors of Career Plateauing



separate academic bases in the career field: individual focus research with a psychological discipline base and organizational research with a sociological discipline base.

The left hand side of the model in Figure 3 contains a number of organizational and individual factors which cause or form the context for career plateauing. As shown in the middle of the model, career plateauing in one's current organization is seen as occurring due to the interaction of the individual's potential to obtain a promotion and the availability of organizational opportunities for upward movement. The proposed relationship of plateauing to various individual attitudes and behaviors and ultimately on organizational performance is indicated on the right hand side of the model. A feedback loop indicates that poor employee work attitudes and organizational performance is likely to result in a higher incidence of career plateauing in the future, creating a negative cycle for both individuals and their companies. The lower right hand side of the model indicates a variety of factors which can be expected to moderate the impact of career plateauing on employee attitudes and behaviors. Each of the aspects of the model are discussed in the

following sections. Hypotheses were proposed for those relationships in the model which were empirically tested.

List of Hypotheses

1: The organizational growth rate of new positions is negatively related to employee perceptions of career plateauing.

2: Departmental power is inversely related to career plateauing: Employees from departments with high power will be less likely to be career plateaued than employees from departments with low power.

3: Organizations with higher promotion rates will have a lower incidence of career plateaued employees.

4: Organizational human resource management (HRM) practices which emphasize hiring external candidates for open positions will have a higher rate of career plateaued employees than organizations which primarily promote from within.

5: Organizational practices which emphasize seniority as an important criterion for promotion will be positively related to employee perceptions of career plateauing.

6: Growth need strength (GNS) will be negatively related to employee perceptions of career plateauing.

7: The level of educational attainment will be negatively related to career plateauing.

8: Age will be positively related to career plateauing.

9: Women and minorities will have a higher incidence of career plateauing than white males.

10: Career plateauing will be negatively related to the following aspects of job satisfaction:

A. Job Satisfaction

B. Pay satisfaction

C. Promotion satisfaction

D. Satisfaction with one's organization

E. Satisfaction with one's supervisor.

11: Career plateauing will be negatively related to organization commitment.

12: Career plateauing will be negatively related to employee motivation (as measured by job involvement).

13: Career plateauing will be positively related to employee intention to quit one's organization.

14: Career plateauing will be negatively related to the number of employee work hours.

15: Career plateauing will be negatively related to performance as measured by the employee's recall of their last performance appraisal rating.

16: Career plateauing will be negatively related to employee career attitudes such as promotion aspiration.

17A: A perceptual measure of career plateauing will explain more of the variance in employee attitudes and behaviors then the traditional measure of career plateauing, job tenure.

17B: Job tenure will moderate the relationship between career plateauing and employee attitudes and behaviors.

18: The supervisor's discussion and planning for the subordinate's career will moderate the impact of career plateauing on employee attitudes and behaviors.

19: The employee's ability or willingness to leave his or her current job for a job in another organization or city will moderate the impact of career plateauing on employee attitudes and behaviors.

20: Career plateauing status in other organizations will moderate the relationship between career plateauing (in one's current organization) on employee attitudes and behaviors.

21: Growth need strength (GNS) will moderate the impact of career plateauing on employee attitudes and behaviors.

22: Career motivation such as promotion aspiration will moderate the impact of career plateauing on employee attitudes and behaviors.

23: Job-content plateauing will (A) be negatively related to employee work attitudes and behaviors and (B) will moderate the relationship of career plateauing to employee attitudes and behaviors.

Organizational Causes of Career Plateauing

Career progression is affected in a dynamic fashion by a number of individual, organizational, and environmental factors, resulting in a situational contingency theory approach to mobility (Anderson, Milkovich, & Tusi, 1981). In this section is a discussion of organizational factors affecting opportunities available for upward movement and hence career plateauing. Environmental factors will be primarily discussed in this section through their impact on organizational level phenomena. Following each discussion, the pertinent hypothesis(es) that was empirically tested is stated.

Organizational structural factors. Organizational structural models posit that various characteristics of jobs and the organizational hierarchy determine internal employee mobility (Markham, Harlan, & Hackett, 1986; Sheridan, et al. 1990).

First, the organization's ability to acquire qualified workers from other organizations may affect its incentive to provide promotion opportunities for its employees.

Second, organizational market power (e.g., in terms of controlling prices of their products and sales volume) can impact whether it can offer promotions to prevent other companies from seeking valued employees (Markham et al. 1986)

Third, the rate of company and industry growth can affect promotion rates (Markham, et al. 1986; Pfeffer, 1983; Stewman & Konda, 1983). Based on these factors the following hypothesis was empirically tested in this dissertation: Hypothesis 1: The organizational growth rate of new positions is negatively related to employee perceptions of career plateauing.

Fourth, the stability and predictability of the company's environment can affect promotion rates. For

example, an organization in a stable and predictable environment may develop a highly structured career pattern which emphasizes promotions early in an employee's career (Forbes, 1987).

Fifth, the organization's strategic orientation and stage in the organizational life cycle (OLC) can affect mobility patterns. An organization in the growth stage of the OLC or with an aggressive business strategy (e.g., "analyzer" according to Miles and Snow's (1978) typology) was found to have fewer career plateaued employees than a company in the same industry with a more passive (e.g., "defender") strategy (Slocum, Cron, Hansen, & Rawlings, 1985).

Finally the nature of the organizational structure and the employee's location in it can also affect promotions, as there is a decreasing number of job positions as an employee moves up the narrowing pyramid of the organizational hierarchy (Bardwick, 1986; Ference et al. 1977; Slocum, Cron, & Yows, 1987). Similarly, the availability of career ladders (e.g., administrative, technical, and project management) and the number of positions on these ladders (Von Glinow, 1988), along with organizational size, can affect prospects for advancement and career plateauing (Rosen, 1988).

Organizational job structure. The characteristics of mobility districts, which are clusters of jobs with related skills and responsibilities, affect the number of promotions (Doeringer & Priore, 1971). Mobility districts are likely to possess greater promotion opportunities when they have a high number of job levels in the hierarchy, significant potential for movement within and outside of the mobility district, a high concentration of positions at the bottom of the mobility district, and when jobs above the entry level are relatively closed to individuals outside the organization (Markham et al., 1986).

The power of the mobility district or department may also be related to promotion opportunities. Recently, empirical support (Sheridan et al. 1990) has been found for the proposition by Pfeffer (1981) and Thompson (1967) that the higher the level of power of the organizational unit or department, the greater its ability to obtain promotions for its employees. Based on these factors the following hypothesis was empirically tested in this dissertation: Hypothesis 2: Departmental power is inversely related to career plateauing: Employees from departments with high

power will be less likely to be career plateaued than employees from departments with low power.

Organizational demography. Demographic characteristics (e.g., age, sex, size, and turnover) affects the availability of positions and the competition for filling these positions, thereby significantly impacting mobility prospects (Ahlburg & Kimmel, 1986; Markham et al. 1986; Stewman & Konda, 1983; Veiga, 1983). For example, large groups of employees possessing similar knowledge, skills and abilities, age, and background can create greater competition for available job openings and reduce upward mobility.

Human resource management philosophy and practices. The organizational culture and human resource management (HRM) practices towards promotion can impact the incidence of career plateauing. Some companies have a policy of "up or out" and aggressively promote individuals while other firms do not place a high value on promotions or hierarchical advancement, but instead emphasize seniority and job security (Sonnenfeld & Peiperl, 1988). Similarly, the degree of company usage of internal promotions versus hiring external candidates can affect career plateauing (Ference et al. 1977). The fairness and

equity of promotion and pay decisions can impact job content and employee motivation (Oldham & Hackman, 1980), ultimately leading to career plateauing (Feldman & Weitz, 1988). Finally, the extent that organizations develop effective human resource program interventions to provide promotion opportunities or challenging work assignments can affect whether employees remain career plateaued or not (Rosen, 1988). Based on these factors the following hypotheses were empirically tested in this dissertation: Hypothesis 3: Organizations which emphasize hierarchical mobility will have a lower incidence of career plateaued employees then organizations which do not place a high emphasis on promotions. Hypothesis 4: Organizational HRM practices which emphasize hiring external candidates for open positions will have a higher rate of career plateauing than organizations which primarily promote from within. Hypothesis 5: Employees in organizations which emphasize seniority in promotion decisions will perceive the organization as offering fewer promotion opportunities and thus will have a higher incidence of career plateauing.

Task design. Research on task design indicates that the nature of the job has a significant affect on

employee motivation. Jobs with low motivating potential can lead to low intrinsic motivation and poor work attitudes (Hackman & Oldham, 1976; 1980) which in turn can increase the potential for career plateauing (Feldman & Weitz, 1988). Similarly, other elements of job context such as the quality of the supervisor-subordinate relationships (Oldham & Hackman, 1980), the skill level of one's supervisor (Veiga, 1983), and the availability of mentors (Noe, 1988) can impact job and promotion opportunities.

Individual Causes of Career Plateauing

Work attitudes and performance. Traditionally performance, ability, and contribution to the company have been viewed as the key determinants of upward mobility (Howard & Bray, 1988) and thus employees lacking in these factors are likely to have reduced promotion potential. In addition, problems in motivation, job stress, and burnout have been hypothesized as causes of career plateauing (Feldman & Weitz, 1988).

A number of these factors have been hypothesized as both a cause and a consequence of career plateauing (Bardwick, 1986). Longitudinal research is needed to sort out these causal relationships, but in any case a

negative cycle between plateauing and work attitudes can be created as shown in Figure 3 when career plateauing leads to poor attitudes which in turn continues to decrease promotion potential and further negatively impact attitudes. The impact of career plateauing on employee performance and a variety of work attitudes will be discussed in greater detail in the section on consequences of career plateauing.

Career and work motivation can also be related to career plateauing. Employees with career values which do not emphasize the importance of growth need strength are more likely to exert less effort in their jobs and ultimately become career plateaued (Feldman & Weitz, 1988). However, career plateauing for individuals is not necessarily associated with negative consequences for employee attitudes as will be discussed in a later section. Based on these factors the following hypothesis was empirically tested in this dissertation: Hypothesis 6: Growth need strength will be negatively related to employee perceptions of career plateauing.

Knowledge, skills, and abilities. Conflicting results have been found on the relationship of level of educational attainment to career plateauing: one study found that career plateaued employees had less

education while another investigation found no difference between plateaued and nonplateaued individuals (Gerpott et al. 1986; Near, 1985). The promotion literature indicates that education (Childs & Klimoski, 1986; Rosenbaum, 1984), prestige of the university, and knowledge, skills, and abilities play an important role in determining career success and upward hierarchical movement (Markham et al. 1986; Sheridan et al. 1990; Syper & Zorn, 1986). A mismatch of employee knowledge, skills, and abilities with job requirements has also been hypothesized to lead to lower motivation and performance thereby causing career plateauing (Feldman & Weitz, 1988). Upward mobility is also related to employee bargaining power based on company experience, expertise in management or technology, and the marketability of such skills to competitor firms (Forbes, 1987; Thompson, 1967). Based on these factors the following hypothesis was empirically tested in this dissertation: Hypothesis 7: The level of educational attainment will be negatively related to career plateauing.

Individual demographic factors. Both older age (Chao, 1990; Rosen, 1988) and late career stage (Slocum & Cron, 1985; Veiga, 1983) have been linked to career plateauing. Older employees are more likely to

be plateaued for a number of reasons: (a) they are more likely to be at higher levels in the organizational hierarchy and are more likely to have a reduced number of open positions available for promotion (Bardwick, 1986) (b) they have obsolescent work and technical skills (Rosen, 1988) and/or (c) organizations may desire to promote and develop younger employees who will have longer useful lives in the company (Ference et al. 1977). Strong linkages appear to exist between age norms (actual and perceived) and upward mobility in many organizations: individuals often need to advance to a certain level by a certain age or face age stereotyping and reduced upward mobility (Evans & Gilbert, 1984; Lawrence, 1988).

Although the number of women and minorities in lower to middle management has increased significantly in recent years, there still are relatively few of these people in higher levels of organizations (e.g., the so-called "glass ceiling" affect) (Morrison & Von Glinow, 1990). Similarly, women tend to perceive a lower number of promotion opportunities than men (Markham et al. 1986) and receive fewer opportunities to work with mentors than men which can curtail their upward movement (Noe, 1988). Based on these factors

the following hypotheses were empirically tested in this dissertation: Hypothesis 8: Age will be positively related to career plateauing. Hypothesis 9: Women and minorities will have a higher incidence of career plateauing than white males.

Family/community factors. An employee's relationship to his or her community (Schein, 1987), children (Veiga, 1983), and spouse (Sekaran & Hall, 1989) can impact the ability or desire to relocate or to accept the increased responsibility associated with upward movement. These factors are discussed in greater detail in a later section as moderators of the career plateauing relationship to employee attitudes.

Early career promotions. The tournament mobility theory (Rosenbaum, 1979, 1984) posits that employees compete with each other for promotions in an implicit tournament process. Individuals who receive promotions early in one's tenure in the organization are signaled as fast-track employees and receive more challenging and important work which leads to greater recognition, success, and ultimately faster hierarchical movement. Thus, employees who do not receive promotions early in their organizational tenure or who are not signaled as special employees are more likely to have reduced upward movement

(Rosenbaum, 1979, 1984; Sheridan et al. 1990; Veiga, 1983). Similarly, exposure and visibility to top management can also impact upward mobility (Veiga, 1983)--two factors which are often associated with being on the fast track.

Recently Forbes (1987) contested the predictions of the tournament mobility theory by finding that upward movement was related to a combination of factors such as the employee's functional background, effects of past (but not necessarily first or early) promotions, and the number of different positions held in the organization. Forbes speculated that these different findings may be due to the fact that his study was conducted in an organization with different contextual and environmental characteristics than that of Rosenbaum. Similarly, it has been found that technical oriented employees have a lower rate of initial promotions but ultimately reach the same level in the organizational hierarchy as general management employees (e.g., who plateaued earlier) (Veiga, 1985).

Research agenda. While these various individual and organizational factors are not meant to be exhaustive, they are presented here to indicate the wide variety of variables which can directly and indirectly affect employee mobility and hence career

plateauing. Hierarchical mobility is affected by a large number of interacting variables whose salience varies depending on the specific employee, organizational, and environmental conditions. For example, what has the greatest impact on career plateauing--the number of organizational opportunities or the individual's standing in the organization? Can high performing employees maintain high upward mobility in an organization with limited promotion opportunities? What is the relationship between actual organizational opportunities and employees' perceptions of these opportunities?

Additional research is needed to develop a contingency theory concerning the situations in which these factors are most applicable (Forbes, 1987). Such research should analyze the relative effects of the numerous organizational and individual level factors on the cause of career plateauing and how the interactive effects under different employee, organizational, industry, environmental, and cross-cultural conditions relate to organizational theory. In addition, this research will require that more sophisticated methodologies and data analysis strategies be utilized for both survey field studies (e.g., hierarchical regression and path analysis) and

archival studies (e.g., event history analysis) than has been the norm for studies on plateauing in the past.

Career Plateauing Status

As shown in the middle of Figure 3, both the employee's standing in the organization or individual promotion potential and the actual number of available organizational opportunities jointly determine the individual's upward mobility potential. In addition, to the objective reality, employee perceptions of both of these factors are also important in determining upward mobility status (Markham et al. 1986). The internal career assessment involves the individual's perceptions of his or her own standing in the organization while the external career assessment pertains to the individual's perceptions of the organizational opportunities available (Derr & Laurent, 1989).

The perceptual process can be complex as the social information processing framework (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978) suggests that social norms, beliefs, and attitudes within the company are likely to impact employee attitudes and perceptions towards promotions (Sanborn & Berger, 1990). Thus, career plateauing

status can be viewed on both an objective and perceptual basis as caused by the interaction of (a) employee standing or individual promotion potential in the organization and (b) the nature and number of available organizational hierarchical opportunities. An important direction for future research, then, concerns what is the relationship between objective factors and employee perceptions of these factors.

Consequences of Career Plateauing

Individual attitudes and behaviors. As shown in the right hand side of Figure 3, career plateauing is expected to affect a number of individual work and career attitudes and behaviors. It should also be noted that career plateauing may impact nonwork attitudes (Bardwick, 1986; Near, 1985), but this dissertation focused primarily on work-related variables. A large number of variables have been studied and thus a brief overview of the findings are provided. These results should be viewed with caution because, as indicated earlier, career plateauing has primarily been operationalized in terms of job tenure in a dichotomous manner. The various results are summarized in Figure 4 in the following

Figure 4

Summary Comparison of Career Plateaued Employees to Nonplateaued Employees in Studies Which Did Not Use Organizational/Individual Contextual Factors

Performance Related Measures

Work less hours (3) (4)
Have less publications and patents (4)
Have positions with less productivity potential (4) (10)
Conflicting findings on self-report job performance (1) (4) (8) (11)

Organization Involvement
Lower or organizational involvement (2)

Motivation
No difference on motivation (8)

Satisfaction
Conflicting findings on job satisfaction (4) (8) (12)
Lower on extrinsic job satisfaction (2)
Lower on intrinsic job satisfaction (2)

Absenteeism
Higher absenteeism in 4 weeks prior to survey (8)

Communication
Less communication with colleagues (3)
Conflicting findings on effectiveness of communication with supervisor (3) (4) (8)

Turnover
Conflicting findings on propensity to leave the organization (11) (12)
Conflicting findings on likelihood to relocate for a new job (9) (11)

Job Characteristics
Receive higher feedback from job itself (4)
Less variety in job (4)
Lower job involvement (4)
No difference on autonomy (4)
Lower work status (4)

Career Attitudes
Less marketable (11) (12)
Less use of networking (3) (6)
Less use of career enhancing strategies (6)
Lower on career planning (2)
Lower on career satisfaction (4)
No difference on fear of stagnation (12)
Conflicting findings on career impatience (12)
Conflicting findings on promotion aspirations (1) (8) (9) (11)

Note: Figures in parentheses correlate to the numbered studies shown on Figure 1.

general categories for performance related measures, motivation, organization involvement, turnover, absenteeism, various aspects of job satisfaction, and career attitudes. The citation for each finding is numbered in the parenthesis based on the ordering of the studies in Figure 1.

Two caveats are needed when interpreting the results in Figure 4: (a) The majority of studies operationalized career plateauing with the five year job-tenure method which may misclassify plateaued employees; and (b) The studies reported here did not utilize moderator variables or contextual factors in an extensive manner. Thus, Figure 4 is intended to display the general consequences associated with career plateauing, without regard to more specific contingency variables.

As indicated in Figure 4, a number of negative relationships between career plateauing and employee attitudes have been found in the literature. However, there have also been many nonsignificant and conflicting findings (Chao, 1990; Feldman & Weitz, 1988). For example, using discriminate analysis, Near (1985) found significant differences in career plateaued versus nonplateaued employees on only a small portion of the total number of work and non-work

criterion variables studied. In addition, numerous researchers have indicated that career plateauing is not necessarily associated with poor performance or work attitudes (Bardwick, 1986; Ference et al. 1977; Hall & Rabinowitz, 1988; Slocum et al. 1985; Veiga, 1981). Thus, research on the impact of plateauing should attempt to determine specific contingency factors and moderating variables concerning the relationship between employee work attitudes.

Several studies did utilize moderator or contextual variables (e.g., Gerpott & Domsch, 1987; Hall, 1985; Slocum et al. 1985) and the implications of the two former studies are discussed in greater detail later in the section on moderators of career plateauing. Slocum et al. (1985) analyzed plateaued and nonplateaued sales personnel in two organizations with different business strategic orientations (defender and analyzer in Miles and Snow's strategic typology). Career plateauing, as measured by job tenure, had a negative impact on a number of job attitudes, but again there were also many nonsignificant findings. In fact, the career plateaued had higher satisfaction with their job and supervisor than the nonplateaued in the company with a defender business strategy.

In addition, the Slocum et al. (1985) and Carnazza et al. (1981) studies utilized the career plateauing-performance model proposed by Ference et al. (1977) which includes the following four groups of employees: (a) stars who are higher performers and not career plateaued (b) comers who are not career plateaued, but are low performers (c) solid citizens who are high performers, but career plateaued (d) deadwood who are career plateaued and low performers. In both studies, career plateauing had a negative impact on only a portion of the numerous job attitudes analyzed. A summary of the results of the three studies which utilized the career plateauing-performance model or organizational contextual variables is shown in Figure 5.

It is unclear to what degree the mixed findings (e.g., a number of significant negative effects, some nonsignificant relationships, and in a few cases positive relationships between career plateauing and employees) are due to: (a) career plateauing not inherently being a negative phenomenon, but rather employees reacting in varying manners to plateauing (Bardwick, 1986; Ference et al. 1977; Slocum, et al. 1985, 1987; Veiga, 1981); (b) research limitations such as the job tenure operationalization, dichotomous

Figure 5

Summary of Career Plateauing Studies Which Contain Organizational Contextual and/or Individual Difference Factors

1. Career Plateau-Performance Model
(Carnazza et al. 1981)

No difference of both deadwood/solid citizens* versus stars/comers*:
--fear of stagnation, propensity to leave, career opportunities

Deadwood lower than stars and comers on:
--career impatience, job elasticity, and exposure/visibility

Deadwood/solid citizens lower than stars/comers on:
--marketability, advancement satisfaction

2. Career Plateau-Performance Model and Business Strategy
(Slocum et al. 1985)

A. Defender Organization
Deadwood/solid citizens were different than stars/comers on:
--more satisfied with supervisor and job
--lower promotion aspirations and longer time expected before promotions
--less likely to leave company or relocate

No difference between deadwood/solid citizens and stars/comers on:
--perceived marketability
--satisfaction with pay, promotion, and coworkers
--personal definition of success

Deadwoods are lower than solid citizens/stars/comers on:
--importance of professional success

B. Analyzer Organization

Deadwood/Solid Citizens were different than stars/comers on:
--lower in willingness to relocate, promotion aspiration
--longer perceived timing of next promotion
--higher in job involvement

Figure 5 continued

No difference between deadwood/solid citizens and stars/comers on:
--job satisfaction, personal definition of success
--job challenge and psychological success

3. Career Plateauing and Triple Career Ladders (Hall, 1985)

A. Administrative Career Ladder
Career plateaued are higher than nonplateaued in:
--recognition and job involvement
Career plateaued are lower than nonplateaued in:
--job challenge and psychological success

B. Technical Career Ladder
No difference between career plateaued and nonplateaued on:
--recognition and job challenge
Career plateaued are lower than nonplateaued in:
--job involvement and psychological success

C. Generalist (Project Management) Career Ladder
Career plateaued are higher than nonplateaued in:
--recognition, job involvement, job challenge, psychological success

*Career Plateau-Performance Model (Ference et al. 1977)

Deadwood: Career plateaued and below average performance
Solid Citizens: Career plateaued and above average performance
Stars: Non-plateaued and above average performance
Comers: Non-plateaued and below average performance

classification of subjects (Chao, 1990), and; (c) the lack of sophisticated statistical analysis (Feldman & Weitz, 1988).

Another potential explanation for these mixed findings is that an individual's reactions to career plateauing may vary over time. For example, some employees may initially experience resistance and denial, but ultimately learn to accept their plateaued status (Bardwick, 1986). However, only one of the plateauing studies has longitudinal data (Stout et al. 1988). Over a three year period, Stout et al. (1988) studied three groups of sales employees: those who were plateaued during the entire time period (based on the five year job-tenure rule), those who became plateaued during the three years, and those who were not plateaued. The impact of career plateauing on employees who were plateaued the entire time or became plateaued was mixed: in some cases there was a negative impact on employee attitudes (e.g., perceived marketability to other companies) while in other areas no impact was observed (e.g., no change in performance as measured by sales volume). Clearly, more research is needed to clarify these issues. A summary of the findings by Stout, Slocum, & Cron (1988) is shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6

Time series Study of Career Plateauing

Career Plateaued Employees Who Were Plateaued Throughout the Entire Three Year Period

Greater propensity to leave the organization
Greater willingness to leave the organization
Decreased perceived marketability
Decreased organizational commitment
More optimistic on timing of next promotion
No change in promotion aspiration
No change in performance (sales volume)

Employees Who Became Plateaued During the Three Year Period

No change in propensity to leave
No change in willingness to relocate
No change in organizational commitment
No change in performance (sales volume)

Lower Than Nonplateaued Employees

Lower marketability in nonplateaued employes.
Lower promotional aspiration in nonplateaued employees.
Less optimistic on timing of next promotion than nonplateaued employees.

Source: (Stout et al. 1988)

Another research limitation is that while many of the major organizational behavior employee attitude variables (e.g., performance, motivation, some facets of job satisfaction, organizational involvement, job involvement) have been tested at some point, most of the studies have focused mainly on career attitudes and have not contained a large number of the organizational behavior criterion variables on any one study. Thus, an important purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between career plateauing and the most important organizational behavior employee attitudes and behaviors, not just career attitudes. Although the relationship between career plateauing and employee attitudes is certainly not uniform for all employees, the following general relationships are hypothesized. Hypothesis 10: Career plateauing will be negatively related to the following aspects of job satisfaction:

A. Work itself - Job satisfaction

B. Pay satisfaction

C. Promotion satisfaction

D. Satisfaction with one's organization

E. Satisfaction with one's supervisor.

Hypothesis 11: Career plateauing will be negatively related to organization commitment. Hypothesis 12:

Career plateauing will be negatively related to employee motivation (as measured by job involvement). Hypothesis 13: Career plateauing will be positively related to employee intention to quit one's organization. Hypothesis 14: Career plateauing will be negatively related to the number of employee work hours. Hypothesis 15: Career plateauing will be negatively related to employee job performance. Hypothesis 16: Career plateauing will be negatively related to employee career attitudes, such as promotion aspiration.

An important issue in testing the above relationships concerns how career plateauing is operationalized. One issue involves whether the traditional measure of career plateauing, job tenure, or a perceptual measure of career plateauing will explain more of the variance in the criterion variables. In addition, another important issue concerns whether job tenure moderates the relationship between career plateauing and employee attitudes (moderators will be discussed in greater detail). Chao (1990) found some evidence suggesting that her perceptual measure was a better predictor of employee attitudes then job tenure and that the interaction of the perceptual plateauing measure and job tenure did

act as a moderating variable. This suggests the following hypothesis: Hypothesis 17A: A perceptual measure of career plateauing will explain more of the variance in employee attitudes and behaviors then the traditional measure of career plateauing, job tenure. Hypothesis 17B: Job tenure will moderate the relationship between career plateauing and employee attitudes and behaviors.

Organizational effectiveness. None of the studies conducted so far analyzed the impact of career plateauing on organizational performance although a negative relationship has been hypothesized (Bardwick, 1986). The only study which dealt extensively with organizational factors associated with career plateauing was Rosen's (1988) survey of over 600 HRM managers. The HRM managers perceived career plateauing to have a negative impact not only on plateaued employees, but also on the morale of other employees via clogged promotion channels. In addition, the HRM managers indicated that career plateauing negatively affects customer/client relationships and lowers the overall productivity of a department or organizational unit (Rosen, 1988).

Therefore, as shown in Figure 3, career plateauing is hypothesized to cause lower organizational effectiveness. In turn, poor performing organizations are likely to have slower growth in promotion opportunities and less resources available to promote overall organizational effectiveness or implement specific interventions for career plateaued employees (Bardwick, 1986; Feldman & Weitz, 1988; Rosen, 1988). Thus, a negative cycle can be created where poor employee attitudes and low organizational effectiveness can lead to greater career plateauing in the future. This hypothesized relationship is shown by the feedback loop from organizational effectiveness to organizational opportunities for promotions in Figure 3. Clearly, more research is needed to investigate the implications of career plateauing on organizational effectiveness and performance and longer-term promotion opportunities for employees.

Moderators of the Plateauing-Consequences Relationship

As mentioned earlier, many of the conflicting and nonsignificant findings may be due to the lack of moderating variables considered in the career

plateauing research. A number of organizational and individual variables that are likely to moderate the relationship between career plateauing and its consequences are shown in the lower right hand side of Figure 3 and will be discussed.

Organizational factors. A number of the organizational factors which have been hypothesized to cause career plateauing may also moderate the relationship between plateauing and employee attitudes. For example, more equitable and effective HRM practices (Feldman & Weitz, 1988), discussion by the supervisor of the subordinate's career (Gerpott & Domsch, 1987), providing plateaued employees with important jobs, and ensuring supportive communication with co-workers (Elsass & Ralston, 1989) may enable employees to respond more favorably to their plateauing status. Based on these factors the following hypothesis was empirically tested in this dissertation: Hypothesis 18: The supervisor's discussion and planning for the subordinate's career will positively moderate the impact of career plateauing on employee attitudes and behaviors.

Adaptability. Adaptability or career appraisal involves the individual's ability to realistically assess their career status and deal with changing,

difficult, or ambiguous conditions (Elsass & Ralston, 1989; London & Stumpf, 1986). Individuals who can make a realistic assessment of their job status and then change their attitudes or goals in response to new or changing conditions are more likely to successfully adapt to career plateauing (Bardwick, 1986; Elsass & Ralston, 1989).

Ability to relocate. An individual's ability to relocate to another organization or city for a new job may also moderate the impact of career plateauing on employee attitudes. With the increasing number of dual career families some employees may not be able to accept promotions or new jobs in other geographic locations (Sekaran & Hall, 1989). Individuals who lack geographic mobility may be more adversely affected by their plateauing status if it causes them to feel trapped in their present organization. Based on these factors the following hypothesis was empirically tested in this dissertation: Hypothesis 19: The employee's ability or willingness to leave his or her current job for a new job (a) in another organization or (b) another city will positively moderate the impact of career plateauing on employee attitudes and behaviors.

Career plateauing status in other organizations. Similar to ability to relocate, the employee's perception of his or her career plateauing status or marketability to other companies may moderate the effects of being plateaued in one's current organization. For example, Hall (1985) found that career plateaued employees in a declining company on a generalist career ladder had more positive work attitudes than plateaued personnel on the technical and managerial career ladders. Hall hypothesized that the generalists had more positive work attitudes because they perceived they were more marketable (due to being generalists) to other companies and thus had other options besides their current organization. In contrast, employees on the managerial and technical career ladders were found to be more adversely affected by career plateauing because their skills were closely linked to their current organization, thereby limiting their marketability to other companies. Based on these factors the following hypothesis was empirically tested in this dissertation: Hypothesis 19: Perceptions of promotion potential in companies other then one's current organization (e.g., career plateauing status in other organizations) will negatively moderate the

relationship between career plateauing (in one's current organization) and employee attitudes and behaviors.

Growth need strength and career motivations. Individual difference variables relating to career motivation are likely to affect how individuals react to career plateauing. For example, growth need strength, or the psychological needs for personal accomplishment, learning, development, and complex jobs (Hackman & Oldham, 1980), is likely to affect how individuals respond to career plateauing (Feldman & Weitz, 1988). Individuals who are high in growth need strength are more likely to be adversely affected by being career plateaued because they place a high value on the challenge and development that often accompanies promotions.

Career motivation may also affect employee responses to career plateauing. Career theorists (Derr, 1986; Driver, 1985, 1988; Howard & Bray, 1988; Schein, 1978, 1987) posit that individuals hold a variety of career motivations, interests, and patterns with some employees placing a much greater value on promotions and job content than other individuals. Individuals who have career motivations that are most closely linked to advancement will be more likely to

experience high levels of stress when they are plateaued. Based on these factors the following hypotheses were empirically tested in this dissertation: Hypothesis 20: Growth need strength will negatively moderate the impact of career plateauing on employee attitudes and behaviors. Hypothesis 21: Career motivation such as promotion aspiration will negatively moderate the impact of career plateauing on employee attitudes and behaviors.

Job-content plateauing. Job-content plateauing may be the single most important moderator of the effects of career plateauing on individual attitudes and behaviors (Bardwick, 1986). Job characteristics have been found to have a mediating affect on the relationship between career plateauing and employee attitudes (Gerpott & Domsch, 1987). Plateaued managers who had challenging, satisfying, and clearly defined jobs were more likely to maintain a high level of job performance (Carnazza et al. 1981). Organizations which provide important job responsibilities or opportunities such as training and development, lateral transfers, and job rotations are likely to encourage more positive coping behaviors by employees to career plateauing (Elsass & Ralston, 1989). This suggests that having challenging work

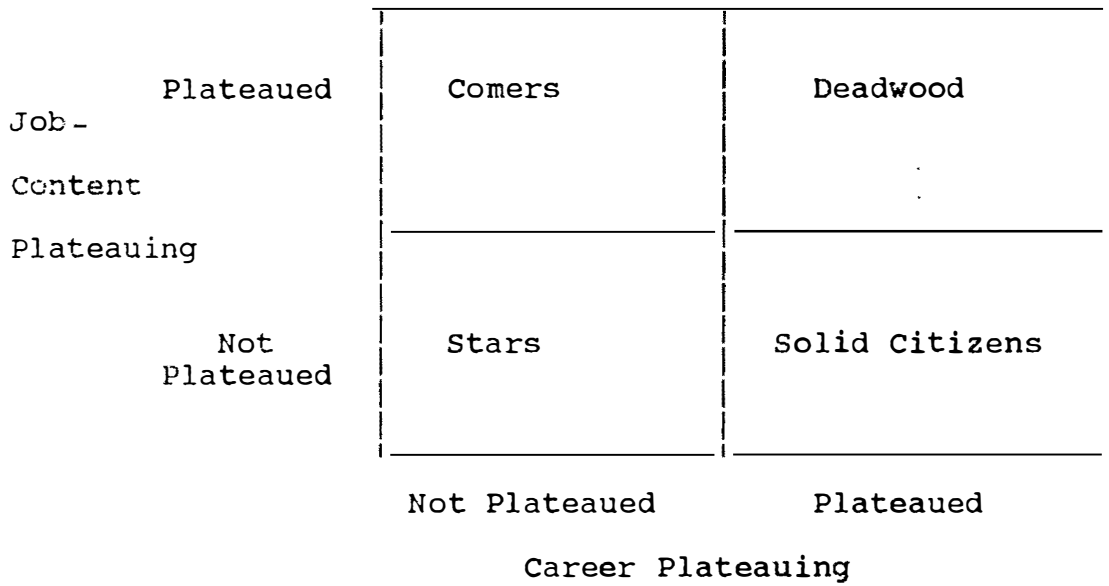
(e.g., not being content plateaued) can alleviate the impact of career plateauing on job attitudes and performance (Bardwick, 1986; Feldman & Weitz, 1988; Hall & Rabinowitz, 1988; Hall & Richter, 1990; Rosen, 1988).

Analyzing the joint impact of job-content plateauing and career plateauing may provide greater insights into employee performance and Ference et al.'s (1977) career plateauing-performance model of solid citizens (high performers, career plateaued), deadwood (low performers, career plateaued), stars (high performers, not plateaued), and comers (low performers, not plateaued). Figure 7 illustrates a two by two typology of job content and career plateauing. The vertical dimension measures career plateauing status where the continuum of plateauing is simplified into plateaued or not plateaued. The horizontal axis measures the job-content plateaued continuum which is divided for simplicity into plateaued or not plateaued.

The upper right hand box of Figure 7 indicates individuals who are both career and job-content plateaued. These employees are most likely to be deadwood or have negative job attitudes and poor performance because they lack both mobility and job

Figure 7

Typology of Career and Job-Content Plateauing



challenge. The lower left hand box of Figure 7 indicates those employees who are neither job-content plateaued nor career plateaued. This box would most likely explain Ference et al.'s (1977) stars as these individuals have both promotion potential and challenging work to provide the incentive and intrinsic work motivation for high performance.

The cells on the other diagonal represent the more problematic "mixed conditions." The upper left hand box indicates comers, or individuals who have promotion potential, but are job-content plateaued. Comers may be younger employees who have promotion potential but are mismatched with their jobs, possibly resulting in low job challenge and consequently poor performance. Comers could also be older managers who are not high performers, but have developed the seniority, connections, and status within the organization which enables them to remain on the promotion track.

The lower right hand box identifies those individuals who are career plateaued, but not job-content plateaued. These individuals are labeled solid citizens because their challenging work provides the incentive and motivation for them to continue to be high performers despite their lack of promotion

potential. This hypothesis is similar to Driver's (1988) proposition that for some plateaued employees, being in the center of the action can substitute for advancement.

This proposed typology underscores the importance of including job-content plateauing in future research in order to more effectively predict job performance of career plateaued employees. Research on this typology will need to assess the relationship between intrinsic (e.g., related to job-content plateauing) and extrinsic rewards (e.g., related to career plateauing). For employees in the lower right-hand corner cell, can job-content rewards substitute for the extrinsic rewards associated with hierarchical advancement? For individuals in the upper left-hand box can perceived opportunities for advancement continue to hold motivating potential for employees when job content has plateaued? More empirical research needs to be conducted in this area particularly because so many of the proposed solutions to career plateauing assume that intrinsic rewards such as lateral moves, interesting work, etc. can substitute for hierarchical advancement for virtually all employees. Based on these factors the following hypothesis was empirically tested in this

dissertation: Hypothesis 23: Job-content plateauing will (a) be negatively related to employee work attitudes and behaviors and (b) negatively moderate the relationship of career plateauing to employee attitudes and behaviors.

Summary

Given the various economic, demographic, and organizational factors which are expected to increase the incidence of career plateauing in the future, it is important that new research directions be developed for both individual and organizational factors associated with career plateauing. Accordingly, the intent of this chapter was to refine the definition and operationalization of career-plateauing and provide a comprehensive model to guide future research.

First, it is recommended that, whenever possible, career-plateauing studies utilize a perceptual measure of career plateauing to be used in conjunction with an objective (e.g., job tenure) measure. The traditional job-tenure measure will also be useful in linking new studies with the past research on career plateauing.

Second, the definition of career plateauing should be broadened to include job-content plateauing as

developed by Bardwick (1986). The inclusion of job-content plateauing provides essential information about the intrinsic aspect of an individual's work and in combination with career plateauing can be helpful in predicting employee work attitudes.

Third, a model of the career-plateauing process was proposed to discuss organizational and individual factors related to the causes, consequences, and moderators of career plateauing which were previously largely ignored in the plateauing research. While the model can not address all the factors involved in career plateauing, it should prove a useful guide to future investigations. From this model a number of hypotheses were proposed to guide the empirical research effort in this dissertation.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Chapter Overview

This chapter describes the research questions, research procedure, sample, operationalization of the survey items, and the methods for testing the hypotheses.

Research Questions

As indicated in the previous chapter, the three major questions addressed in this dissertation are (a) what organizational and individual variables lead to or cause career plateauing, (b) what is the impact of career and job content plateauing on individual employee attitudes and behaviors, and (c) what organizational and individual variables moderate the relationship between career plateauing and employee attitudes and behaviors? A survey field study was primarily utilized to empirically answer these questions and test the research hypotheses.

Research Procedure

The research procedure for answering these sets of questions involves the following three stages.

Stage One: Preliminary Interviews

In the first stage, brief interviews were conducted with either the human resource manager or top manager at each of the sites. The interview was used to ensure that the basic assumptions and approach of the survey to be administered were appropriate for the site and to determine if any changes needed to be made in the item content for the questionnaire specific to each site.

Stage Two: Questionnaire Administration

In the second stage, the questionnaire was distributed to managerial and professional employees at each of three major sites: a materials company in San Diego, a Southern California health care organization, and the University of Southern California (USC) Executive Masters in Business Administration (EMBA) program. Four hospitals and one regional staff department are included in the health care organization. Both the materials and health care

organization sites contained a small number of clerical employees.

The survey was distributed in slightly different ways at the three sites. For the San Diego materials company the surveys were distributed by the human resource management (HRM) manager for employees to complete during company training and development sessions. The respondents then mailed the surveys directly to the author at USC.

In the health care organization, the surveys were distributed by the author to the employees at departmental staff meetings. The competed surveys were then mailed back to the author at USC.

For about two-thirds of the EMBA sample, the surveys were distributed in class to existing students by the director of the EMBA program. The other one-third of this sample comprised EMBA graduates who responded to the survey via a mailing which, again, was coordinated by the director of the EMBA program. The respondents at all three sites participated on a voluntary basis.

Stage Three: Survey Feedback and Interviews

Feedback reports were sent to the administrative contacts at each site. In the health care

organization a number of other high-level managers (e.g., Director of Nursing Services, Personnel Director, etc.) also requested feedback on their personnel who completed the survey. Finally, about 25% of the respondents from the health care organization and over 50% of the EMBA students requested individual feedback.

The feedback report contained mean scores for each area or hospital facility of the sites and a comparison of the overall mean for that company as well as the other two sites. Correlational analysis was also provided, principally to illustrate the relationships between the various independent and dependent variables. Finally, a formal presentation was made of the data for several of the hospitals in the health care organizations and the EMBA program. Valuable feedback was obtained from both the top managers as well as the respondents themselves at the presentations as well as in the last interview.

Sample Description

Site One

The first site included employees from a materials company in San Diego. These employees belonged to one of seven company locations and one of

four types of employee groups (management, professional, supervisor, and clerical). Approximately 120 surveys were handed out to the employees by the HRM manager while they were attending a training session. The employees were asked to fill out the surveys and mail them to the author at USC. The response rate was 81%, resulting in a sample size of 97.

The mean age in the materials company, health care organization, and EMBA students was very similar ranging from 37 to 40 years. For the materials company, the mean age was 39 years. About 60% of the sample was male and 84% was Caucasian. The distribution of females and minorities was concentrated in the supervisory and clerical employee groups. The employees had both an average job tenure and company tenure of approximately 5 years. About half of the sample had supervisory responsibilities.

Site Two

Approximately 350 surveys were handed out at the second site. There were approximately 205 respondents which primarily included departmental administrators, assistant department administrators, and other professional staff in four medical centers of a large health care organization located throughout Southern

California. In addition, there were some professional staff from the regional office and about 10 clerical personnel included in the sample.

About 80% of the sample had supervisory responsibilities with an average of 20 employees reporting directly to them. The mean age was 40 years. The sample was 28% male and 69% Caucasian. The mean company tenure was 7.5 years and job tenure was 4.6 years. As noted earlier, the author handed out the surveys to departmental administrators at staff meetings at each hospital who were also asked to take an extra copy of the survey for their assistant department administrator. The respondents then were requested to mail the surveys back to the author at USC. The overall response rate was approximately 53%.

Site Three

The third site included approximately 86 Executive of Masters of Business Administration (EMBA) students and 55 graduates from the University of Southern California for a total sample size of 141. The EMBA students were given the survey by the head of the EMBA program in class and asked to complete the questionnaire on their own time. The response rate was approximately 67%. The EMBA graduates were sent

surveys via mail. The response rate was approximately 40%.

The EMBA sample was comprised of a diverse group of executives, managers, consultants, and other professional employees. The average age of the EMBA sample was 37 years. The sample was 76% male and 82% Caucasian. The average company tenure was 6.8 years. The average job tenure was 4 years and the median job tenure was 2 years.

Total Sample Demographic Statistics

Overall, the total sample size was 443 respondents with a mean age of 39 years. The sample was 50% male and 78.5% Caucasian. In terms of education, approximately 80% of the sample had at least a bachelors degree and 44% had at least a graduate degree. The average job tenure was 4 years and company tenure was 7 years. About 72% had supervisor responsibilities. Background statistics for the total sample are reported in Table 1.

Operationalization and Measurement of Variables

Several versions of the questionnaire were employed to meet the specific needs of each site and

Table 1

Summary Demographic Statistics of Sample Population

Variable		Mean	Stand. Dev.	N
Age		39	--	388
Gender	Male	49%		190
	Female	51%		199
Ethnicity	Caucasian	76%		250
	Non-Caucasian	24%		80
Education				
Bachelors degree or more		75%		
Masters degree or more		44%		
Job Tenure		4.0	4.9	374
Company Tenure		6.7	6.2	381
Number of years at same level of responsibility		3.9	3.2	96
Percent with supervisory responsibility		72%		
Supervisors - average number of reports		11.5	17.9	331

to improve the operationalization of the variables. A copy of the most widely used version of the questionnaire is shown in Appendix A. The survey contained six major sections. The background questions section included the demographic variables and several moderator variables such as willingness to relocate and perceived marketability. The second section entitled "Your future opportunities in your current company" included promotion aspiration and the independent variables (career and job-content plateauing). The third section entitled "How you feel about your current job, supervisor and company" included the dependent variables and one moderator variable, the supervisor's discussion of the subordinate's career. The fourth section labeled "How do you perceive the opportunities available in your company" contained questions about the organization's promotion opportunities, (organizational factors causing career plateauing). The fifth section is entitled "Your ideal job" and includes the growth need strength items and how the respondents rate the power of their department in their organization. A sixth section is labeled "Organizational rewards and opportunities" and included questions on employee preferences for company rewards and opportunities.

Data is reported in this dissertation on the first five sections.

Section 1: Demographic Variables

Section 1 contains background and demographic questions which included questions on: age, gender, level of education attainment, and ethnicity. The ethnicity question solicited information on whether the respondents were Caucasian, Black, Hispanic, Asian, American Indian, and any other ethnic origin. For the data analysis, the respondents were later categorized into either Caucasian and non-Caucasian. The respondents also indicated the highest level of education attained among the following categories: high school, some college, college degree, some graduate, graduate degree, and doctorate degree.

These demographic variables were analyzed in two ways. First, they were analyzed as possible causes of career plateauing. For example, as indicated in Chapter 2, being older, a woman, or a minority were all hypothesized as leading to a higher incidence of career plateauing. In addition, these demographic variables may affect responses to the criterion variables (employee attitudes and behaviors such as

job satisfaction, organization commitment, etc.). For this reason a second purpose was to use age, gender, and ethnicity as control variables in a hierarchical multiple regression equation so that the additional variance explained in the criterion variables by career plateauing could be determined beyond these demographic variables.

A final control variable was performance which was also utilized as one of the dependent variables. Performance was measured by the employee's recall of their performance rating from their last performance appraisal. Performance was used as a control variable in the hierarchical regression involving the relationship of career plateauing to the dependent variables, because it has also been hypothesized to be related to job satisfaction (Porter & Lawler, 1968) and other employee attitudes. The performance variable will be discussed in greater detail in a later section of this chapter.

Since some differences were found in the mean scores of some of the various demographic, independent, and dependent variables between the three sites, all employees received a code depending on which site they were from. This site identification

variable was also entered as an additional control variable in the hierarchical regression.

Background work questions included information on job tenure, company tenure, the number of years elapsed since one's last promotion, whether the respondent had supervisory responsibilities, and the number of promotions received in the company. In addition, some of the EMBA respondents also answered questions regarding the number of promotions received in the last 5 years and how long they had been at approximately the same level of job responsibility. These questions were not included in the survey for the materials company and health care organization due to restrictions in the length of the questionnaire.

The most important background variable was job tenure, which as noted in Chapter 2, was the primary means by which career plateauing has been operationalized in previous studies. The typical cut-off point utilized for defining plateaued versus nonplateaued employees has been 5 years. The mean job tenure for the overall sample was 3.9 years and the median was 2 years. About 28% of the sample (approximately 110 employees) had a job tenure of 5 years or more, allowing for an appropriate test of the 5 year rule.

Job tenure was used in two ways in the analysis. First, job tenure was utilized as an objective measure for career plateauing. Job tenure was entered into the hierarchical regression after the various control variables (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity, performance, and site identification) and before the perceptual measure of career plateauing. This allows for a comparison of the percent of additional variance explained in the criterion variables by job tenure versus that explained by the perceptual measure of career plateauing. Following Chao (1990), this ensures a conservative test of determining if a perceptual measure of career plateauing is a better predictor of employee attitudes and behaviors than the traditional job tenure measure as proposed in Hypothesis 17-A. In addition, entering job tenure first in the hierarchical regression enables us to determine the additional variance in the criterion variables that was explained by the perceptual measure of career plateauing (i.e., over and above control variables and the objective measure of job tenure).

In summary, the specification of the model for the second research question involving the relationship of career plateauing to employee attitudes is listed below. In this equation the

indicator variable is listed as I, the control variables are listed as C's and the predictor and moderator variables are labeled as X's.

Y = Dependent variable or employee attitudes and behaviors

I1 = Identification of respondent by employee or site group (e.g., EMBA, health care organization, materials company)

C1 = Age

C2 = Gender

C3 = Ethnicity

C4 = Performance

X1 = Job tenure

X2 = Career Plateauing

The model can be written as follows:

$$Y = bo + b1I1 + b2C1 + b3C2 + b4C3 + b5C4 + b6X1 + b7X2$$

Second, job tenure was used as an interaction term along with the perceptual measure of career plateauing (job tenure times career plateauing perceptual measure) to test for a moderating affect on employee attitudes and behaviors as predicted by Hypothesis 17-B. Job tenure and other moderators are discussed in greater detail later in this chapter.

The other background variables (e.g., company tenure, number of years elapsed since one's last

promotion, the number of promotions received in the company, etc.) were included in the analysis to test for the construct validity of the perceptual measure of career plateauing. For example, I hypothesized a positive relation between the number of years since the employee's last promotion and the perceptual measure of career plateauing. In general, the longer the time that has elapsed since an employee was promoted, the more likely he or she is to have lower promotion potential and hence be career plateaued. Correlational analysis was utilized to determine the relationship between the perceptual measure of career plateauing and these background variables for the purposes of construct validity.

Section 2: Independent Variables: Career and Job-content Plateauing

Reliability. A major goal of this research study was to develop psychometrically sound perceptual measures of the two independent variables: career plateauing (in one's current company) (six items) and job-content plateauing (six items). It should be noted that the perceptual measure of career plateauing in one's current company is simply referred to as career plateauing hereafter. In addition, Section 2

of the survey also contains two other moderator variables that were developed by the author: career plateauing status in other companies (four items), and promotion aspiration (three items), which was also used as a dependent variable. Both of these latter two variables are discussed in more detail in the section on moderator variables.

These four variables were measured on a 7-point Likert scale anchored from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (neither agree nor disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The various items were first tested on a sample of approximately 100 University of Southern California and Pepperdine University evening MBA students. Principal component factor analysis with varimax rotation was employed and the items loaded on the four factors as predicted for both this sample of MBA students and for the entire sample included in this dissertation. The factor analysis results for the entire sample for these four variables are shown in Table 2.

Internal reliabilities, as measured by Cronbach's alpha, were also conducted on the entire sample for career plateauing (.90) and job-content plateauing (.87). In addition, test-retest reliabilities were calculated with the evening MBA students. The test-

Table 2

Varimax Principle Component Factor Analysis of Career and Job-Content Plateauing and Promotion Aspiration Variables

Items	Factors and Loadings* #1	#2	#3	#4	E*	Var*
Career Plateauing - Current Company					6.3	33%
1. My opportunities for upward movement are limited in my present organization	.73					
2. I expect to be promoted frequently in the future in my company (reversed)	.72					
3. I have reached a point where I do not expect to move much higher in my company	.82					
4. The likelihood that I will get ahead in my organization is limited	.82					
5. I am unlikely to obtain a much higher job title in my organization	.80					
6. I expect to advance to a higher level in the near future in my company (reversed)	.71					
Job-Content Plateauing					3.6	19%
1. I expect to be constantly challenged in my job in the future (reversed)			.80			
2. I will learn and grow a lot in my job (reversed)			.64			
3. My job tasks and activities will become routine for me in the future			.83			
4. My job responsibilities will increase significantly in the future (reversed)			.64			

Table 2 continued

Items	Factors and Loadings* #1	#2	#3	#4	E*	Var*
5. My job will continually require me to extend my abilities and knowledge (reversed)			.77			
6. I will be challenged in my job (reversed)			.86			
Career Plateauing - Other Companies					1.7	9%
1. I expect to be promoted frequently in the future in other companies (reversed)				.67		
2. I have reached a point where I do not expect to move much higher in other companies				.77		
3. The likelihood that I will get ahead in other organizations is limited				.82		
4. I am unlikely to obtain a much higher job title in other organizations				.86		
Promotion Aspiration					1.5	8%
1. I definitely want to be promoted					.84	
2. It is important for me to be promoted					.88	
3. I desire to move up to higher levels in my company					.83	
Total						60%

*E = Eigenvalue and % Var = Percent of total variance explained

retest reliabilities for career plateauing was .88 for a sample of 49 and .77 for job-content plateauing for 22 respondents taken about 4 weeks apart. Means, standard deviations, internal reliabilities, inter-item correlations, and test-retest reliabilities are shown for career plateauing and job-content plateauing in Table 3.

Background checks. Table 4 shows zero-order correlations between career plateauing and related background and demographic variables. It was predicted that career plateauing should be positively related to career plateauing in other companies, job-content plateauing, the number of years elapsed since one's last promotion, the number of years an individual has worked at the same level of responsibility, age, and being a woman or minority. In addition, it was predicted that career plateauing should be negatively related to the number of promotions received in the last 5 years, the number of promotions received in one's company, promotion aspiration, perceived marketability, and the level of education attained.

In terms of demographic variables, the career plateauing measure was significantly positively correlated with age ($r = .29$; $p \leq .001$) and being a

Table 3

Internal and Test-Retest Reliability of Plateauing Constructs

Construct	# Items	N	Cronbach's Alpha	Inter-item Correlations Mean	High	Low	Reliability Test-Retest	N
Career plateauing (Current Company)	6	435	.90	.59	.68	.46	.88	49
Job-Content Plateauing	6	381	.86	.53	.69	.30	.77	22

Means and Standard Deviations

Variable	Mean	St Dev.	N
Career plateauing (Current Company)	3.8	1.6	435
Job-Content Plateauing	2.9	1.3	381

Table 4

Correlations of Career Plateauing to Background and Demographic Variables

Zero-order correlations

Demographic Variables	Career Plateauing	
Age	.29***	
Gender	-.03	
Ethnicity	.12*	
Education	-.11*	
Job tenure	.30***	
Company tenure	.20***	
Background and Moderator Variable		
Career Plateauing - Other Companies	.38***	
Job Content Plateauing	.38***	
Promotion Aspiration	-.36***	
Number of Years Since Last Promotion	.31***	
Number of Years at Same Level of Responsibility	.32**	(N=90)
Number of Promotions in Last 5 Years	-.12+	(N=37)
Company Promotion Rate	-.29***	(N=262)
Perceived Marketability	-.17*	
Willingness to Leave for a New Job in Current City	.12*	
Willingness to Leave for a New Job in Another City/Area	.11+	

*** P < .001 **P < .01 *P < .05 + P < .10

minority ($r = .12$; $p \leq .05$) and a negative correlation with the level of education attained ($r = -.11$; $p \leq .05$). The direction of these relationships are as expected. No significant relationship was found between career plateauing and gender.

In relation to background variables, career plateauing was significantly positively correlated with job tenure ($r = .30$; $p \leq .001$), company tenure ($r = .20$; $p \leq .001$) the number of years since one's last promotions ($r = .32$; $p \leq .01$), the number of years one has been at the same level of job responsibility ($r = .32$; $p \leq .01$), willingness to leave to another company in the same city ($r = .12$; $p \leq .05$), willingness to leave to another company in another city ($r = .11$; $p \leq .10$), job-content plateauing ($r = .39$; $p \leq .001$), and career plateauing in other companies ($r = .39$; $p \leq .001$). Career plateauing was negatively correlated with the number of promotions received in the last 5 years ($r = -.12$; $p \leq .10$), promotion aspiration ($r = -.39$; $p \leq .001$), and perceived marketability to other companies ($-.17$; $p \leq .01$). With the exception of gender, all of these correlations are significant and in the direction predicted, providing some evidence that the perceptual

career plateauing scale does measure what it is intended to measure.

Career plateauing and criterion variables. In order to further check if the perceptual career plateauing scale does indeed measure plateauing or promotion potential, zero-order correlations were calculated between career plateauing and the various dependent variables. It would be expected career plateauing would be significantly negatively related to employee attitudes and behaviors (e.g., job satisfaction, organization commitment, etc.). In addition, to career plateauing (in one's current company), zero-order correlations between the two other plateauing measures--job-content plateauing, and career plateauing--other companies, and the employee attitudes and behavior variables were calculated and are shown in Table 5.

In terms of the various job satisfaction variables, the career plateauing measure was more significantly negatively correlated with promotion satisfaction ($r = -.65$; $p \leq .001$) than the other satisfaction items: company ($r = -.33$; $p \leq .001$), supervisor ($r = -.24$; $p \leq .001$), pay ($r = -.19$; $p \leq .001$), and job ($r = -.15$; $p \leq .01$). In addition, career plateauing was correlated positively with

Table 5

Correlations of Three Plateauing Measures with Dependent Variables

Zero-order Correlations	Correlations with		
Criterion Variables	Career Plateauing	Job-Content Plateauing	Career Plateau--Other Co.
Number of Work Hours	-.06	-.26***	.05
Performance Evaluation	-.12*	-.10+	-.14+
Organization Commitment	-.36***	-.51***	.09+
Intention to quit	.23***	.34***	-.18***
Job Involvement	-.11*	-.37***	.07
Promotion Satisfaction	-.65***	-.49***	-.06
Pay Satisfaction	-.18***	-.18***	-.03
Supervisor Satisfaction	-.25***	-.34***	.07
Company Satisfaction	-.35***	-.40***	.20***
Job Satisfaction	-.16**	-.37***	.07
Perceived Marketability	-.13*	-.03	-.32***

*** P < .001 **P < .01 *P < .05 + P < .10

intention to quit ($r = .24$; $r \leq .001$), and negatively correlated with organization commitment ($r = -.34$; $p \leq .001$), and employee performance ($r = -.11$; $p \leq .10$). However, career plateauing was not significantly related to job involvement ($r = -.07$, ns) or to the number of work hours ($r = -.07$, ns).

Job-content plateauing was significantly negatively related to the ten dependent variables (all at $p \leq .01$), with the exception of employee performance which was significant at $r = -.11$; $p \leq .10$. Overall, the significance and direction of the zero-order correlations between career plateauing and job-content plateauing with the various criterion variables provide further support that these two scales measure what they are intended to measure. In other words, as would be expected, career and job-content plateauing have a number of significant relationships to the major organizational behavior individual work attitude variables.

Career plateauing in other companies was significantly correlated with only four of the ten criterion variables: satisfaction with company ($r = .20$; $p \leq .01$), intention to quit ($r = -.15$; $p \leq .01$), employee performance ($r = -.11$; $p \leq .10$), and the number of work hours ($r = .11$; $p \leq .10$). Due in part

to the lack of a significant number of relationships of these criterion variables, career plateauing in other companies was utilized as a moderator variables, rather than independent variables in the subsequent analysis. Descriptive statistics for this variable and other moderating factors are shown in Table 6. It is surprising that career plateauing in other companies is positively related to company satisfaction and the number of work hours and negatively related to intention to quit one's company. These results indicate that being career plateaued in other companies appears to have a positive relationship to some employee work attitudes (at least in relation to the employee's current organization). A possible explanation is that employees may become more satisfied with their current company, work harder, and be less likely to quit when they perceive few opportunities for upward mobility elsewhere.

Section 3: Criterion Variables

As indicated previously, the criterion variables included in this study are: performance, number of work hours, organization commitment, job involvement, intention to quit, and the various job satisfaction measures (pay, promotion, company, supervisor, and

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics For Moderating Factors

Variables	# Items	Mean	Std Dev.	Cronbach's Alpha	N
Promotion Aspiration*	3	5.9	1.4	.89	328
Perceived Marketability**	1	79%			296
Willingness To Relocate***					
A. Current City/Area	1	3.4	1.5		288
B. New City/Area	1	2.7	1.5		282
Growth Need Strength****	4	6.4	.8	.85	312
Career Plateauing in other organizations*	4	2.5	1.0	.83	350
Supervisor Discussion of Subordinate Career*	2	3.9	2.0	.90	382

1. My supervisor discusses my career and personal development
2. My supervisor assists me in setting specific career development goals

*7 Point Likert scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strong agree

**Scale based on 0 (poor) to 100 (excellent)

***5 Point Likert scale

**** 7 point Likert scale from 1 = Would like having this only a moderate amount (or less) to 7 = Would like this extremely much

job). The means, standard deviations, and internal reliabilities for these variables are listed in Table 7.

Performance. The performance evaluation item from Nathan, Mohrman, and Milliman (1991) is "My last performance evaluation was" followed by a scale of 1 (does not meet expectations) to 4 (meets expectations) to 7 (far exceeds expectations).

Number of work hours. The number of work hours question is from Evans and Gilbert (1984) and is phrased "Approximately how many hours do you typically work per week?" The respondents checked the most appropriate box from 35 hours or less, 40, 45, 50, 55, and 60 hours or more.

Job involvement. Job involvement, organization commitment, and intention to quit were all measured using a 7-point Likert scale anchored from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (neither agree nor disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The job involvement scale contains five items selected from a 10-item scale by Kanugo (1982). Job involvement is a measure of an individual's high job motivation or effort in their job (Price & Mueller, 1986). The coefficient alpha was .79.

Table 7

Descriptive Statistics For Criterion Variables

Variable/Items	Mean	S.D.	Cronbach's Alpha	N
Performance* (as recalled by subordinate in last performance appraisal)	5.1	1.2		342
Number of Work Hours**	3.7	1.3		380
Job Involvement*				
1. I am very much involved personally in my job				
2. I consider my job to be very central to my existence				
3. I like to be absorbed in my job most of the time				
4. I live, eat, and breathe my job				
5. Usually I feel detached from my job (reversed)				
5-item scale	5.0	1.3	.79	377
Organization Commitment*				
1. I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organization				
2. This organization really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance				
3. I am extremely glad that I chose this organization to work for over others I was considering at the time I joined				
4. I talk up this organization to my friends as a great organization to work for				
5. I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organization				
6. I really care about the fate of this organization				
6-item scale	5.7	1.2	.83	331
Intention to Quit*				
1. I will probably look for a new job in the coming year				
2. I have been unsuccessful in looking for another job (reversed)				
3. I scan newspapers and other sources for prospective jobs				
4. I frequently think of quitting my job				
4-item scale	3.0	1.6	.75	329

*7 Point Likert scale

**Scale based on 1 = 35 to 40 hours; 2 = 40 to 45 hours; 3 = 45 to 50 hours; 4 = 50 to 55 hours; 5 = 55 to 60 hours; 6 = 60 hours or more.

Table 7 Continued

Variables/Items	Mean	S.D.	Cronbach's Alpha	N
Satisfaction With Pay***				
1. The amount of pay for the work I do 2. How my pay compares with that for similar jobs in other companies 3. My pay and the amount of work I do 4. How my pay compares with that of others				
4-item scale	3.0	1.1	.91	383
Satisfaction With Promotion***				
1. The opportunities for advancement on this job 2. The chances of getting ahead on this job 3. The way promotions are given out on this job 4. My chances for advancement				
4-item scale	3.0	1.1	.92	383
Satisfaction With Supervisor***				
With the person who supervises you - your organizational superior	3.7	1.2		385
Satisfaction With Company***				
With working for this company - overall	4.0	0.9		388
Satisfaction with Job				
With the nature of the work you perform - your job	4.0	1.0		260

*7 Point Likert scale

**Scale based on 1 = 35 to 40 hours; 2 = 40 to 45 hours; 3 = 45 to 50 hours; 4 = 50 to 55 hours; 5 = 55 to 60 hours; 6 = 60 hours or more.

***5 point Likert scale

Organization commitment. Six organization commitment items were selected from Mowday and Steer's (1979) organization commitment questionnaire. The coefficient alpha was .83, indicating an acceptable level of internal reliability.

Intention to quit. The intention to quit items come from multiple sources. Two of the items are from (Jones, 1986): "I scan newspapers and other sources for prospective jobs" and "I will probably look for a new job in the coming year." The last item is from "I have been unsuccessful in looking for another job" (Chung, 1989). The coefficient alpha for this variable was .75.

Job satisfaction. Five facets of job satisfaction were measured: satisfaction with pay, promotion, company, supervisor, and job. The items were measured on a 5-point likert scale anchored by 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The satisfaction with pay (four items) and promotion (four items) are from the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Weiss, Davis, England, & Lofquist, 1967). The coefficient alphas were .91 for satisfaction with pay and .92 for satisfaction with promotion. The single item satisfaction with company,

supervisor, and job measures are from Nathan, et al. (1991).

Section 4: Moderator Variables

One major research question involved the variables which moderate the relationship between career plateauing and employee attitudes and behaviors. A moderator variable is "any variable which when systematically varied "causes" the relationship between two other variables to change" (Stone, 1978, p. 26) or "through its interactive influences the relationship between two other variables" (Stone, 1986, p. 310). As such, a moderator variable interacts with another variable in predicting scores and accounting for variance in a criterion variable (James & Brett, 1984; Stone, 1988).

The preferred method for testing for moderating effects is hierarchical moderated regression (MMR) (James & Brett, 1984; Stone, 1988). A two-stage approach is utilized with (a) the criterion variable being regressed on the two independent variables (career plateauing and the moderator variable) and (b) a cross-product term (career plateauing multiplied by the moderator) is added to the model. The interaction term was entered last in the hierarchical regression

after the various control variables--job tenure, and career plateauing--and the moderator variable itself. A significant interaction term indicates a moderating effect. The sign of the beta coefficient for the interaction term indicates the direction of the moderating effect.

The additional specifications for the moderating variable model to the previous career plateauing to employee attitudes model is as follows:
X3 = Moderator Variable (main effect of moderator)
X2X3 = Interaction term or cross-product (career plateauing times the moderator variable). The moderating model then can be written as follows:
Y = bo +b1I1 +b2C1 +b3C2 +b4C3 +b5C4 +b6X1 +b7X2 +b8X3 +b9(X2X3).

The following variables were tested as potential moderating variables of the relationship between career plateauing and employee attitudes: promotion aspiration, willingness to leave for a new job in one's current city, willingness to leave for a new job in another city, growth need strength, job-content plateauing, job tenure, career plateauing in other companies, and supervisor discussion of the subordinate's career. Descriptive statistics for the moderator variables are shown in Table 6.

Promotion aspiration. The 3-item promotion aspiration measure was developed by the author. The Cronbach's alpha for this measure was .89 and the test-retest reliability for the three items was .73 for a sample of 21 MBA students taken four weeks apart.

Willingness to leave. The willingness to leave items are from Veiga (1981) and are worded "Please indicate your willingness to leave for a better job in another company." To this statement the following additional points were added: (a) in your current city/area (b) in another city/area." The scale for this pair of questions is from 1 (would not move) to 5 (would definitely move).

Growth need strength. Growth need strength was measured by four items from Hackman and Oldham (1980). The variable is measured on a 7-point Likert scale from 1 (Would like having only a moderate amount or less) to 4 (Would like having this very much) to 7 (Would like having this extremely much). The four items used were as follows:

1. Stimulating and challenging work.
2. Opportunities to learn new things from my work.

3. Opportunities to be creative and imaginative in my work.

4. A sense of worthwhile accomplishment in my work

The coefficient alpha for this scale was .80.

Supervisor discussion of the subordinate's career. This organizational moderating variable concerns the degree to which the supervisor is involved in the planning and discussion of the subordinate's (the respondent's) career. The two items were measured on a 7-point Likert scale and were taken from Nathan, Mohrman, and Milliman (1991). These items include "My supervisor discusses my career and personal development" and "My supervisor assists me in setting specific career development goals." The coefficient alpha was .90.

Section 5: Causes of Career Plateauing

A final research question in this dissertation dealt with the variables leading to or causing career plateauing. A number of organizational variables were hypothesized to cause career plateauing: the organizational growth rate of new positions, organizational practice of hiring external candidates, importance of seniority as a criteria in promotion

decisions, the frequency of promotions in the organization, and the level of the respondent's departmental power or influence. These variables were included in a separate section entitled "How you perceive the opportunities available in your company." The questions used a 7-point Likert scale from (1) strongly disagree to (7) strongly agree, with the exception of departmental power which was measured on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (low power) to 5 (high power). Descriptive statistics for each of these variables are shown in Table 8.

With the exception of the items regarding hiring external candidates and department power, the various measures were developed by the author. The hiring of external candidates and the growth rate of new position are 2-item scales; the rest of the variables are measured by single items.

The following measures were utilized for the organizational cause variables:

1. Organizational growth rate of new positions: "Promotions primarily occur only when turnover creates an open position" and "Few new positions are created in the company."

Table 8

Organizational Cause Variables

Variables/Items	Mean	S.D.	Alpha	N
Organizational Growth*				
1. Promotions primarily occur only when turnover creates an open position 2. Few new positions are created in the company				
2-item scale	4.8	1.6	.69	303
Organizational Culture on Promotions* In general, the organization promotes its employees frequently	3.8	1.7	--	300
Importance of Education Prestige* Attending a prestigious school is important for moving up in your company	3.9	1.9	--	303
Importance of Seniority* Seniority is an important criteria in promotions	4.0	1.9	--	303
Hiring of External Candidates				
1. Job vacancies here are usually filled by people from outside the company 2. An employee who applies for another job here has a better chance of getting that job than someone from outside who applies for the job:				
2-item scale:	3.4	1.5	.65	311
Department Power**	3.4	1.3	--	256

*7-point Likert scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree

**5-point Likert scale from 1 = low power to 5 = high power

2. The frequency of promotions in the organization: "In general, the organization promotes its employees frequently."

3. Importance of Seniority: "Seniority is an important criteria in promotions."

4. Hiring of External Candidates: "Job vacancies here are usually filled by people from outside the company" and "An employee who applies for another job here has a better chance of getting that job than someone from outside who applies for the job" (reversed scaling). This variable is from Landau and Hammer (1986).

5. Power of the Department: In addition, the respondents were asked to assess the power or influence of their department in the organization on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 = low power to 5 = high power. This item was based on Sheridan et al.'s (1990) work who hypothesized that employees from high power departments were more likely to have greater visibility and influence in the company and thus higher promotion potential.

As mentioned earlier, a number of individual level variables have also been hypothesized as causes of career plateauing: age, gender, ethnicity, and education. In addition, to these variables, job

tenure and performance were also evaluated as potential factors leading to career plateauing.

The causes of career plateauing were analyzed in two ways. First, zero-order correlations were calculated between career plateauing and the various organizational and individual cause variables. Second, a stepwise multiple regression was performed with career plateauing as the dependent variable and the various cause variables of career plateauing as the independent variables.

Comparisons of Scores by the Three Sites

Table 9 contains a summary of mean scores for the various variables for the three sites. As can be seen from the table, there are some significant differences between the three sites. For example, the EMBA students were lower in organization commitment, career plateauing status in other companies, job-content plateauing, and higher on the self-report performance appraisal scores, average number of work hours, and intention to quit, than the respondents from the materials company and health organization. The materials company was higher on career plateauing (in one's current company) and lower on pay satisfaction, promotion satisfaction, and job involvement than the

Table 9

Mean Scores for Materials Company, Health Organization Employees, and EMBA Students

Variable	Materials	EMBA*	Health
BACKGROUND/DEMOGRAPHICS			
Sample Size	97	141	205
Age (approximate)	38	37	40
Sex - % Male	60%	76%	28%
- % Female	40%	24%	72%
Ethnicity - % Caucasian	84%	82%	69%
Education - Bachelor's degree or more	49%	100%	84%
Average number of years at current company	4.6	6.8	7.5
Average number of years have worked at current job (regardless of company)	4.9	4.0	4.6
Number in Line positions (have employees report to them)	47%	82%	79%
PREDICTOR VARIABLES: PROMOTION/JOB CHALLENGE POTENTIAL			
Career Plateauing (in one's current company)	4.7	3.8	3.9
Career Plateauing (in other companies)	3.6	2.5	3.3
Job content plateauing	3.5	2.9	3.1
MODERATOR VARIABLES			
Promotion Aspiration	6.1	6.0	5.8
Growth Need Strength	6.2	6.5	6.5
Supervisor Discussion/Planning of Subordinate's Career	3.5	3.9	3.8
Willingness to leave for a new job in:			
A. Current city	3.5	4.0	3.0
B. Another City	2.5	2.7	2.7
Perceived Marketability	75%	81%	80%

Table 9 Continued

Variable	Materials	EMBA	Health
CAUSES OF CAREER PLATEAUING			
Organizational Growth Rate of New Positions	3.2	3.6	3.7
New positions are created in the company	3.2	2.6	3.3
Prestige of Education	3.7	4.1	3.9
Importance of seniority in promotions	3.6	4.1	4.3
Company hires external candidates	3.2	3.2	3.3
Power of your Department	3.4	3.6	3.4
OUTCOME VARIABLES: EMPLOYEE JOB/WORK ATTITUDES			
Organization Commitment	4.9	4.4	5.8
Intention to quit one's current company	3.1	3.5	3.1
Job involvement (motivation in one's job) (3-item scale)	5.7	6.1	6.0
Performance Evaluation	4.6	5.7	5.2
Average number of work hours per week	46	55	47
Various Job Satisfaction Items			
Pay Satisfaction	2.7	3.4	3.0
Promotion Satisfaction	2.7	3.1	3.1
Company Satisfaction	3.9	3.7	4.2
Supervisor Satisfaction	3.5	3.5	3.8
Job Satisfaction	3.9	3.6	4.1

*Complete statistics for all variables are not available for the entire EMBA sample.

respondents from the EMBA program and health organization. The health organization was higher on organization commitment and company satisfaction than the other two sites.

Due to these differences, a dummy variable coded 1 to 3 was created to identify the site location of each respondent as mentioned earlier. This site identification variable was utilized as a control variable in the hierarchical regression to control for differences in sites and make it possible to draw general conclusions about the sample regardless of differences between the sites.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Three major research questions were empirically tested in this dissertation. First, nine hypotheses concerning organizational and individual level factors leading to or causing career plateauing were tested. Second, eight hypotheses were tested concerning the impact of career and job-content plateauing on five facets of job satisfaction and six other important employee attitudes and behaviors: organization commitment, job involvement, intention to quit, performance, number of work hours, and promotion aspiration. Third, six hypotheses were tested regarding the factors that moderate the relationship between career plateauing and employee attitudes and behaviors.

Causes of Career Plateauing

The hypotheses concerning causes of career plateauing were tested in two ways. First, zero-order correlations between these variables and career plateauing (perceptual measure) and job-content plateauing were analyzed. These correlations are shown in Table 10. Second, with career plateauing as

Table 10

Causes of Career and Job-Content Plateauing
Zero-order Correlations of Individual and Organizational Level Variables with Career and Job Content Plateauing

Cause/ Predictor Variable	Career Plateauing Current Co.	Job-Content Plateauing	Career Plateauing Other Companies
Organizational Level Variables			
Department Power	-.17**	-.26***	-.02
Growth in New Positions	-.19***	-.33***	-.02
Organizational Culture on Promotions	-.42***	-.33***	-.06
Company Hires External Candidates	.27***	.18***	.07
Seniority as Criteria for Promotions	-.09+	-.03	-.17**
N = 269 to 345			
Individual Level Variables			
Age	.29***	-.03	-.01
Gender	-.03	.06	.02
Ethnicity	.12*	.07	-.03
Education	-.11*	-.16**	-.09
Job Tenure	.30***	-.01	.20***
Company Tenure	.20***	-.07	.31***
Performance	-.10*	-.10+	.05
N = 313 to 425			

KEY
$p \leq .001$ *** $p \leq .01$** $p \leq .05$ * $p \leq .10$+

the dependent variable, three sets of stepwise multiple regressions were conducted with the following independent variables: (a) organizational factors only; (b) individual level factors only; (c) both organizational and individual factors. The results of the regression analysis are shown in Table 11. While the main focus is on career plateauing, the results on job-content plateauing will be discussed briefly later in this section.

Organizational Level Causes of Career Plateauing

Hypothesis 1 states that the organizational growth rate of new positions is negatively related to career plateauing. In other words, career-plateaued employees are more likely to perceive their company as having fewer new job positions available for promotions. In contrast, employees with higher promotion potential are likely to see their organization as creating more new job positions and promotion opportunities. As shown in Table 10, the two-item scale of employee perceptions of the growth in new positions is negatively correlated with career plateauing at $r = -.19$; $p \leq .001$, providing support for Hypothesis 1.

Table 11

Test For Causes of Individual and Organizational Level Variables as Cause of Career Plateauing

Stepwise Multiple Regression with Change in R square

A. Organizational Level Variables Only

Variables entered in stepwise regression: Department Power, Organizational Culture on Promotions, Lack of Growth in New Positions, Seniority as Criteria, Prestige of Education as Criteria, Company Hiring of External Candidates

Dependent Variable	1 Org Culture Promotions	2 Depart-ment Power	3 Company Hiring External	Total Multiple R	N
Career Plateau	.16***	.01*	.01+	.43	293
Beta	-.39	-.16			

B. Individual Level Variables Only

Variables entered in stepwise regression: Age, Gender, Ethnicity, Education, Job Tenure, Company Tenure, Performance Evaluation

Dependent Variable	1 Age	2 Educa-tion	3 Job Tenure	Total Multiple R	N
Career Plateau	.11***	.03**	.02**	.39	289
Beta	.58	-.23	.05		

C. Individual and Organizational Level Variables

Dependent Variable	1 Org Culture Promotions	2 Age	3 Perfor-mance Eval.	4 Depart-ment Power	Total Mult R	N
Career Plateau	.16***	.11***	.02*	.01+	.55	248

KEY $p \leq .001$ *** $p \leq .01$** $p \leq .05$ * $p \leq .10$+

Hypothesis 2 posits that the level of the employee's department power will be negatively related to career plateauing. That is, employees from highly influential or powerful departments will have higher promotion potential and thus will be less likely to be career plateaued. In contrast, employees from low power departments will be more likely to be career plateaued. The correlation between the respondents' perception of department power and career-plateauing status was $r = -.17$; $p \leq .01$, indicating support for Hypothesis 2.

The third hypothesis predicts that the degree the organization promotes its employees frequently will be negatively related to career plateauing. This measure was negatively related to perceptions of career plateauing at $r = -.42$; $p \leq .001$, providing strong support for Hypothesis 3.

Hypothesis 4 posits that company practices which emphasize hiring people from outside the organization (external candidates) for open job positions will be positively related to perceptions of career plateauing. As shown in Table 10 the two-item scale for external candidate hiring is positively related to career plateauing at $r = .27$; $p \leq .001$.

The final hypothesis concerning organizational level causes states that the organizational practice of emphasizing seniority as an important criterion in promotions will be positively related to career plateauing. In essence, employees who are career plateaued will be more likely to perceive that the organization uses seniority as an important determinant in making promotion decisions. The one-item measure for employee perceptions of seniority in promotion decisions is negatively related to career plateauing at $r = -.09$; $p \leq .10$, indicating a significant relationship, but in the direction opposite of what was predicted. In other words, the negative sign indicates that the organizational policy of emphasizing seniority in promotion decisions is related to having greater promotion potential. This result is surprising and I'm not sure why it occurred. Further research is needed to investigate this relationship.

The top portion of Table 11 illustrates the results of the stepwise multiple regression with the five organizational level variables as predictor variables and career plateauing as the dependent variable. Stepwise regression was utilized to determine which of the five variables were the most

important determinants of career plateauing. As shown in the table, the degree the organization promotes its employees frequently was the most important single factor (change in r square =.16; $p \leq .001$). Department power and company hiring of external candidates were associated with marginally significant changes in R square.

Individual Level Causes of Career Plateauing

In the bottom portion of Table 10 the zero-order correlations between career plateauing and the individual level factors are reported. As suggested by Feldman and Weitz (1988), Hypothesis 6 states that growth need strength (GNS) will be negatively related to perceptions of career plateauing. The correlation between GNS and career plateauing was $r = -.12$; $p \leq .05$, indicating some support for this hypothesis. This result should be interpreted with caution since the mean score on GNS was quite high (6.3 on a 7-point scale) and the standard deviation was low (only 0.8), suggesting that there may be a range restriction in this sample. Thus, generalizability to other employee populations is unclear.

Hypothesis 7 posits that the level of education attained is negatively related to career plateauing.

That is, employees with a higher level of education are less likely to be career plateaued than those with less education. Table 10 indicates that the relationship between highest level of education obtained and career plateauing is $r = -.11$; $p \leq .05$, providing some support for Hypothesis 7.

Hypothesis 8 states that age will be positively related to perceptions of career plateauing. Table 10 shows that the correlation between age and career plateauing is $r = .29$; $p \leq .001$, indicating support for this hypothesis.

Hypothesis 9 concerns the "glass ceiling" effect in predicting that women and minorities are more likely to be career plateaued than white males. The coding for gender was 1 = male and 2 = female and for ethnicity it was 1 = Caucasian and 2 = non-Caucasian. The correlations with career plateauing were nonsignificant for gender ($r = .03$, ns), but significant for ethnicity $r = .12$; $p \leq .05$. These results indicate no difference in perceptions of career plateauing between women and men, but that non-Caucasians were slightly more likely to perceive being plateaued than Caucasians. These results should be interpreted with caution. A significant portion of the sample contained a relatively high proportion of

women and non-Caucasian managers in a health care organization. In this organization women and non-Caucasians often hold managerial positions in powerful patient care departments (e.g., nursing services) and thus generalizability to other organizations is unclear.

Table 11 also contains the results of the stepwise multiple regression for the four demographic factors (age, gender, ethnicity, and education) and three other important background variables which have been hypothesized to be related to career plateauing: company tenure, job tenure (Chao, 1990), and performance (Feldman & Weitz, 1988). The stepwise regression indicates age, education, and job tenure as the most important individual demographic and background predictors of career plateauing.

At the bottom of Table 11, results of the stepwise multiple regression which included both individual and organizational level variables as predictors of career plateauing are reported. According to these results the frequency that employees are promoted (change in r square of .16; $p \leq .001$) and age (change in r square of .11; $p \leq .001$) were the two most important predictors. Performance and department power were marginally significant. The

total multiple R for the regression was in the moderate range of .55, indicating that much of the variance in the career plateauing was not explained by these variables.

Job-Content Plateauing

In addition to career plateauing, Table 10 shows zero-order correlations between the individual and organizational variables and job-content plateauing. The only significant correlations between individual level variables and job-content plateauing were education ($r = -.16$; $p \leq .01$), GNS ($r = -.10$; $p \leq .10$), and performance ($r = -.10$; $p \leq .10$). However, four of the organizational variables regarding promotion opportunities were significantly related to job-content plateauing: department power ($r = -.26$; $p \leq .001$), the frequency the organization promotes its employees ($r = -.33$; $p \leq .001$), organizational hiring of external candidates ($r = .18$; $p \leq .001$), and organizational growth of new positions ($r = .-33$; $p \leq .001$). Thus, job-content plateauing appears to be related to a number of employee perceptions of company policies and opportunities regarding promotion. This may be because promotions typically involve changes in

job content and responsibility (Sanborn & Berger, 1990).

Relationship of Career Plateauing to Employee Attitudes

Hypotheses 10 to 16 predict that career plateauing will be negatively related the following employee attitudes and behaviors: organization commitment, intention to quit (positive relationship), job involvement, performance, number of work hours, promotion aspiration and five facets of job satisfaction; pay, promotion, company, supervisor, and job. As stated in Chapter 3, the relationship of career plateauing to these 11 criterion variables were all tested with hierarchical regression with the control and independent variables entered in the following manner: (a) an indicator variable identifying the respondents by employee group; (b) age, gender, ethnicity, and job performance as control variables; (c) job tenure; and (d) career plateau.

The results of the hierarchical regression for the relationship of career plateauing to six employee attitudes and behaviors are shown in Table 12. Career plateauing was highly related to organization commitment (change in r square = .20; $p \leq .001$) and

Table 12

Relationship of Job Tenure and Career Plateauing to Employee Attitudes

Multiple Regression with Change in R square

The Cross product is Job Tenure times Career Plateau

STEP DEPENDENT VARIABLE	1 CO ID	2 Age, Perfor. Race, Sex	3 Job Tenure	4 Career Plateau	5 Cross Product	Total Mult. R	N
Organization Commitment	.02*	.03*	.00	.20***	.00	.51	309
Beta	-.22	A=.22 P=.06 R=.06 S=.15	.00	-.36	.00		
Intention To Quit	.01	.05**	.00	.09***	.00	.39	282
Beta	.14	A=-.21 P=-.19 R=.10 S= -.12	.02	.40	.00		
Job Involvement	.00	.09***	.00	.07***	.00	.41	308
Beta	-.02	A=.42 P=.06 R=-.06 S=.17	.02	-.22	.00		
Performance	.02**	.03*	.01*	.02**	.01+	.32	316
Beta	.27	A=-.13 R=-.52 S=.20	-.03	-.13	-.02		
Work Hours	.01	.13***	.00	.02*	.01+	.42	307
Beta	-.06	A=.44 P=.21 R=.01 S=-.07	-.02	-.11	.02		
Promotion Aspiration	.02**	.10***	.00	.07***	.02*	.45	310
Beta	.24	A=-.45 P=.02 R=-.01 S=.00	-.01	-.24	.02		

KEY $p \leq .001$ *** $p \leq .01$** $p \leq .05$ * $p \leq .10$+

moderately related to intention to quit (change in r square = .09; $p \leq .001$), job involvement (change in r square = .07; $p \leq .001$), and promotion aspiration (change in r square = .07; $p \leq .001$). In addition, career plateauing had small, but significant changes in R square with both the number of work hours and performance (change in r square = .02; $p \leq .01$).

Table 13 illustrates the results of the hierarchical regression for the five job satisfaction variables. As shown in the table, career plateauing showed a significant change in r square for all five job satisfaction variables even after being entered in the regression analysis after six variables. Career plateauing was highly significantly related to satisfaction with promotion (change in r square = .40; $p \leq .001$) and company (change in r square = .17; $p \leq .001$). In addition, career plateauing showed moderate changes in R square in satisfaction with job (change in r square = .09; $p \leq .001$) and supervisor (change in r square = .07; $p \leq .001$). Finally, career plateauing explained a small amount of additional variance in satisfaction with pay (change in r square = .04; $p \leq .001$).

The beta coefficients are also shown in Tables 12 and 13. Please note that step two of the hierarchical

Table 13

Relationship of Job Tenure and Career Plateauing to Job Satisfaction

Multiple Regression with Change in R square

The Cross product is Job Tenure times Career Plateau

STEP DEPENDENT VARIABLE	1 CO ID	2 Age, Perfor. Race, Sex	3 Job Tenure	4 Career Plateau	5 Cross Product	Total Mult. R	N
Pay Satisfaction	.02	.02	.00	.04***	.00	.27	314
Beta	.16	A=.05 P=.10 R=-.03 S=.10	.00	-.14	.00		
Promotion Satisfaction	.00	.03+	.02**	.40***	.00	.67	314
Beta	-.07	A=-.03 P=.12 R=-.08 S=-.07	-.04	-.48	.02		
Company Satisfaction	.05***	.02+	.00	.17***	.00	.49	316
Beta	-.26	A=.12 P=.06 R=-.02 S=.16	.01	-.26	.00		
Supervisor Satisfaction	.01	.05**	.01	.07***	.00	.36	314
Beta	-.11	A=.04 P=.18 R=-.13 S=.11	-.02	-.22	.00		
Job Satisfaction	.03*	.02	.01	.09***	.00	.39	259
Beta	-.23	A=.14 P=-.04 R=-.01 S=-.06	.02	-.21	.01		

KEY $p \leq .001$ *** $p \leq .01$** $p \leq .05$ * $p \leq .10$+

regression contains four control variables and thus the abbreviations for each of these variables are shown. These abbreviations are as follows: age (A), race or ethnicity (R), gender or sex (S), and performance (P). Thus, the beta coefficients for these four control variables are age (A) = .22, race (R) = .06, sex (S) = .15, and performance (P) = .06 for the first regression with organization commitment as the dependent variable in Table 12.

These regression results, combined with the zero-order correlations of career plateauing with the criterion variables from Table 5, indicate that career plateauing is significantly related to a wide range of employee attitudes and behaviors, providing support for Hypotheses 10 to 16. In addition, the sign of the beta coefficients indicate that career plateauing is negatively related to these criterion variables with the exception of intention to quit with which it has a positive relationship.

Hypothesis 17A states that career plateauing (perceptual measure) will explain a greater amount of the variance in the criterion variables than the traditional measure of plateauing, job tenure. (Some hypotheses are so closely related, they are designated as A and B, rather than assigning a new number.) Job

tenure explained a significant amount of variance only in promotion satisfaction (change in r square = .02; $p \leq .01$) and performance (change in r square = .01; $p \leq .01$). Thus, even though job tenure was entered in the hierarchical regression equation before career plateauing, the career plateauing perceptual measure explained more variance in all of the criterion variables. These results provide some support for Hypothesis 17-A and the research of Chao (1990) that a perceptual measure of career plateauing is a better predictor of employee attitudes than the traditional job tenure method. This finding should be regarded with caution because job tenure is a more objective measure while both the dependent variables and career plateau were measured with purely perceptual data. As a result, we would normally expect a stronger relationship with the latter two variables then with the former two variables.

Moderators of the Career Plateauing--Employee Attitudes Relationship

While the correlations and regression results indicate that career plateauing does have a negative relationship with employee attitudes and behaviors, it is important to recognize that career plateauing does

not have a negative relationship with attitudes and behaviors of all employees. Thus, the purpose of the third set of hypotheses concerns the factors that moderate the relationship between career plateauing and employee attitudes and behaviors. The intent here is to determine why some individuals may react more negatively to being career plateaued while others are relatively unaffected.

As mentioned previously, moderators are tested by entering the interaction terms between career plateauing and the moderator variable. Thus, the moderator variable was entered in step five of the hierarchical regression as a main effect and the interaction term was entered in step six for Tables 14 to 20 (the only exception is the interaction term for career plateauing and job tenure was entered in step five since job tenure itself was hypothesized as a moderator as shown in Tables 12 and 13).

Changes in r square are shown at each step of the regression equation for all of the variables in all of the tables. However, since the beta coefficients were already shown for steps one to four in the regression equation in Tables 12 and 13 (steps one to four are common to all the tables), only the beta coefficients are shown for the moderator variable as a main effect

Table 14

Relationship of Supervisor Discussion of Subordinate Career and Career Plateauing to Employee Attitudes

Hierarchical Regression with Change in R square

The Cross product is Supervisor Career Discussion times Career Plateau

STEP	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total		
DEPENDENT VARIABLE	CO ID	Age, Perf. Race, Sex	Job Ten.	Career Plateau	Career Discus	Cross Prod	Mult. R	N	Beta
Organization Commitment	.02*	.03*	.00	.20***	.09***	.02**	.61	305	CD= .18 CP= .05
Intention To Quit	.01	.05**	.00	.10***	.06***	.01	.48	302	CD=-.21 CP=-.04
Job Involvement	.00	.09***	.00	.06***	.03***	.00	.45	303	CD= .13 CP= .00
Pay Satisfaction	.02	.02	.00	.04***	.02*	.01+	.32	306	CD= .08 CP= .03
Promotion Satisfaction	.00	.03+	.02**	.41***	.08***	.01+	.74	307	CD= .17 CP= .02
Company Satisfaction	.05***	.02+	.00	.16***	.04***	.02**	.56	308	CD= .11 CP= .05
Supervisor Satisfaction	.01	.05**	.01	.07***	.22***	.00	.59	307	CD= .32 CP= .00
Job Satisfaction	.03*	.02	.01	.10***	.01*	.01	.42	251	CD= .07 CP= .02
Performance	.02**	.03*	.01*	.02**	.00	.00	.32	308	CD= .00 CP= .00
Work Hours	.01	.13***	.00	.02*	.02*	.01	.42	299	CD= .09 CP= .00
Promotion Aspiration	.02**	.10***	.00	.08***	.00	.01*	.46	309	CD=-.04 CP=-.05

KEY $p \leq .001$ *** $p \leq .01$** $p \leq .05$ * $p \leq .10$+

Table 15

Relationship of Willingness to Leave For a New Job in One's Current City and Career Plateauing to Employee Attitudes

Hierarchical Regression with Change in R square

The Cross product is Willingness to Leave in One's Current City times Career Plateau

STEP	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total		
DEPENDENT VARIABLE	CO ID	Age, Perf. Race, Sex	Job Ten.	Career Plateau	Willing Leave	Cross Prod	Mult. R	N	Beta
Organization Commitment	.02*	.03*	.00	.19***	.09***	.02**	.61	265	WL=-.25 CP=-.07
Intention To Quit	.01	.05**	.00	.09***	.13***	.00	.53	269	WL= .39 CP= .00
Job Involvement	.00	.09***	.00	.06***	.03**	.00	.41	264	WL=-.16 CP=-.03
Pay Satisfaction	.02	.02	.00	.04***	.07***	.01	.37	267	WL=-.21 CP=-.04
Promotion Satisfaction	.00	.03+	.02**	.40***	.06***	.01*	.72	267	WL=-.21 CP=-.04
Company Satisfaction	.05***	.02+	.00	.16***	.07***	.01*	.58	269	WL=-.19 CP=-.05
Supervisor Satisfaction	.01	.05**	.01	.07***	.03**	.01	.42	267	WL=-.17 CP=-.04
Job Satisfaction	.03*	.02	.01	.09***	.06***	.00	.45	241	WL=-.18 CP= .00
Performance	.02**	.03*	.01*	.02**	.00	.00	.32	269	WL= .00 CP= .00
Work Hours	.01	.13***	.00	.02*	.00	.00	.38	267	WL= .09 CP= .00
Promotion Aspiration	.02**	.10***	.00	.06***	.04***	.01+	.48	263	WL= .18 CP= .05

KEY $p \leq .001$ *** $p \leq .01$** $p \leq .05$ * $p \leq .10$+

Table 16

Relationship of Willingness to Leave For a New Job in Another City and Career Plateauing to Employee Attitudes

Hierarchical Regression with Change in R square

The Cross product is Willingness to Leave in Another City times Career Plateau

STEP	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total		
DEPENDENT VARIABLE	CO ID	Age, Perf. Race, Sex	Job Ten.	Career Plateau	Willing Leave	Cross Prod	Mult. R	N	Beta
Organization Commitment	.02*	.03*	.00	.19***	.02**	.00	.55	261	WL=-.12 CP= .00
Intention To Quit	.01	.05**	.00	.09***	.03**	.00	.43	265	WL= .17 CP= .00
Job Involvement	.00	.09***	.00	.05***	.00	.02**	.39	260	WL= .00 CP= .06
Pay Satisfaction	.02	.02	.00	.05***	.00	.01	.27	263	WL= .00 CP=-.03
Promotion Satisfaction	.00	.03+	.02**	.41***	.00	.00	.67	263	WL= .00 CP= .00
Company Satisfaction	.05***	.02+	.00	.16***	.02**	.00	.53	265	WL=-.10 CP= .00
Supervisor Satisfaction	.01	.05**	.01	.07***	.02**	.01	.40	263	WL=-.13 CP=-.04
Job Satisfaction	.03*	.02	.01	.09***	.01	.01+	.40	237	WL=-.18 CP= .05
Performance	.02**	.03*	.01*	.02**	.00	.01+	.32	265	WL= .00 CP=-.06
Work Hours	.01	.13***	.00	.01*	.00	.00	.38	264	WL= .00 CP= .00
Promotion Aspiration	.02**	.10***	.00	.06***	.01+	.01	.48	259	WL=.00 CP=.00

KEY $p \leq .001$ *** $p \leq .01$** $p \leq .05$ * $p \leq .10$+

Table 17

Relationship of Career Plateauing - Other Companies and Career Plateauing (Current Company) with Employee Attitudes

Hierarchical Regression with Change in R square

The Cross product is Career Plateauing - Other Companies times Career Plateau (Current Company)

STEP	1	2	3	4	5	6			
DEPENDENT VARIABLE	CO ID	Age, Perf. Race, Sex	Job Ten.	Career Plateau	Career Plateau Other Co	Cross Prod	Total Mult. R	N	Beta
Organization Commitment	.02*	.03*	.00	.20***	.04***	.01	.53	284	OC= .17 CP= .02
Intention To Quit	.01	.05**	.00	.09***	.06***	.02*	.47	283	OC=-.28 CP=-.07
Job Involvement	.00	.09***	.00	.06***	.00	.00	.41	283	OC= .00 CP= .00
Pay Satisfaction	.02	.02	.00	.04***	.00	.01	.30	263	OC= .00 CP= .00
Promotion Satisfaction	.00	.03+	.02**	.42***	.03***	.00	.70	289	OC= .14 CP= .00
Company Satisfaction	.05***	.02+	.00	.16***	.06***	.02**	.57	290	OC= .18 CP= .04
Supervisor Satisfaction	.01	.05**	.01	.08***	.03**	.00	.41	289	OC= .16 CP=-.00
Job Satisfaction	.03*	.02	.01	.09***	.00	.01	.38	238	OC= .00 CP= .00
Performance	.02**	.03*	.01*	.03**	.00	.00	.31	290	OC= .00 CP=-.02
Work Hours	.01	.13***	.00	.02*	.00	.02*	.44	281	OC= .00 CP=-.06
Promotion Aspiration	.02**	.10***	.00	.07***	.04***	.00	.51	285	OC=-.20 CP=.00

KEY $p \leq .001$ *** $p \leq .01$** $p \leq .05$ * $p \leq .10$+

Table 18

Relationship of Growth Need Strength (GNS) and Career Plateauing with Employee Attitudes

Hierarchical Regression with Change in R square

The Cross product is GNS times Career Plateau

STEP DEPENDENT VARIABLE	1 CO ID	2 Age, Perf. Race, Sex	3 Job Ten.	4 Career Plateau	5 GNS	6 Cross Prod	Total Mult. R	N	Beta
Organization Commitment	.02*	.03*	.00	.18***	.01	.00	.47	216	GN=-.13 CP=-.04
Intention To Quit	.01	.05**	.00	.08***	.01	.00	.41	215	GN=-.28 CP=-.07
Job Involvement	.00	.09***	.00	.05**	.01+	.00	.36	215	GN= .16 CP= .06
Pay Satisfaction	.02	.02	.00	.02*	.02*	.00	.30	218	GN=-.18 CP=-.02
Promotion Satisfaction	.00	.03+	.02**	.35***	.01*	.00	.69	220	GN=-.15 CP= .01
Company Satisfaction	.05***	.02+	.00	.14***	.00	.00	.49	220	GN= .03 CP=-.03
Supervisor Satisfaction	.01	.05**	.01	.07***	.00	.00	.42	220	GN=-.08 CP= .01
Job Satisfaction	.03*	.02	.01	.08***	.00	.01	.35	217	GN=-.05 CP=-.06
Performance	.02**	.03*	.01*	.01	.02+	.00	.36	220	GN= .20 CP=-.03
Work Hours	.01	.13***	.00	.01	.01	.03**	.47	212	GN= .13 CP= .18
Promotion Aspiration	.02**	.10***	.00	.09***	.05***	.00	.52	216	GN=.37 CP=.05

KEY $p \leq .001$ *** $p \leq .01$** $p \leq .05$ * $p \leq .10$+

Table 19

Relationship of Promotion Aspiration and Career Plateauing to Employee Attitudes

Hierarchical Regression with Change in R square

The Cross product is Promotion Aspiration times Career Plateau

STEP	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total		
DEPENDENT VARIABLE	CO ID	Age, Race, Sex	Perf. Job Ten.	Career Plateau	Prom Asp	Cross Prod	Mult. R	N	Beta
Organization Commitment	.02*	.03*	.00	.20***	.02**	.01*	.55	304	PA=-.15 CP=-.08
Intention To Quit	.01	.05**	.00	.10***	.03**	.02**	.47	301	PA= .22 CP= .12
Job Involvement	.00	.09***	.00	.07***	.00	.03**	.44	302	PA= .00 CP=-.12
Pay Satisfaction	.02	.02	.00	.04***	.04***	.00	.33	308	PA=-.18 CP= .00
Promotion Satisfaction	.00	.03+	.02**	.41***	.07***	.01*	.73	309	PA=-.24 CP=-.06
Company Satisfaction	.05***	.02+	.00	.17***	.03***	.02**	.55	310	PA=-.14 CP=-.07
Supervisor Satisfaction	.01	.05**	.01	.07***	.081+	.00	.37	309	PA=-.09 CP= .00
Job Satisfaction	.03*	.02	.01	.10***	.01	.01+	.42	253	PA=-.30 CP=-.06
Performance	.02**	.03*	.01*	.02**	.00	.00	.32	310	PA= .00 CP= .00
Work Hours	.01	.13***	.00	.01+	.00	.00	.41	301	PA=-.00 CP=-.00

KEY $p \leq .001$ *** $p \leq .01$** $p \leq .05$ * $p \leq .10$+

Table 20

Relationship of Job Content Plateauing and Career Plateauing to Employee Attitudes

Hierarchical Regression with Change in R square

The Cross product is Job Content Plateau times Career Plateau

STEP	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total		
DEPENDENT VARIABLE	CO ID	Age, Perf. Race, Sex	Job Ten.	Career Plateau	Job Cont	Cross Prod	Mult. R	N	Beta
Organization Commitment	.02*	.03*	.00	.20***	.16***	.00	.65	281	JC=-.41 CP=-.02
Intention To Quit	.01	.05**	.00	.09***	.07***	.00	.47	279	JC= .33 CP= .00
Job Involvement	.00	.09***	.00	.06***	.09***	.00	.47	280	JC=-.32 CP= .01
Pay Satisfaction	.02	.02	.00	.04***	.01+	.00	.27	286	JC=-.10 CP=-.01
Promotion Satisfaction	.00	.03+	.02**	.39***	.06***	.01+	.71	286	JC=-.21 CP= .03
Company Satisfaction	.05***	.02+	.00	.16***	.10***	.01+	.58	280	JC=-.36 CP=-.03
Supervisor Satisfaction	.01	.05**	.01	.07***	.08***	.00	.47	286	JC=-.30 CP= .01
Job Satisfaction	.03*	.02	.01	.09***	.09***	.00	.49	254	JC=-.25 CP=-.03
Performance	.02**	.03*	.01*	.02**	.00	.00	.30	288	JC=-.05 CP=-.03
Work Hours	.01	.13***	.00	.01+	.05***	.00	.46	304	JC=-.24 CP=-.01
Promotion Aspiration	.02**	.10***	.00	.08***	.04***	.01*	.51	282	JC= .23 CP= .06

KEY $p \leq .001$ *** $p \leq .01$** $p \leq .05$ * $p \leq .10$+

in step five and the interaction term in step 6 in Tables 14 to 20. This was done to make the tables easier to read. These two beta coefficients are shown in the last column of these tables. The moderating variable and the interaction term are abbreviated in this column for each of these tables. For example, CD stands for supervisor career discussion as a main effect and CP stands for the cross product or interaction term in Table 14 and all of the other tables in this chapter. Thus, in Table 14 the beta coefficient for supervisor career discussion (CD) was -.21 and the cross-product (CP) was -.04 for the regression with intention to quit as the dependent variable.

The first potential moderator tested was job tenure (Hypothesis 17-B). Step five of the regression equation in Tables 12 and 13 indicates the change in R square for the cross product of job tenure times career plateauing. As shown in these two tables, there are significant effects on three of the eleven criterion variables: performance and number of work hours (change in r square = .01; $p \leq .10$) and promotion aspiration (change in r square = .02; $p \leq .05$).

The beta coefficients were +.02 for the cross-products for both the number of work hours and promotion aspiration, indicating that if we hold career plateauing constant, as job tenure increases there is an increase in the number of work hours and promotion aspiration. Thus, employees who are career plateaued and are in their current job for a longer period of time appear to work longer hours and have higher promotion aspirations. However, the beta coefficient was -.02 for the interaction term with performance as the dependent variable. This indicates that career plateaued employees with longer job tenures have lower performance evaluation scores.

At first these results regarding the number of work hours and promotion aspiration seemed counter intuitive. However, Carnazza et al. (1981) also found that many low promotion potential employees continued to have high promotion aspirations and made the following observation:

> One explanation is that these managers acknowledge the reality of the situation on a conscious level, but on an unconscious level they have not given up. An equally plausible explanation is that even though these managers understand and acknowledge reality, promotion is such a pervasive cultural success indicator that to openly repudiate and reject it is just too difficult and threatening. (p. 25)

Thus, a possible explanation for this result is that employees may seek to compensate for their perceived lower promotion potential and longer job tenure by rejecting the possibility that they are not very promotable and they do this by increasing their work hours and having higher promotion aspiration.

Hypothesis 18 states that supervisor discussion of the subordinate's career will positively moderate the relationship between career plateauing and employee attitudes. Table 14 contains the results of the hierarchical regressions with supervisor discussion of subordinate career entered in step five and the cross product of supervisor career discussion and career plateauing entered in step six. The cross-product explained a significant amount of variance in the following employee attitudes: organization commitment (change in r square = .02; $p \leq .01$), pay and promotion satisfaction (change in r square = .01; $p \leq .10$), company satisfaction (change in r square = .02; $p \leq .01$), and promotion aspiration (change in r square = .01; $p \leq .01$), thus providing support for Hypothesis 18.

The sign of the beta coefficients of the cross product was positive for all of the criterion variables except for promotion aspiration. This

indicates that if career plateauing is held constant, having greater supervisor discussion of the subordinate's career increases the employee's commitment to the organization and satisfaction with pay, promotion, and the company. However, having greater discussion of the subordinate's career has a decreasing effect on the respondent's promotion aspiration. This latter result is surprising. However, it may be that for career plateaued employees, the supervisor's career discussion involves a realistic assessment of the employee's relatively low chances of promotability, thereby decreasing his or her's promotion aspiration.

It should also be noted from Table 14 that supervisor discussion of the subordinate's career was significant as a main effect for 9 of the 11 criterion variables (all except promotion aspiration and performance). These results indicate that supervisor career discussion has an important relationship with the major organizational behavior individual criterion variables, even after controlling for a number of demographic and background variables as well as career plateauing.

Tables 15 and 16 illustrate the hierarchical regression results for willingness to leave one's

current company for a new job in one's current city (Hypothesis 19A) and in a new city/geographic area (Hypothesis 19B). The cross product of willingness to relocate in one's current city and career plateauing explained a significant amount of variance in four employee attitudes: organization commitment (change in r square = .02; $p \leq .01$), satisfaction with promotion and company (change in r square = .01; $p \leq .05$) and promotion aspiration (change in r square = .01; $p \leq .10$), providing some support for Hypothesis 19-A.

The signs of the beta coefficients of the cross product were negative for all the criterion variables, except for promotion aspiration. This indicates that given a certain level of career plateauing, the more willing the employee is to leave for a new job in another organization, the more negative the effect on commitment to the company and satisfaction with promotion and company. However, career-plateaued individuals who are more willing to leave for another job in the current city are likely to have higher promotion aspiration.

Finally, willingness to leave for a new job in one's current city was significant as a main effect on 9 of the 11 criterion variables. These results

indicate that willingness to relocate for a new job in one's current city is also an important predictor of employee attitudes.

The results for willingness to leave for a new job in another city are shown in Table 16. The cross product for willingness to leave for a new job in another city and career plateauing was significant for the following criterion variables: job involvement (change in r square = .02; $p \leq .01$) and job satisfaction and performance (change in r square = .01; $p \leq .10$). These results indicate some support for Hypothesis 19-B.

The beta coefficient of the cross product was negative for performance which indicates that, for a certain level of promotion potential, being willing to leave for a new job in another city is related to lower performance. In contrast, the sign of the beta coefficients for the cross product was positive for job involvement and job satisfaction, indicating that, for a given level of career plateauing, a greater willingness to leave for a new job in another city is related to higher job involvement and job satisfaction. These results are confusing as it is not clear why for career plateaued individuals, willingness to leave for a new job in another city is

related to higher satisfaction and involvement with their jobs, but lower job performance. More research is needed in this area.

Hypothesis 20 posits that career-plateauing status in other organizations will negatively moderate the relationship between career plateauing (in one's current company) and employee attitudes. The results for this hypothesis are shown in Table 17. The cross product was significant for intention to quit, satisfaction with company, and number of work hours (change in r square = .02; all at least $p \leq .05$).

The sign of the cross product's beta coefficients were negative for intention to quit and positive for company satisfaction indicating that, for a constant level of career plateauing (in one's current company), an increasing level of career plateauing in other organizations is related to lower intention to quit and higher satisfaction with one's company. Thus, in this case, the interaction of career plateauing in one's current company and career plateauing in all other companies has a positive impact on two of the employee's attitudes in relationship to their current company. It may be that employees who perceive they have low promotion potential elsewhere are then more likely to be satisfied with and seek to remain in

their current company. In contrast, the sign of the beta coefficient of the cross product was negative for the number of work hours. This suggests that people career plateaued in both one's current company and all other companies, work less hours than employees who are career plateaued in their company only.

It should also be noted from Table 17 that career plateauing in other companies explains a significant amount of additional variance in six of the eleven criterion variables as a main effect. The sign of the beta coefficient for career plateauing in other companies was positive for four of the criterion variables: organization commitment, and satisfaction with promotion, company, and supervisor. The sign of the beta coefficient was negative for intention to quit and promotion aspiration, indicating negative relationships to these variables.

The zero-order correlations of career plateauing status in other organizations with the criterion variables were reported in Table 5. The results indicate that this variable had a significant positive relationship with two of the eleven criterion variables (organization commitment and company satisfaction) and a negative relationship with intention to quit. In addition, career plateauing in

other companies had a significant zero-order negative correlation with performance and promotion aspiration. Overall, the results of the regression and correlation analysis indicate that career plateauing status in other companies has a significant relationship to only a subset of employee attitudes.

At first these results seemed counter intuitive for two reasons. First, given the importance of promotion and the high intra-firm mobility of employees in the United States (Von Glinow & Chung, 1989) it would be expected that career plateauing in other companies would be significantly related to most employee work attitudes. It appears that employees (at least in this sample) focus most on promotion opportunities in their current company and less on other organizations. Of course, it should also be remembered that the employee attitudes measured in this study all related specifically to one's current job and company, but career plateauing status in other companies may relate more to more general work attitudes.

A second point is that I anticipated that career plateauing in other companies would have a negative relationship to employee attitudes. In retrospect, the positive relationship of career plateauing in

other companies, as a main effect, and as a cross product to employee attitudes makes sense. A possible explanation is that employees who have low overall promotion potential (e.g., in both their company and in all other companies) may decide not to purse promotion opportunities elsewhere, and as a consequence, may be more accepting and satisfied with their current job and organization.

The results for Hypothesis 21, which predicts that growth need strength (GNS) will moderate the relationship of career plateauing to employee attitudes, are shown in Table 18. The GNS - career plateauing cross product was significant for only one variable: the number of work hours. The sign of the beta coefficient of the cross product for the number of work hours was positive, indicating that higher GNS increases the number of work hours for a given level of career plateauing.

Overall, these results indicate there is hardly any support for Hypothesis 21. Again it should be recalled that there may be a restriction of range on this variable. However, GNS as a main effect was significant for five of the eleven criterion variables: promotion aspiration, performance, job involvement, promotion satisfaction, and pay

satisfaction. As indicated by the sign of the beta coefficient, growth need strength had a positive relationships with all of these criterion variables, except pay satisfaction.

Hypothesis 22 posits that promotion aspiration will moderate the career plateauing--employee attitudes relationship. As shown in Table 19, the cross product of promotion aspiration and career plateauing explained a significant amount of additional variance in six of the ten criterion variables: organization commitment and promotion satisfaction (change in r square = .01; $p \leq .05$), intention to quit and company satisfaction (change in r square = .02; $p \leq .01$), job involvement (change in r square = .03; $p \leq .01$), and job satisfaction (change in r square = .01; $p \leq .10$). The sign of the cross product beta coefficients were negative for five of the variables and positive for intention to quit--indicating that for a given level of career plateauing, having higher promotion aspiration leads to a more negative impact on these various employee attitudes. These results provide strong support for Hypothesis 22, suggesting that promotion aspiration is an important moderator of the career plateauing--employee attitudes relationship.

It should also be observed from Table 19 that promotion aspiration explained a significant amount of additional variance as a main effect for six of the ten criterion variables: organization commitment, intention to quit, and satisfaction with pay, promotion, company, and supervisor. The sign of the standardized beta coefficients indicates that promotion aspiration had a negative relationship with all of these variables (except intention to quit with which it had a positive relationship).

These results suggest a somewhat perplexing result for organizations. On the one hand, career plateauing or low promotion potential is negatively related to many employee attitudes, including promotion aspiration. However, at the same time having higher promotion aspiration is also negatively related to many employee attitudes. Thus, employees who are either career plateaued or who have high promotion aspiration (e.g., those interested in the fast-track) are more likely to have more negative work attitudes. A possible explanation is that employees who have either high promotion aspiration or low promotion potential are less likely to be accepting or satisfied with their current position and the promotion opportunities of the firm.

Hypothesis 23-A predicts that job-content plateauing will be a moderator of the career plateauing relationship with the various criterion variables. Table 20 shows that the cross-product of career plateauing and job-content plateauing was significant for satisfaction with company and promotion (change in r square = .01; $p \leq .10$) and promotion aspiration (change in r square = .01; $p \leq .05$). These results provide some support for Hypothesis 23-A.

The sign of cross product beta coefficient was negative for company satisfaction, indicating that being both career and job-content plateaued leads to a lower level of satisfaction with one's company. In contrast, the sign of the cross product beta coefficients were positive for promotion aspiration and satisfaction with promotion, indicating that for a given level of career plateauing, a higher level of job-content plateauing leads to higher promotion aspiration and satisfaction with promotion.

The latter two results appear to be counter-intuitive. It may be that being plateaued in both promotion and in the content of one's job leads employees to be more determined to achieve a promotion. However, it would then be expected that

the employee would be less (not more) satisfied with their current promotion status. Clearly, more research needs to be conducted in this area.

Hypothesis 23-B predicted that job-content plateauing will have a negative relationship with employee attitudes and behaviors. As a main effect, job-content plateauing explained significant variances for every criterion variable except performance even when entered after the other control variables--job tenure, and career plateauing. As with career plateauing, the sign of the beta coefficients indicate that job-content plateauing has a negative relationship to employee attitudes.

The zero-order correlations of job-content plateauing to employee attitudes reported in Table 5 also indicate that job content is strongly negatively related to the criterion variables. In fact, the correlations for job-content plateauing to employee attitudes are the same or higher than career plateauing for 7 of the 11 dependent variables. Thus, both the regression and correlational analysis strongly support Hypothesis 23-B and indicate that job-content plateauing has an important relationship to employee attitudes and behaviors.

A summary of the findings on the impact of moderator variables on employee attitudes is shown in Table 21. The column on the right hand side of the table indicates the number of significant moderating effects found per moderator variable. The table indicates that promotion aspiration was the most important moderator of the career plateauing--employee attitudes relationship with six significant interaction terms. Supervisor discussion of the subordinate's career and willingness to leave for a new job in one's current city were the next most important with significant moderators of 4 of the 11 employee attitudes. Job tenure, job-content plateauing, career plateauing in other companies, and willingness to leave for a new job in another city all had significant interaction effects with three of the criterion variables. Only growth need strength with just one significant result for the cross product does not appear to be an important moderator of the career plateauing to employee attitudes relationship (and this may be due in part to the high mean score and range restriction on growth need strength by the sample).

The number of moderating effects found per criterion variable is shown at the bottom of the

Table 21

Summary of Results of Tests for Moderating Effects

Moderator	Criterion Variables with Significant Cross Products											
	Perf-	# Work	Org	Int	Job	Prom		Satisfaction				
	mance	Hours	Comm	Quit	Inv	Asp	Pay	Prom	Co	Super	Job	#
Job Tenure	X	X				X						3
Job Content Plateau					X	X	X					2
Career Plateau-Other Co's		X		X					X			3
Promotion Aspiration			X	X	X			X	X		X	6
Supervisor Career Discussion			X				X	X	X			4
Willingness to Leave Current City			X			X		X	X			4
Willingness to Leave Other City	X				X						X	3
GNS		X										1
Totals	2	3	3	2	3	3	2	3	4	0	2	

table. Each criterion variable was moderated by at least two variables with the exception of satisfaction with one's supervisor, which had no significant interaction effects. Satisfaction with company had four significant moderating effects which was the highest of any of the employee attitudes.

Stepwise Multiple Regression of Career Plateauing

Thus far, most of the analysis of career and job-content plateauing has been conducted via hierarchical regression. Such an approach does not penable us to determine what variables are the most important predictors of employee attitudes and behaviors. Table 22 illustrates stepwise multiple regression for the 11 criterion variables regressed on the following demographic, individual, predictor, and moderator variables: age, gender, ethnicity, level of education attainment, job tenure, performance, career plateau (both in one's current company and all other companies), job-content plateau, growth need strength (GNS), promotion aspiration, willingness to leave for a new job in one's current city, willingness to leave for a new job in another city, perceived marketability, employee group or sample

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Table 22

Stepwise Multiple Regression For Various Predictor Variables of Employee Attitudes

Predictor and Moderator variables entered in stepwise regression: Age, Gender, Ethnicity, Education, Job Tenure, Performance Evaluation, Career Plateau (current company), Job Content Plateau, Career Plateau (other companies), Growth Need Strength (GNS), Promotion Aspiration, Willingness to Leave in Current City, Willingness to Leave in Other City, Perceived Marketability, Company Identification (control), and Supervisor Discussion of Career.

N=239 For all regressions except Job Satisfaction N = 191
Change in R square is shown at each step

Dependent Variable	Job-Content Plateau	Willing Leave Curr City	Career Plateau	Super. Career Discuss	CO Iden	Job Ten.	Perf	Tot Mul R
Organization Commitment	.25***	.11***	.04***	.02**	.02**	.01*	.01*	.68
Beta	-.44	-.27	-.15	.10	-.19	.03	-.08	

Dependent Variable	Willing Leave Cur City	Job Content Plateau	Super Career Discuss	Age	Career Plateau	Prom Asp	Perf	Tot Mul R
Intention to Quit	.23***	.08***	.03***	.01+	.02*	.01*	.01*	.62
Beta	.48	.34	-.14	-.17	.14	.14	-.11	

Dependent Variable	Job-Content Plateau	Age	Willing Leave Cur City	Prom Asp	Tot Mul R
Job Involvement	.14***	.06***	.02**	.02*	.49
Beta	-.35	.33	-.14	.15	

Dependent Variable	Educa-tion	Race	GNS	CO ID	Tot Mul R
Performance	.06***	.05***	.03**	.01+	.39
Beta	.25	-.71	.27	-.37	

Dependent Variable	Job-Content Plateau	Age	Perf	Job Tenure	Tot Mul R
Work Hours	.09***	.06***	.05***	.02*	.46
Beta	-.28	.33	.22	-.04	

Table 22 (Continued)

Dependent Variable	Willing Leave Cur City	Career Plateau	Prom Asp	CO Id	Willing Leave Oth City	Tot Mul R
Pay Satisfaction	.07***	.03**	.05***	.03**	.01+	.42
Beta	-.19	-.12	-.21	.23	.09	

Dependent Variable	Career Plateau	Prom Asp	Super Discuss Career	Willing Leave Cur City	Tot Mul R
Promotion Satisfaction	.42***	.12***	.07***	.03***	.81
Beta	-.45	-.33	.17	-.14	

Dependent Variable	Job-Content Plateau	Willing Leave Curr City	Career Plateau	CO ID	Prom Asp	Job Ten.	Super Discuss Career	Tot Mul R
Company Satisfaction	.20***	.09***	.03***	.04***	.02*	.01*	.01*	.64
Beta	-.33	-.21	-.12	-.23	-.11	.03	.06	

Dependent Variable	Super Discuss Career	Willing Leave Cur City	Perf	Job-Content Plateau	Tot Mul R
Supervisor Satisfaction	.32***	.03**	.01*	.01+	.61
Beta	.35	-.15	.11	-.11	

Dependent Variable	Job-Content Plateau	Willing Leave Cur City	Perf	Tot Mul R
Job Sat.	.14***	.02*	.02*	.42
Beta	-.27	-.11	-.11	-.04

Dependent Variable	Age	Career Plateau	Willing Leave Cur City	GNS	CO ID	Job-Content Plateau	Tot Mul R
Promotion Aspiration	.12***	.07***	.04**	.03*	.03*	.02*	.55
Beta	-.51	-.22	.18	.26	.52	.18	

KEY $p \leq .001$ *** $p \leq .01$** $p \leq .05$ * $p \leq .10$+

LISREL Analysis

Because of some of the limitations in this research study, which are explained in detail in Chapter 5, I also conducted some preliminary analysis of the data using the LISREL program (Joreskog & Sorbom, 1981). One of the advantages of LISREL is it that allows simultaneous testing of the various variables included in the proposed model of Chapter 2 and can assess the overall goodness of fit of a model.

Two adjustments were made to the model in developing the LISREL analysis. First, since the model is already complex, the organizational level cause variables were excluded from the analysis for parsimony. Second, due to the typical problems in multicollinearity, I did not include the moderators and the related interaction terms in the LISREL analysis. Eighteen variables were ultimately included in the LISREL model. These variables include six individual level variables which were assumed to cause or affect the two independent variables, career and job-content plateauing: age, gender, job tenure, ethnicity, education, and growth need strength (GNS). Ten dependent variables were included: the five aspects of job satisfaction (work, supervisor,

company, pay, and promotion), organization commitment, job involvement, intention to quit, performance, and the number of work hours. In this covariance structure model, the six individual level variables were also assumed to cause the dependent variables. In addition, a number of relationships were specified between the various dependent variables.

With covariance structure models, it is important to first examine the overall fit of the model. If the model does not fit the data, the hypothesis that the model is an accurate representation of the data is rejected. Table 23 includes a summary of the fit statistics of this structural model. The maximum likelihood chi square yielded by the test was 103.3 (df = 16, p =.000). The goodness of fit index was .958. Both indexes indicates that the theoretical model fits the data.

Table 24 lists the gamma coefficients between the six individual level cause variables and the 10 dependent variables and two independent variables. The t-values for these coefficients are shown in Table 25. All of the significant results reported below are at the $p \leq .05$ level unless otherwise noted. The data indicate that job tenure is significantly positively related to organization commitment and career plateau

Table 23

Fit Statistics of Structural Model

Statistics	Value
Chi-Square	103.30
P-value	.000
Degrees of Freedom (df)	16
Chi-Square/D.F.	6.47
Goodness-of-Fit Index	.958
Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index	.553
Root-Mean-Square-Residual	.064
Overall Coefficient of Determination	.639

Table 24

Gamma Coefficients

Dependent Variables	Tenure	Age	Gender	Ethnicity	Education	GNS
Organization Commitment	.093	-.034	.050	.050	-.103	-.129
Intention to Quit	.023	-.070	.008	-.019	.111	.073
Job Involvement	.055	.254	.034	.031	-.085	.128
Pay Satisfaction	.078	-.012	.048	-.010	.002	-.075
Promotion Satisfaction	-.123	.163	-.042	-.090	-.022	-.091
Company Satisfaction	.043	.147	.132	.010	-.026	.112
Supervisor Satisfaction	-.087	.081	.067	-.093	.020	-.009
Job Satisfaction	.091	.166	.053	-.013	-.072	-.038
Performance	-.081	-.086	.076	-.129	.143	.190
Number of Work Hours	-.087	.438	.043	.048	.114	.057
Career Plateau	.181	.261	-.008	-.046	-.201	-.086
Job Content Plateau	.044	-.019	.061	.130	-.080	-.123

Standard Errors

Dependent Variables	Tenure	Age	Gender	Ethnicity	Education	GNS
Organization Commitment	.041	.044	.036	.037	.037	.037
Intention to Quit	.052	.065	.046	.045	.049	.048
Job Involvement	.064	.066	.058	.057	.060	.058
Pay Satisfaction	.067	.069	.059	.059	.062	.060
Promotion Satisfaction	.052	.053	.047	.046	.049	.047
Company Satisfaction	.055	.056	.048	.048	.050	.049
Supervisor Satisfaction	.064	.066	.056	.056	.059	.057
Job Satisfaction	.066	.067	.059	.059	.062	.060
Performance	.065	.075	.058	.057	.060	.059
Number of Work Hours	.063	.072	.057	.056	.060	.057
Career Plateau	.064	.064	.058	.057	.059	.058
Job Content Plateau	.070	.070	.063	.062	.065	.063

Table 25

Gamma Coefficient T-Values

Dependent Variables	Tenure	Age	Gender	Ethnicity	Education	GNS
Organization Commitment	2.29	-0.78	1.38	1.41	-2.74	-3.49
Intention to Quit	0.44	-1.07	0.16	-0.42	2.27	1.53
Job Involvement	0.86	3.87	0.59	0.54	-1.41	2.20
Pay Satisfaction	1.16	-0.16	0.81	-0.17	0.03	-1.25
Promotion Satisfaction	-2.36	3.07	-0.89	-1.95	-0.44	-1.94
Company Satisfaction	0.79	2.61	2.73	0.21	-0.52	2.30
Supervisor Satisfaction	-1.37	1.23	1.19	-1.65	0.34	-0.15
Job Satisfaction	1.37	2.46	0.88	-0.21	-1.15	-0.63
Performance	-1.25	-1.15	1.30	-2.26	2.37	3.21
Number of Work Hours	-1.37	6.12	0.75	0.84	1.90	1.00
Career Plateau	2.82	4.06	-.13	-0.80	-3.38	-1.47
Job Content Plateau	0.63	-0.27	0.96	2.09	-1.24	-1.94

and negatively related to promotion satisfaction. Age was significantly positively related to job involvement, promotion satisfaction, company satisfaction, job satisfaction, number of work hours and career plateau. Being a female was positively related only to company satisfaction. Being a minority was positively related to job-content plateauing and negatively related to performance, promotion satisfaction, and supervisor satisfaction (the latter at $p \leq .10$). Education was positively related to performance, the number of work hours, and intention to quit and negatively related to organization commitment and career plateauing. Growth needs strength was positively related to job involvement, company satisfaction; and performance and negatively related to organization commitment, promotion satisfaction, and job-content plateauing.

Table 26 lists the beta coefficients and standard errors for the relationship between both career plateau and job-content plateau and the ten dependent variables. The t-values for these coefficients are shown in Table 27. The data shows that career plateauing was negatively related to promotion satisfaction and job satisfaction at $p \leq .05$ and to organization commitment at $p \leq .10$. Job-content

Table 26

Beta Coefficients

Dependent Variables	Career Plateau	Job Content Plateau
Organization Commitment	-.084	-.113
Intention to Quit	-.076	.050
Job Involvement	-.053	-.332
Pay Satisfaction	.035	-.002
Promotion Satisfaction	-.567	-.257
Company Satisfaction	-.074	-.167
Supervisor Satisfaction	.002	-.180
Job Satisfaction	-.132	-.316
Performance	.004	.094
Number of Work Hours	-.061	-.351

Standard Errors for Beta Coefficients

Dependent Variables	Career Plateau	Job Content Plateau
Organization Commitment	.047	.043
Intention to Quit	.060	.061
Job Involvement	.062	.057
Pay Satisfaction	.078	.062
Promotion Satisfaction	.050	.046
Company Satisfaction	.064	.054
Supervisor Satisfaction	.075	.062
Job Satisfaction	.064	.059
Performance	.076	.072
Number of Work Hours	.065	.068

Table 27

Beta Coefficients T-Values

Dependent Variables	Career Plateau	Job Content Plateau
Organization Commitment	-1.761	-2.644
Intention to Quit	-1.266	.818
Job Involvement	-0.855	-5.803
Pay Satisfaction	0.441	-0.033
Promotion Satisfaction	-11.273	-5.569
Company Satisfaction	-1.166	-3.120
Supervisor Satisfaction	0.026	-2.906
Job Satisfaction	-2.069	-5.372
Performance	0.048	1.307
Number of Work Hours	-0.938	-5.132

plateauing was negatively related to organization commitment, job involvement, promotion satisfaction, company satisfaction, supervisor satisfaction, job satisfaction, and the number of work hours.

Table 28 shows the PSI, squared multiple correlations, standard errors, and t-values. The squared multiple correlations exceed .40 for four of the variables: organization commitment, intention to quit, promotion satisfaction, and company satisfaction. The squared multiple correlations were between .20 and .25 for job involvement, supervisor satisfaction, performance, and the number of work hours. The lowest squared multiple correlations were for the remaining two dependent variables--pay satisfaction (.15) and job satisfaction (.14)--and the two independent variables--career plateau (.19) and job-content plateau (.04).

Overall, several observations can be drawn form this preliminary LISREL analysis. First, the analysis indicates the model tested reasonably fits the data. Second, the data indicates that fewer significant relationships were found between career and job-content plateau to the dependent variables than in the regression analysis. This is due in part to the fact that the LISREL analysis also tested for relationships

Table 28

PSI and Squared Multiple Correlations

Dependent Variables	PSI	Squared Multiple Correlations	Standard Error	T-Values
Organization Commitment	.298	.653	.027	11.24
Intention to Quit	.472	.499	.044	10.62
Job Involvement	.789	.203	.070	11.24
Pay Satisfaction	.833	.153	.074	11.24
Promotion Satisfaction	.516	.433	.046	11.24
Company Satisfaction	.542	.417	.048	11.24
Supervisor Satisfaction	.746	.229	.066	11.24
Job Satisfaction	.833	.145	.074	11.24
Performance	.764	.241	.068	11.23
Number of Work Hours	.756	.241	.073	10.33
Career Plateau	.804	.196	.072	11.24
Job Content Plateau	.955	.045	.085	11.24

between two additional individual level cause variables (education and growth need strength) and the dependent variables which were not included in the regression analysis. In addition, the LISREL analysis assumed different casual relationships among the different dependent variables.

In summary, the analysis indicates that the relationship between career and job-content plateauing and the various dependent measures needs to reassessed with additional LISREL analysis. The modification indices suggest the following relationships should be considered for specification in future models:

1. Organization commitment with performance.

2. Job involvement with organization commitment, intention to quit, satisfaction with pay, promotion, company, and job, performance, and work hours.

3. Pay satisfaction with work hours.

4. Promotion satisfaction with intention to quit, satisfaction with company, supervisor, and job, and work hours.

5. Job satisfaction with satisfaction with company and supervisor.

Additional models should be tested with these proposed relationships and revised based upon subsequent analysis.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The incidence and importance of career plateauing is expected to increase significantly in this decade (Bardwick, 1986; Driver, 1988; Greller & Nee, 1989; Hall & Richter, 1990). However, the research on plateauing has recently been criticized for lack of rigor and having a number of fundamental limitations (Chao, 1990; Feldman & Weitz, 1988). Due to these problems, the intent of this dissertation has been to improve the research on career plateauing on both conceptual and methodological levels.

Research on career plateauing commenced with Ference et al. (1977) who defined the construct as the low likelihood of future hierarchical movement and proposed a model of plateauing and performance. Since then approximately a dozen empirical studies have been conducted on career plateauing. Concurrent with this research on career plateauing there have been a number of studies on promotion in the past decade.

The first major limitation in the conceptual research is the lack of integration of the research

between promotion and career plateauing, even though plateauing essentially represents reduced promotion potential. A second conceptual limitation is that few articles have been devoted to the theoretical development of career plateauing and hence no overall model of the career-plateauing process has been proposed. In addition, there has been little differentiation between career-plateauing status in one's organization versus all other organizations (Chao, 1990), simplistic treatment of the career plateaued as one large group of homogenous employees (Feldman & Weitz, 1988), consideration of few mediating or moderating factors (Gerpott & Domsch, 1987), and little attention on job content as part of the plateauing process (Bardwick, 1986).

In terms of research methodology, an important problem has been the reliance on job tenure as the main method of operationalizing career plateauing and resulting dichotomous classification of employees as either plateaued (0% chance of promotion) or not plateaued (100% chance of promotion) (Chao, 1990). Job tenure rates vary significantly by occupation, organization, and promotion potential for most employees is a probability (e.g., between 0 and 1).

In addition, the analysis has largely been conducted with t-tests on the differences in employee attitudes between those classified as plateaued versus non-plateaued. As such, the research has not utilized sophisticated methods for empirical assessment (Feldman & Weitz, 1988). Furthermore, job-content plateauing has not been empirically tested and most of the career-plateauing research has not considered a wide range of the major organizational behavior individual attitudes dependent variables. In response to these issues, the objective of this dissertation was to seek improvements in the conceptual and methodological aspects of career-plateauing research, and based on these refinements, to develop an empirical study which extends our knowledge of the causes, consequences, and moderators of plateauing.

Conceptual Considerations

It is recommended that the definition of career plateauing be broadened. The slower economic growth of the United States, workforce downsizing, increase in competition for available positions from the large baby boom cohort, and dual career family considerations are all likely to increase the incidence of career plateauing among younger- and

middle-aged workers in the 1990s. As a result, the definition of career plateauing needs to be broadened from primarily older employees who have very little probability of upward hierarchical movement (Ference et al., 1977), to also include employees who will remain at one level in the organizational hierarchy for a long time (e.g., baby boomers) (Hall & Rabinowitz, 1989), but will have some future upward movement.

In addition, given the different ways that employees define career success (Derr, 1986; Driver, 1988; Schein, 1978, 1987) and the increasing emphasis of employees on the intrinsic aspects of work (Hall & Richter, 1990), the plateauing construct also needs to be reconsidered to include job content, not just hierarchical advancement. A purpose of this dissertation was to expand on the work of Bardwick (1986) to further develop the job-content plateauing construct. Job-content plateauing was defined as the time an individual experiences a significant decrease or little challenge, meaningfulness, and growth in his or her work. A typology of career and job-content plateauing was proposed to predict employee performance and work attitudes.

An objective of this dissertation was to present an extensive literature review of career plateauing which integrates the literature on plateauing and promotion and draws on studies from both psychological and sociological disciplines. From this broader perspective, a comprehensive model of the career-plateauing process and research hypotheses was proposed which involved the following three major areas: (a) the individual and organizational level causes of or factors leading to career plateauing, (b) the consequences or impact of career plateauing on employee attitudes and behaviors and ultimately on organizational effectiveness and (c) the moderators of the career plateauing - employee attitudes relationship.

Research Methodology Considerations

The first methodological objective was to improve the method of operationalizing career plateauing by indicating the limitations of the traditional job-tenure method and suggesting two other alternative methods--individual self-assessment perception and organizational assessment--as alternatives. Both of these methods allow for career plateauing to be operationalized as a probability between 0 and 1,

rather than on a dichotomous basis, reflecting more appropriately how employees view their promotion potential (Chao, 1990) as well as the proposed broader definition of career plateauing.

Accordingly, the most important methodological goal was to develop perceptual measures of career plateauing and job-content plateauing which meet acceptable standards of reliability and validity. Career-plateauing perceptual measures were developed on two levels: in regards to one's current organization (six items) as well as in all other organizations (four items). In addition, perceptual measures were developed for job-content plateauing (six items) and promotion aspiration (three items). These items were first tested on a sample of approximately 200 day and evening MBA students at the University of Southern California and Pepperdine University. The 19 items were factor analyzed and the items loaded cleanly on the four factors as anticipated with acceptable levels of internal reliability as measured by Cronbach's alphas on both the MBA students and the final sample of respondents. Career plateauing and job-content plateauing were also evaluated for test-retest reliability on a subset of the MBA students. In addition, significant

correlations were found between career plateauing and a number of background and demographic variables expected to be related to it such as age, job tenure, and the number of promotions received in the last five years.

Survey Field Study and Sample

These perceptual measures were then utilized with items drawn from previous research in a survey field study on three groups of employees. The first group of employees--the executive MBAs (EMBAs)--was selected for inclusion in this dissertation for its diversity of middle- to upper-level professional staff and managers and membership in a large number of organizations. A limitation of the EMBA sample was that it consisted primarily of male Caucasians. For this reason the second group of respondents included a large number of women and minorities in middle management and professional-staff positions of a large southern California health care organization. The third group of employees included a Southern California materials construction company which was comprised of two different types of employees. The first type of employees consisted primarily of male Caucasians in middle- to upper-level management,

professional staff, and sales positions. The second type of employees consisted mainly of women and minorities in lower level management and clerical positions of this company.

Overall, the three groups of respondents from the EMBA program, health care organization, and materials company provide a diverse sample of employees with which to study career plateauing. However, the average age of each of the respondents in each of these three groups was between 37 and 40, which limits the generalizability of the results to other employees given the strong correlation between age and plateauing. The sampling limitations of this study will be discussed in greater detail shortly.

Discussion of Results

The empirical results have a number of important implications for theory building and future research on career plateauing. Two of the most important implications involve the following areas. First, a number of hypotheses from the proposed model of the career-plateauing process concerning the causes, consequences, and moderators of plateauing were tested. A summary of the findings on the research hypotheses is presented.

Second, this is the first study to test perceptual measures of two types of career plateauing (both in one's current organization and in all other organizations) as well as job-content plateauing.

Results of Tests of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: Some support for the organizational growth rate of new positions is negatively related to employee perceptions of career plateauing.

Hypothesis 2: Some support for departmental power is inversely related to career plateauing.

Hypothesis 3: Strong support for organizations with a higher frequency of promotions have a lower incidence of career-plateaued employees.

Hypothesis 4: Some support for HRM practices which emphasize hiring external candidates for open positions have a higher rate of career-plateaued employees.

Hypothesis 5: Some support that seniority as an important criterion for promotion is positively related to employee perceptions of career plateauing.

Hypothesis 6: Some support that growth need strength is negatively related to employee perceptions of career plateauing.

Hypothesis 7: Some support that the level of educational attainment is negatively related to career plateauing.

Hypothesis 8: Moderate support that age is positively related to career plateauing.

Hypothesis 9: No support that women are more career plateaued than men, but some support that non-Caucasians have a higher incidence of career plateauing than Caucasians.

Hypothesis 10: Career plateauing is negatively related to the following aspects of job satisfaction:

A. Job Satisfaction (moderate support)
B. Pay satisfaction (some support)
C. Promotion satisfaction (strong support)
D. Satisfaction with one's organization (moderate support)
E. Satisfaction with one's supervisor (moderate support)

Hypothesis 11: Moderate support that career plateauing is negatively related to organization commitment.

Hypothesis 12: Some support that career plateauing is negatively related to employee motivation (as measured by job involvement).

Hypothesis 13: Moderate support that career plateauing is positively related to employee intention to quit one's organization.

Hypothesis 14: Some support that career plateauing is negatively related to the number of employee work hours.

Hypothesis 15: Some support that career plateauing is negatively related to performance.

Hypothesis 16: Strong support that career plateauing is negatively related to employee career attitudes, such as promotion aspiration.

Hypothesis 17A: Strong support that a perceptual measure of career plateauing will explain more of the variance in employee attitudes and behaviors then the traditional measure of career plateauing, job tenure.

Hypothesis 17B: Some support that job tenure moderates the relationship between career plateauing and employee attitudes.

Hypothesis 18: Strong support that the supervisor's discussion and planning for the subordinate's career moderates the impact of career plateauing on employee attitudes.

Hypothesis 19A: Moderate support that the employee's willingness to leave his or her current job

for a new job in another organization moderates the impact of career plateauing on employee attitudes.

Hypothesis 19B: Some support that the employee's willingness to leave his or her current job for a new job in another city moderates the impact of career plateauing on employee attitudes.

Hypothesis 20: Moderate support that career-plateauing status in other organizations moderates the relationship between career plateauing (in one's current organization) on employee attitudes.

Hypothesis 21: Little support that Growth need strength (GNS) moderates the impact of career plateauing on employee attitudes.

Hypothesis 22: Strong support that career motivation such as promotion aspiration moderates the impact of career plateauing on employee attitudes.

Hypothesis 23A: Strong support that job-content plateauing is be negatively related to employee work attitudes

Hypothesis 23B: Some support that job-content plateauing moderates the relationship of career plateauing to employee attitudes.

Causes of Career Plateauing

The results support a number of aspects of the proposed comprehensive model of career plateauing, including the causes of plateauing which had seldom been studied in past research. In this study both individual and organizational level causes of career plateauing were investigated. Zero-order correlations indicated the following organizational factors were negatively related to employee perceptions of career plateauing: growth rate of new positions, departmental power, frequency of organizational promotion of employees, organizational practice of hiring external candidates for open positions, and use of seniority as a criterion for promotion decisions. In addition, stepwise multiple regression of the organizational factors indicated that the frequency of organizational promotion of employees was the most important predictor of career plateauing, followed by department power and the organization hiring of external candidates.

In terms of individual level factors, correlational analysis indicated growth need strength and level of educational attainment were negatively related to career plateauing. In addition, being older and non-Caucasian were positively related to

career plateauing. No difference was found on perceptions of career plateauing between women and men. Thus, for this sample of primarily middle-level management employees, the "glass-ceiling effect" appears to apply only to non-Caucasians and not to women. However, the generalizability of these results to other employee groups is unclear given that women in the health care organization (which comprised almost one-half of the sample), may perceive promotion opportunities differently than women in non-health care organizations. Stepwise multiple regression of these various individual factors along with job tenure, company tenure, and performance was also conducted. The regression indicated that age was the most important predictor of career plateauing, followed by education, and job tenure.

Finally, stepwise multiple regression of both the individual and organizational factors indicated that the frequency of organizational promotions of employees, age, performance, and department power were the most important predictors of career plateauing. These results indicate for the first time how individual- and organizational-level factors are jointly related to perceptions of career plateauing. Future studies should investigate these various

factors in other employee groups and different organizational settings. For example, will perceptions of career plateauing decrease in an organization which has a higher promotion rates of employees or promotes internal candidates rather than hires external applicants for open positions? Will women and non-Caucasians perceive less promotion potential than white males in other organizations? Will age and employee perceptions of the organizational rate of promotions continue to be the most important predictor of career plateauing in other organizations?

Future research should also use a time series design to determine specifically how perceptions of organizational promotion opportunities relate to employee self-assessment of career plateauing. Do perceptions of limited organizational opportunities cause an employee to feel career plateaued or do career-plateaued employees attribute their perceived lack of promotion potential to external factors such as few organizational opportunities? This research may help organizations to better understand the attitudes of the career plateaued and to assist in the development of more effective managerial interventions for career plateauing.

Consequences of Career and Job-Content Plateauing

The second set of research hypotheses concerns the relationship between career plateauing and job-content plateauing and a variety of employee attitudes and behaviors--not just career attitudes. The criterion variables included performance, number of work hours, organization commitment, job involvement, intention to quit, and five facets of job satisfaction: job, pay, promotion, company, and supervisor. Hierarchical regression was employed using an indicator variable for the three employee groups in the sample (EMBA, health care organization, and materials company) and the following control variables: age, gender, ethnicity, performance, and job tenure.

These variables were all entered into the regression equation before career plateauing. The purpose of the hierarchical regression was to present a conservative test of the career-plateau perceptual measure by determining the additional variance in employee attitudes explained by career plateauing. A second purpose was to test whether the traditional measure of career plateauing, job tenure, or the

perceptual measure of career plateauing explained greater variance in employee attitude criterion variables.

The hierarchical regressions indicated that the perceptual measure of career plateauing explained a significant amount of additional variance in all of the criterion variables even when entered after six control variables. The sign of the beta coefficient indicated career plateauing was negatively related to employees attitudes. The data show that career plateauing was most strongly related to organization commitment, intention to quit, promotion aspiration, and satisfaction with promotion, company, and supervisor. Career plateauing also appears to have significant, but low-to-moderate negative relationships with satisfaction with job and pay, job involvement, number of work hours, and performance. Thus, career plateauing appears to impact the major organizational behavior individual attitude criterion variables.

Another important finding was that the perceptual measure of career plateauing explained a greater amount of variance than job tenure in all of the employee attitudes and behaviors. This supports the research of Chao (1990) that a perceptual measure of

career plateauing should replace job tenure as the primary method of operationalizing this construct.

In addition to career plateauing, job-content plateauing was also empirically tested with hierarchical regression. Job-content plateauing explained a significant amount of additional variance in all of the criterion variables, except promotion aspiration and performance, even when entered after the control variables and career plateauing. Job-content plateauing was most strongly related to organization commitment, intention to quit, job involvement, and satisfaction with promotion, supervisor, and job. The construct was also related on a low-to-moderate level to satisfaction with pay and company and the number of work hours. Like career plateauing, job-content plateauing had a negative relationship with these employee attitudes.

Stepwise multiple regression of job-content plateauing and career plateauing, even when entered with 14 other demographic, background, and moderator variables, also indicated these two variables were strong predictors of employee attitudes. In fact, the correlational and stepwise regression analyses indicated that job-content plateauing was a better overall predictor of most employee attitudes than

career plateauing. Clearly, the results indicate the importance of job-content plateauing and the need to include it in future plateauing studies. Future research should also seek to determine whether career plateauing or job-content plateauing has a more important impact on certain employee attitudes or for different types of employees (e.g., technical specialists, managerial). In addition, longitudinal research is needed to determine the casual relationship between career plateauing and employee attitudes. For example, does poor performance and poor work attitudes lead to career plateauing or does plateauing lead to lower performance?

These results, in conjunction with the findings on factor analysis, internal reliability, test-retest reliabilities and correlations with a number of background and demographic variables, provide some support for the psychometric properties of these perceptual measures of career plateauing and job-content plateauing. This finding represents one of the most important contributions of this dissertation for future plateauing research.

Following the suggestion of Chao (1990), this dissertation was also the first study to empirically investigate both career plateauing in one's current

organization and career plateauing in other organizations.

Two important conclusions can be drawn from the data on these two aspects of career plateauing. First, career plateauing in other organizations was found to be significantly related to only about one-half of the criterion variables. This suggests that promotion potential in one's current organization has a much more important impact on employee attitudes than promotion potential in other organizations. This is true even though inter-firm mobility is considered to be much higher and more important in the United States than in most other countries (Von Glinow & Chung, 1989). Second, career plateauing in other organizations had a positive relationship with several employee attitudes. It appears that having low promotion potential in other companies may cause employees to be more accepting and satisfied with their current job and organization.

Clearly, this research needs to be replicated in other organizations. Thus, while career plateauing in other organizations does not have the same degree of impact on employee attitudes as career plateauing in one's current organization, it still is an important

factor to consider in future studies as both a main effect and moderator.

Moderating Factors

One major area of empirical research involved what factors moderate the relationship between career plateauing and employee attitudes--an area which has largely been ignored in past research. Moderators were tested by adding the cross product of career plateauing and the moderator variable in the last step of the hierarchical regression. A significant cross product indicates a moderating effect. Up to eleven variables were tested in this fashion.

The most important moderator was promotion aspiration which was significant for six of the criterion variables. The results indicate that career-plateaued employees with high promotion aspirations were more likely to have negative work attitudes than plateaued individuals who place a low importance on promotions.

The supervisor discussion of the subordinate's career was found to be a positive moderator of four of the career-plateauing-employee attitude relationships and career plateauing in other organizations for three of the criterion variables. Thus, for a given level

of career plateauing, the greater the supervisor career discussion and the lower the employee's promotion potential in other organizations, the more positive the impact on employee attitudes.

Willingness to leave for a new job in the same city was a significant moderator of the career-plateauing-employee attitude relationship for four of the criterion variables. However, this variable had a negative moderating effect: for a given level of career plateauing, employees who were more willing to leave for a new job were more likely to have negative work attitudes.

Three other variables--job tenure, job-content plateauing, and willingness to leave for a new job in another city--were significant moderators for three of the employee attitudes. Only growth need strength was not a significant moderator of the relationship between career plateauing and employee attitudes.

This dissertation represents the first attempt to empirically test a large number of moderators. The findings clearly indicate that plateauing does not affect all individuals equally, supporting Feldman and Weitz's (1988) assertion that the career plateaued should not be treated as one large homogenous group of employees. Future research should utilize other data

analysis techniques such as cluster analysis, to obtain additional insights into subgroups of career-plateaued employees and how different combinations of variables jointly affect employee attitudes. For example, career-plateaued employees who have low promotion aspiration, supervisors who regularly discuss their careers, and are career plateaued in other organizations may be more likely to have high performance and job satisfaction.

Job-content plateauing is another important moderating factor to consider. Employees who are both career plateaued and job-content plateaued are likely to have less positive work attitudes than employees who have both high promotion and job challenge potential. Cluster analysis may also provide insights into these two subgroups of employees as well as employees who are plateaued on one dimension but not the other (e.g., career plateaued but not job-content plateaued and vice versa). For example, will career-plateaued employees with high-job challenge potential and high-promotion aspiration have positive work attitudes (e.g., can job challenge compensate for the lack of promotion potential for employees who place a high value on promotion?).

Overall, the data provide support for a number of facets of the proposed model of the career-plateauing process. This model needs to be tested in other groups of employees and organizations. In addition, future research should build on this model by testing new factors in each area of the model. For example, the fairness of the organization's promotion system should be empirically tested as a cause of career plateauing. Additional dependent variables might include organization based self-esteem (Pearce, Gardner, Cummings, & Dunham, 1989), absenteeism, and other measures of productivity (sales, profits and loss, and surveys from customers). New moderators to be tested could include career attitudes (Derr, 1986; Driver, 1988; Schein, 1978) and loyalty to the organization (Elsass & Ralston, 1989).

Limitations of the Study

There are several limitations of this study. First, though the sample is diverse in terms of professional status, gender, and ethnicity, the generalizability to other employees is still unclear. For example, the average age of the sample was 39. Since age was strongly related to career plateauing, this study needs to be conducted with different age

groups. Ideally, future research should include studies of employees of all ages who may face career plateauing (Bardwick, 1986).

Second, the specific management practices, type of employees, and organizational context of the respondents in this sample may have significantly influenced the results. As mentioned earlier, the unique nature of hospitals (including the high number of women and minorities) may affect the generalizability of the results. In addition, there was a very high distribution of white males in the managerial and professional staff positions in the materials company while the majority of its women and non-Caucasians were located in the lower-level supervisory and clerical positions. This distribution may also have affected perceptions of plateauing and work attitudes. Furthermore, due to the unique nature of EMBA programs, the EMBA students may not represent typical managers in many organizations. Finally, while there are a number of executive, staff, and clerical employees in the sample, a majority of the respondents are in middle-management positions. Future studies should consider career plateauing in employees in different levels of the organizational

hierarchy as well as those from more technical backgrounds.

A third potential limitation is that all of the data were collected on one survey instrument at one point in time. As a result, the ability to draw causal inferences is limited and common-method variance represents a potential problem. However, it should be noted the zero-order correlations between career plateauing and the various criterion, control, and moderator variables varied significantly, providing some indication that the respondents did discriminate between the different variables. In addition, a number of control variables were utilized in the hierarchical regression to provide a conservative test of career plateauing.

Fourth, all of the measures, including career plateauing and performance, were operationalized only by self-report of the respondent; no organizational or supervisor assessment was obtained. Given the lack of agreement between subordinate and the supervisor perceptions of the subordinate's promotion potential (Carnazza et al., 1981), it would be useful to have an alternative method of operationalizing career plateauing as well as other measures such as performance.

Finally, there are limitations to the regression analysis. First, there is some degree of multicollinearity in the variables which could potentially affect the results. However, with the exception of correlations between a number of the dependent variables, very few of the correlations between the individual and organization cause, independent, and moderator variables (and these variables to the dependent measures) were above .40--a commonly accepted point of where multicollinearity is considered a significant problem. A second possible limitation is that much of the analysis was conducted with hierarchical regression. The forced entry of the variables at each step of the regression equation reduces the ability of each variable to account for its unique share of the variance in the criterion variables. For this reason stepwise multiple regression with the various independent, control, and moderator variables was also utilized. The stepwise regression indicated that career and job-content plateauing were still important predictors of employee attitudes and behaviors.

Recommendations For Future Research

This study points to a number of directions for future research. First, the study needs to be replicated in other employee groups which vary by the various demographic variables (age, ethnicity, gender, and education level), employee type, and organizational context. Second, future research on career plateauing should seek to use multiple methods (e.g., both individual and organization assessments) of operationalizing the career-plateauing construct. Following Carnazza et al., (1981), an interesting direction will be to compare employee and organizational assessments of promotion potential and how the congruency of these perspectives affects employee attitudes. Likewise, research should seek to collect data from objective organizational sources, such as performance, sales, absenteeism, and turnover.

Third, such studies should consider a number of organizational contextual factors. In addition, to the promotion practice variables used in this study, future research should seek to include such organizational contextual factors as company size, presence of labor unions, business strategy, technology, and organizational life cycle stage. One possibility is to conduct a study which includes fewer

employees from a large number of organizations in which archival data can collected on such areas as market share, profits, and financial ratios. In this way the relationship of career plateauing to organizational profitability and effectiveness can be examined.

Fourth, some of the future studies on plateauing should be longitudinal. Such research can trace how career and job-content plateauing and employee attitudes vary over time and enable us to determine the casual relationship between plateauing and work attitudes. For example, do work attitudes decline over time as an employee stays plateaued or do individuals learn to accept their plateaued status and have positive work attitudes and high performance? What happens to attitudes and performance when plateaued employees obtain additional education or new job experience and their promotion potential improves? This dissertation has potential as a future longitudinal study because a large number of the EMBA respondents voluntarily identified themselves and they could be surveyed again at a later date.

Fifth, an ideal study would combine both survey assessment and event history analysis of archival data from the organization, including information on job

tenures and promotion rates of employees over time in the company. Having access to company archival data such as performance ratings from appraisals, training and development programs attended, demographic data, and educational levels would provide a number of insights into the individual and organizational factors that increase or decrease hierarchical movement. A survey or interview assessment would then provide a valuable complement to the objective organizational data by indicating how the employees feel and think about their promotion status.

Finally, future research should consider the impact of career plateauing on nonwork attitudes. Several researchers (Bardwick, 1986; Elsass & Ralston, 1989; Near, 1985) indicate career plateauing has a negative impact on the individual's stress, health, financial status, and self-esteem which, in turn, can adversely affect work attitudes.

Implications for Practice

This dissertation also offers a number of implications for practice. Perhaps the most important concerns of organizations are how many of its employees are plateaued, what is the impact of plateauing on employees and the organization, and what

interventions can organizations develop to alleviate the negative effects of plateauing. The previous chapter shows that both career and job-content plateauing have a negative affect on a wide range of employee attitudes and behaviors. The research and practice implications of developing solutions to career plateauing are discussed in the next section of this chapter. I will now briefly discuss how many employees are affected by plateauing.

The data indicate both career and job-content plateauing are important phenomena in this sample. While a number of the respondents indicated they have relatively low to moderate levels of promotion potential, the sample continues to have high promotion aspirations. For example, if the career plateauing scale (mean = 4.01 on a 7-point scale) is reversed scored to represent promotion potential, the mean score would be 3.99. However, the mean score for the promotion aspiration scale was 5.9. As such, the gap between promotion aspiration and promotion potential is 5.9 - 3.99 = 1.91, which is a large difference on a 7-point scale. (Caution must be exercised in reviewing these calculations since the data in this study are probably either ordinal or interval and thus

it may be difficult to determine true differences between different variables).

Furthermore, promotion aspiration was negatively related to a number of employee attitudes, indicating that organizations face a dilemma in which both employees with low promotion potential (career plateaued) and high promotion aspiration have less positive work attitudes. As such, organizations must try to simultaneously manage two fundamentally different problems associated with promotion. Dealing with these two different groups of employees will likely require different human resource management and career strategies.

In addition to perceiving relatively low promotion potential, the employees did not feel there were many promotion opportunities available in their organizations. The mean score was 3.8 on the degree to which the organization promotes its employees frequently and 3.2 for the organizational growth rate of new positions. These results indicate that firms need to address this unfavorable perception of the organizational promotion environment either directly in their promotion systems or by providing alternatives to promotions.

Another potential issue indicated in this dissertation concerns career plateauing and workforce diversity. Non-Caucasians were more likely to report being career plateaued and lower performance appraisal ratings than Caucasians. This provides further data that creating equal opportunity and meeting the needs of minorities is an important issue for organizations, particularly given the increasing diversity of the workforce.

Various aspects of job enrichment and increasing job challenge have been suggested as solutions to career plateauing (Bardwick, 1986; Hall & Richter, 1990). However, if job-content plateauing (mean = 2.9) was reversed scored to indicate job challenge potential the mean score would be 5.1. However, the sample mean for growth need strength, which is similar to the desire or need for challenging work, was 6.4. As such, the gap between growth need strength and job challenge potential was 6.4 - 5.1 = 1.3, which again is a relatively significant difference. It appears that the sample does not have a high degree of job challenge to compensate for the lack of promotion potential. Thus, organizations must address issues related not only to promotion, but also job content.

Another possible solution for career and job-content plateauing concerns the relationship between the employee and his or supervisor. For example, the degree to which the supervisor discusses and plans the subordinate's career was strongly positively related to most of the employee work attitudes as both a main effect and moderator. This finding indicates that effective supervisor-subordinate relationships and organizational career systems may help counter the negative effects of plateauing. The issue of developing solutions to plateauing will be discussed in greater detail.

Developing Solutions to Plateauing

Once the nature and impact of career plateauing on employee attitudes and the organization has been established, another important research direction is to develop managerial interventions which will enable companies to motivate and retain competent and high performing plateaued employees. A number of researchers have suggested solutions for career-plateaued employees. The most prominent suggestions involve various job-enrichment strategies such as lateral moves, greater job challenge and responsibilities, new work assignments, participation

on task forces and project teams, internal consulting assignments, job rotation, and temporary work assignments (Bardwick, 1986; Carnazza et al., 1981; Feldman & Weitz, 1988; Gerpott et al., 1986; Gerpott & Domsch, 1987; Hall, 1985; Hall & Richter, 1990; Hall & Rabinowitz, 1988; Slocum et al., 1987; Rosen, 1988; Rosen & Jerdee, 1988). Other frequently recommended solutions include making employees aware of their plateauing status and organizational limitations in promotion opportunities (Bardwick, 1986; Carnazza et al., 1981; Slocum et al., 1987, Rosen & Jerdee, 1988), career counseling and development (Hall, 1985; London & Mone, 1987), providing training and development opportunities (Ahlburg & Kimmel, 1986; Near, 1983; Slocum et al., 1987), developing alternative rewards (Ahlburg & Kimmel, 1986) and skill-base career paths (Hall, 1985), and improving communication between the supervisor and subordinates (Gerpott & Domsch, 1987; Near, 1983) and co-workers (Carnazza et al., 1981).

Unfortunately, there are several limitations with these suggestions. First, none of these proposals have been empirically tested. Second, with the exception of Feldman and Weitz (1988), these suggestions have been made in general for all career-plateaued employees and thus did not take into account

individual differences in employees. Third, the focus of these proposed solutions has been primarily on the employees and have not considered the needs, motives, or contextual factors of organizations. In effect, little consideration has been given to the organization except to say that firms should aggressively seek to assist career-plateaued employees.

Developing effective managerial interventions for career and job-content plateauing requires a more sophisticated approach which simultaneously involves organizational and employee levels of analyses. In terms of the employee perspective, the following factors should be considered in developing interventions for career plateauing. First, what is the employee's motivation towards the various solutions mentioned above? A central component of expectancy theory states that the valence of employees for organizational rewards needs to be considered. Growth need strength (Hackman & Oldham, 1980) and career models (Derr, 1986; Driver, 1988; Schein, 1978, 1987) which link employee motivations to preferences for organizational rewards may be useful here.

Second, the employee's stage of professional development should be considered in determining the

appropriate nature and type of changes in job content and enrichment strategies. Career stage models may provide some helpful insights here. Third, the employee's self-efficacy or perceived competence will affect how receptive and willing career-plateaued employees are to the various possible interventions (Rosen, 1988). In summary, the important point is that solutions to career plateauing should not be applied universally and instead should consider the specific nature of the employee.

The needs and context of the organization also need to be considered in developing solutions to career plateauing. The organizational perspective should consider the following factors. First, the organization should seek to determine the cause of career plateauing before developing interventions for plateaued employees (Feldman & Weitz, 1988; Rosen, 1988). For example, is the cause of plateauing primarily due to employee (e.g., obsolescent skills or lack of effort) or to organizational limitations (e.g., downsizing, and lack of promotion and job opportunities)? Such knowledge will inform firms of whether to undertake individual or organizational intervention strategies for plateaued employees.

A second key point to consider is how career plateauing affects the organization (Lawrence & Mittman, 1991). The magnitude of the problem is based on the following factors: how many employees are plateaued, how negative is the impact of plateauing on employee attitudes, and what is the resulting impact on organizational effectiveness and performance?

Third, with information on the impact of plateauing on employees and the organization, the firm needs to consider how much resources to invest in developing solutions to plateauing. The organization should consider conducting a benefit-cost analysis of proposed interventions. In addition, management should ensure that the interventions are consistent with the organizational culture, philosophy, and business strategy (Lawrence & Mittman, 1991).

Finally, organizations should study the effectiveness of the interventions over time to determine how successful these programs are. An ideal research study would be to split career-plateaued employees into different groups and develop different interventions for each group. Differences in work attitudes can then be compared over time between groups with different interventions as well as a control group with no intervention (Rosen, 1988).

In conclusion, a number of economic, demographic, organizational, and individual factors are likely to increase the incidence and importance of both career and job-content plateauing in the future. Given these trends it will become even more imperative for researchers to use both cross-sectional and time series research designs involving multiple sources of data and methods of operationalization to determine the impact of career plateauing on employees and organizations. In turn, these studies should be used to inform researchers and organizations on how to develop effective managerial interventions to career plateauing. The ability of researchers and practitioners to first assess the impact of career plateauing and to then develop effective intervention strategies will have a significant impact on many employees and organizations in the future.

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APPENDIX A

PROMOTION AND JOB CHALLENGE SURVEY

DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT
AND ORGANIZATION

PROMOTION AND JOB CHALLENGE SURVEY

Dear Employee:

People sometimes experience problems in obtaining what they want from their companies (e.g. promotion, pay, interesting work, etc.). We at the U.S.C. School of Business are asking for your cooperation in completing the enclosed survey which is aimed at solving some of these problems. The questions ask how do you assess your potential for promotion and job challenge? How satisfied are you with your work? What kinds of rewards and opportunities do you desire? There are no right or wrong answers; we simply want your honest opinions.

The primary purpose of this study is for research at U.S.C., but summary statistics will be sent to your Medical Group Administration. All of your responses will be kept strictly confidential. If you do desire a copy of your individual results and a comparison of your scores to the overall scores at Kaiser Permanente please write your name & department below. Your individual results will be reported only to you.

Most people complete the survey in 15-20 minutes. Please mail the survey back to me in the attached envelope when you have answered all the questions.

We thank you in advance for your participation - it is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

John Milliman
U.S.C. School of Business

ORGANIZATIONAL REWARDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Please rate the following items on the seven point scales provided to the extent they are IMPORTANT TO YOU

Very Little 1	Little 2	Some 3	Moderate 4	Consider-able 5	Very Much 6	Extremely Much 7

1. More challenging work in:							
A. a functional or specialty area	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B. in terms of general management responsibility	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. Bonus for high quality work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. Greater variety in your current job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. Being able to participate more with your boss in setting goals and making decisions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. Benefit plans with more options and choices	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. Greater opportunity to participate in important projects which affect the success of the company	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. Increased job security	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. More information about what your boss thinks about your job performance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. More opportunity for temporary work assignments to learn new skills	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. Promotion to:							
A. a higher level in my specialty area	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B. a higher level managerial position	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. Opportunity to take a sabbatical or other leave of absence for professional or personal reasons	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. Formal, nonfinancial recognition (such as letters of commendation or awards) for work well done	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. Better career counseling regarding organizational opportunities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. Informal recognition for jobs well done from your boss or higher level managers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. Lateral move to another area or department	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. Flexible work hours or schedules	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

YOUR FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES IN YOUR CURRENT COMPANY

Unless otherwise specified the questions in this section refer to how you perceive your future job and promotion opportunities in your CURRENT COMPANY.

	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Mildly Disagree 3	Neither Agree Nor Disagree 4	Mildly Agree 5	Agree 6	Strongly Agree 7
1. I expect to be constantly challenged in my job in the future							
2. My opportunities for upward movement are limited my present organization							
3. I will learn and grow a lot in my job							
4. I expect to be promoted frequently in the future in							
A. my company							
B. in other companies							
5. My job tasks and activities will become routine for me in the future							
6. I definitely want to be promoted							
7. My job responsibilities will increase significantly in the future							
8. I have reached a point where I do not expect to move much higher in:							
A. my company							
B. in other companies							
9. My job will continually require me to extend my abilities and knowledge							
10. The likelihood that I will get ahead in:							
A. my organization is limited							
B. other organizations is limited							
11. It is important to me to be promoted							
12. I am unlikely to obtain a much higher job title in							
A. my organization							
B. other organizations							
13. I expect to advance to a higher level in the near future in my company							
14. I desire to move up to higher levels in my company							
15. I will be challenged in my job							
16. I would take a lateral move if it:							
A. involved interesting work or required new skills							
B. involved an increase in pay or status							

HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT YOUR CURRENT JOB, SUPERVISOR AND COMPANY

	Strongly Disagree 1	Moderately Disagree 2	Slightly Disagree 3	Neither Agree Nor Disagree 4	Slightly Agree 5	Moderately Agree 6	Strongly Agree 7
1. I am very much involved personally in my job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organization	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I consider my job to be very central to my existence	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I like to be absorbed in my job most of the time	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I will probably look for a new job in the coming year	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. This organization really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. I have been unsuccessful in looking for another job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. My supervisor discusses my career and personal development	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. I am extremely glad that I chose this organization to work for over others I was considering at the time I joined	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. I talk up this organization to my friends as a great organization to work for	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. I live, eat, and breathe my job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organization	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. I scan newspapers and other sources for prospective jobs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. I really care about the fate of this organization	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. My supervisor assists me in setting specific career development goals	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. Usually I feel detached from my job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. I frequently think of quitting my job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. I would be satisfied with a lateral move to another area/department if it provided me with new skills/experience	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Please use the scale below to rate your **SATISFACTION** with your company.

1	2	3	4	5
Very Dissatisfied		Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied		Very Satisfied

1. The amount of pay for the work I do	1	2	3	4	5	
2. The opportunities for advancement on this job	1	2	3	4	5	
3. How my pay compares with that for similar jobs in other companies	1	2	3	4	5	
4. With the person who supervises you - your organizational superior	1	2	3	4	5	
5. The chances of getting ahead on this job	1	2	3	4	5	
6. My pay and the amount of work I do	1	2	3	4	5	
7. The way promotions are given out on this job	1	2	3	4	5	
8. With working for this company - overall	1	2	3	4	5	
9. How my pay compares with that of others	1	2	3	4	5	
10. My chances for advancement	1	2	3	4	5	
11. With the nature of the work you perform - with your job	1	2	3	4	5	

12. My last performance evaluation was:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Far Exceeds Expectations			Meets Expectations			Does Not Meet Expectations

HOW YOU PERCEIVE THE OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE IN YOUR COMPANY

Please indicate how accurately the statements below describe the promotion opportunities available to you in your current company.

Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Slightly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

1. There is little growth in new positions (e.g. for promotions) in this company	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. Attending a prestigious school is important for moving up in your company	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. Seniority is an important criteria in promotions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Please continue using the following scale:

Strongly Disagree 1	Moderately Disagree 2	Slightly Disagree 3	Neither Agree Nor Disagree 4	Slightly Agree 5	Moderately Agree 6	Strongly Agree 7

4. Promotions primarily occur only when turnover creates an open position — 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

5. Few new positions are created in the company — 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

6. In general, the organization promotes its employees frequently — 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

7. Job vacancies here are usually filled by people from outside the company. — 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

8. An employee who applies for another job here has a better chance of getting that job than someone from outside who applies for the job — 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

YOUR IDEAL JOB

Using the scale below, please indicate the degree to which **you would LIKE** to have each characteristic present in your job.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Would like having this only a moderate amount (or less)			Would like having this very much			Would like this extremely much

1. Stimulating and challenging work — 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

2. Opportunities to learn new things from my work — 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

3. Great job security — 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

4. A sense of worthwhile accomplishment in my work — 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

5. Opportunities for personal growth and development in my job — 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

YOUR CURRENT DEPARTMENT

How would you rate the power of your Department?
(Assume power is defined as the ability of a department to influence other departments to bring about its desired outcome).

1	2	3	4	5
Low Power		Medium Power		High Power

BACKGROUND QUESTIONS

1. Age _____ < than 25 years _____ 36-45 years _____ > 56 years
_____ 26-35 years _____ 46-55 years

2. Gender _____male _____female

3. Ethnicity _____Caucasian _____ Black _____Hispanic
_____Asian _____ American Indian _____Other

4. Highest level of education received (check one below)
_____ High School _____ College Degree _____ Graduate Degree
_____ Some College _____ Some Graduate _____ Doctorate Degree

5. What is the total number of years you have worked at:
A. your present company ____ years B. your present job ____years

6. Do you have any employees reporting to you? _____ yes _____ no
If yes, how many DIRECT reports do you have _____

7. Approximately how many hours do you typically work per week?
_____ 35 hours or less _____ 45 hours _____ 55 hours
_____ 40 hours _____ 50 hours _____ 60 hours or more

8. Approximately how long ago was your last promotion? _____ year(s)

9. About how many promotions have you received in your present company?
_____ promotions.

10. Please rate your chances of obtaining a position as good as your present one in another company from 0 (no chance) to 100 (excellent)
_____ chance

11. Please indicate your willingness to leave for a better job in another company in A. your current city/area 1 2 3 4 5
B. another city/area 1 2 3 4 5
Would Not Move Would Definitely

Please feel free to make any comments/suggestions regarding this survey in the remaining space below. _____

Thank you for completing this survey.

Please send in the attached envelope to:
John Milliman
School of Business
University of Southern California
L.A., CA 90089-1421