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Recent Tertiary Graduates’ Career Attitudes, Career Adaptability and Career Self-management Behaviours: Focus on Continuity in a Fragmented Employment Context

Yue Zhang

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Abstract

With the traditional one-way hierarchical organization career path being replaced with non-linear or multi-directional career paths, how an individual could maintain continuous career development within a dynamic and discontinued employment context is a consistent theme of this thesis. Through an internet-mediated quantitative research method among recent alumni of Massey University, this current study explores three core aspects of recent tertiary graduates’ career development: the extent to which they hold new career attitudes (protean and boundaryless attitudes), endorse career adaptability and implement career self-management behaviours. By also considering these graduates’ gender, age range, ethnicity, highest qualification, the college from which they graduated and location after graduation, this New Zealand based empirical study questions if such demographic elements could affect graduates’ career attitudes, career adaptability and career self-management behaviours.

The findings reveal that although recent tertiary graduates’ levels of endorsement of new career attitudes and career adaptability has increased to a considerable extent, these graduates are not practising career self-management behaviours to a similar high level. Demographic elements are implied to be an issue when considering the above three aspects of their career development, but are evidently not crucial; and are still worth more investigation in future empirical career studies. The practical value of this study lies in its implications for both individual graduates and institutions to maintain congruence in both attitudes and actions when developing individual careers.
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# Table of Contents

Abstract ........................................................................................................................................... i
Acknowledgements .......................................................................................................................... ii
Table of Contents ............................................................................................................................ iii
List of Tables ................................................................................................................................... v
List of Figures ................................................................................................................................... vii
List of Appendices ........................................................................................................................... ix
Chapter 1 - Introduction ................................................................................................................. 1
  1.1 The Fragmented Career Context of Recent Tertiary Graduates ........................................... 1
  1.2 Three Core Aspects to Obtain Continuous Career Development ........................................ 3
  1.3 Graduates’ Career – Research Interests and Questions ......................................................... 4
Chapter 2 – Literature Review ....................................................................................................... 7
  2.1 Career Attitudes ...................................................................................................................... 7
  2.2 Career Adaptability ................................................................................................................ 19
  2.3 Career Self-Management ....................................................................................................... 25
  2.4 Demographic Elements and Their Influence ........................................................................ 38
  2.5 Summary ............................................................................................................................... 40
Chapter 3 – Research Questions ................................................................................................... 42
Chapter 4 – Research Methodology ............................................................................................. 45
  4.1 Selection of Research Method ............................................................................................... 45
  4.2 Questionnaire Design ............................................................................................................ 46
  4.3 Data Analysis Method ............................................................................................................ 50
Chapter 5 – Results ......................................................................................................................... 54
  5.1 Sample Characteristics .......................................................................................................... 54
  5.2 Results of Statistical Analysis ............................................................................................... 58
Chapter 6 – Discussion .................................................................................................................... 90
  6.1 Recent Tertiary Graduates’ Career Attitudes ........................................................................... 90
  6.2 Recent Tertiary Graduates’ Career Adaptability .................................................................... 95
  6.3 Recent Graduates’ Career Self-management Behaviours ..................................................... 99
  6.4 Limitations ............................................................................................................................. 104
Chapter 7 – Conclusion ........................................................................................................ 107
7.1 Recent Tertiary Graduates’ Career Attitudes............................................................... 107
7.2 Recent Tertiary Graduates’ Career Adaptability......................................................... 109
7.3 Recent Tertiary Graduates’ Career Self-management Behaviours ......................... 110
7.4 Practical Implications .............................................................................................. 112
References ....................................................................................................................... 114
Appendices ...................................................................................................................... 126
List of Tables

Table 1: Types of career strategies, and appropriate situations for their implementation .................................................................................................................................................................................. 28

Table 2: Items, original reliability alpha coefficient and sources of the career attitude construct ........................................................................................................................................................................ 47

Table 3: Items, original reliability alpha coefficient and sources of the career adaptability construct ................................................................................................................................................................ 48

Table 4: Items, original reliability alpha coefficient and sources of the career self-management behaviours construct .................................................................................................................. 49

Table 5: Results of factor analysis for the construct of career attitudes ........................................ 60

Table 6: Results of reliability test for the construct of career attitudes ........................................... 63

Table 7: Results of reliability test for the construct of career adaptability ........................................ 64

Table 8: Results of reliability test for the construct of career self-management behaviours .................................................................................................................................................. 65

Table 9: Final items of each factor in the construct of career attitudes, with mean and standard deviation of factors .............................................................................................................. 66

Table 10: Final items of each factor in the construct of career adaptability, with mean and standard deviation of factors ........................................................................................................ 67

Table 11: Final items of each factor in the construct of career self-management behaviours, with mean and standard deviation of factors .............................................................................................................. 67

Table 12: Results of independent-samples t-test between gender groups for the construct of career attitudes ................................................................................................................................. 80

Table 13: Results of independent-samples t-test between gender groups for the construct of career adaptability ................................................................................................................................. 83
Table 14: Results of significant difference in career self-management caused by gender .............................................................. 85

Table 15: Summary of participants’ level of new career attitudes (Protean and boundaryless attitudes), career adaptability and implementation of self-management behaviors ........................................................................................................................................................................ 88

Table 16: Summary of results of group comparisons in whether demographic variables could influence participants’ career attitudes, career adaptability and career self-management behaviors ........................................................................................................................................................................ 89
List of Figures

Figure 1: Two dimensions of boundaryless careers ............................................................ 16
Figure 2: Protean and boundaryless combinations: career profiles and development challenge .......................................................................................................................... 17
Figure 3: Configurations of Rate and Degree of Adaptability ............................................. 23
Figure 4: A cyclical model of career self-management in organizations .............................. 27
Figure 5: Three ways of knowing in career self-management ............................................. 29
Figure 6: Visual representation of the present study ............................................................. 42
Figure 7: Gender and age of participants ............................................................................ 55
Figure 8: Ethnicity of participants grouped by their highest qualifications ....................... 56
Figure 9: Colleges from which participants graduated ......................................................... 57
Figure 10: Main resident places of participants after graduation ......................................... 58
Figure 11: Frequency distribution of participants’ average scores for the protean self-directed factor ......................................................................................................................... 69
Figure 12: Frequency distribution of participants’ average total scores for the protean value driven factor .................................................................................................................. 69
Figure 13: Frequency distribution of participants’ average scores for the boundaryless mindset factor ......................................................................................................................... 71
Figure 14: Frequency distribution of participants’ average scores for the organizational mobility factor .......................................................................................................................... 71
Figure 15: Frequency distribution of participants’ average scores for the career planning factor ............................................................................................................................... 73
Figure 16: Frequency distribution of participants’ average scores for the career decision-making factor ....................................................................................................................... 73
Figure 17: Frequency distribution of participants’ average scores for the career resilience factor ..........................................................................................................................75

Figure 18: Frequency distribution of participants’ average scores for adaptability to changes factor ......................................................................................................................................75

Figure 19: Frequency distribution of participants’ average scores for the career exploration factor ..................................................................................................................................76

Figure 20: Frequency distribution of participants’ average scores for the boundary management factor ..................................................................................................................................77

Figure 21: Frequency distribution of participants’ average scores of the factor for investment in human capital ....................................................................................................................................78

Figure 22: Frequency distribution of participants’ average scores of the factor for investment in social capital ....................................................................................................................................78
List of Appendices

Appendix 1: Online survey invitation to Massey alumni.................................................. 126
Appendix 2: online survey for the present study (print screen)...................................... 128
Appendix 3: Codebook of factors for SPSS analysis...................................................... 138
Appendix 4: Gender and age of participants................................................................. 139
Appendix 5: Ethnicity of participants grouped by their highest qualifications .......... 140
Appendix 6: Colleges participants graduated from and main resident places after graduation...................................................................................................................... 141
Appendix 7: Item-coefficients, scree plot, component matrix and component correlation matrix for factor analysis of construct of career adaptability ................................. 142
Appendix 8: Item-coefficients, scree plot, component matrix and component correlation matrix for factor analysis of construct of career self-management behaviours .......... 145
Appendix 9: Average scores that participants gained for each item in constructs of career attitudes, career adaptability and career self-management behaviours .......... 148
Appendix 10: Average scores that participants gained for each factor in the constructs of career attitudes, career adaptability and career self-management behaviours .......... 150
Appendix 11: Results between age groups for the construct of career attitudes ........ 151
Appendix 12: Results among ethnicity groups for the construct of career attitudes.... 152
Appendix 13: Results among groups divided by highest qualification for the construct of career attitudes ........................................................................................................ 153
Appendix 14: Results among groups divided by colleges from which participants graduated for the construct of career attitudes ........................................................................ 154
Appendix 15: Results among groups divided by location of participants after graduation for the construct of career attitudes................................................................. 155
Appendix 16: Results between age groups for the construct of career adaptability ...

Appendix 17: Results among ethnicity groups for the construct of career adaptability

Appendix 18: Results among groups divided by qualification for the construct of career adaptability

Appendix 19: Results among groups divided by colleges that participants graduated from for the construct of career adaptability

Appendix 20: Results among groups divided by resident places for the construct of career adaptability

Appendix 21: Results among different age groups for the construct of career self-management behaviours

Appendix 22: Results among ethnicity groups for the construct of career self-management behaviours

Appendix 23: Results among qualification groups for the construct of career self-management behaviours

Appendix 24: Results among groups divided by colleges that participants graduated from for the construct of career self-management behaviours

Appendix 25: Results among groups divided by main resident places of graduates for the construct of career self-management behaviours