

**SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT AND MOBILITY: AN EMPIRICAL TEST OF
THE BOUNDARYLESS CAREER CONCEPT**

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the relevance of the boundaryless career concept to the experiences of development offered to the workforce of seven different organizations. In specific it examined the meaning of the boundaryless career as developmental process and its link to different types of mobility. Measures of propensity to mobility were constructed via factor analysis and the hypotheses were tested using correlation and regression procedures using a sample of 1592 employees. The results provided some evidence as to how careers can be described by the boundaryless career concept. The relationship between propensity to mobility and career development was found to be stronger in the groups of females and clerical/administrative staff for whom both intra and inter-organizational mobility was associated with experiences of mentoring and coaching. Among groups with long tenure and over 50 years of age intra-organizational mobility was associated with training experiences. The results demonstrated the growing role of work relationships deriving from coaching, mentoring and job challenge which are more crucial resources for career development than training and lateral moves. Also the role of self-motivation and one's own wishes and interests was the most significant drive in generating career opportunities. However, the average employee did not expect to move between organizations and did expect to stay up to 10 years with their employers, which suggests the preference for the old model of career based on upward progression within one employer rather than for more flexible the boundaryless model.

Many academics suggest that traditional understandings of career such as upward progression or linear stages do not fully hold to the test of changes in modern organizations (Adamson et al. 1998; Sullivan, 1999). This paper starts from a different perspective. Assuming that the field of career research has developed the vocabulary, which allowed academics to enter a new era, we aim to see whether the organizational realities hold to these newly described phenomena.

In particular, we test empirically one of the most popular concepts used in assessing careers in today's work environment - the boundaryless career. As broadly defined by Arthur and Rousseau (1996: 3): 'The boundaryless career form does not characterize any single career form, but rather, a range of possible forms that defies traditional employment assumptions'. Specifically, such a career is characterized by movements across the boundaries of several employers and the use of supportive external networks and information. It is independent from traditional organizational career arrangements and breaks hierarchical reporting and advancement principles.

In this study we address in particular the meaning of the boundaryless career as a development rather than an upward progression and its link to the mobility of employees within and between organizations. We focus in particular on the dimensions of career growth which combine the processes of development and mobility that both shape careers within the enterprise. According to Osterman (1996) this 'internal labor market' consisting of training, development, mobility channels and job ladders describes the basic framework in which careers evolve. In our study, we focus on employees' subjective experiences of this framework by addressing how employees think they develop and how they think they can move ahead in their organizations. Further, we test whether these perceptions have any connection with their propensity to mobility, both within and between organizations, to see whether the experiences of employees correspond to the boundaryless career arrangements.

In particular, we aim to look closer at the career experiences of women, older and longer tenured employees and non-managers. Many issues which concern these groups of employees are still to be resolved as they had to be resolved under the traditional career arrangements (Hansson et al. 1997; Baker & Aldrich, 1996). The importance of researching females and older employees is dictated by the changing profile of the workforce brought by the baby-boom generation (Mobley, 1982; Stroth & Greller, 1995). This workforce is entering an environment of flattening organizations with reduced numbers of managers and deepening divisions between senior levels and the rest of the workforce (Osterman, 1996). Today's organizations are therefore challenged to provide solutions to all groups who are not on the ladder, by offering to them meaningful work assignments and development.

The concept of the boundaryless career has generated very few empirical studies in large samples of diverse workforces. Furthermore, whenever the empirical study was involved it had a narrow sample or narrow setting which impacted on the generalisability of the results to other employee groups and across different organizations. For example, Blau and Lunz (1998) used a sample of 457 medical technologists; Moore and Buttner (1997) tested 128 women entrepreneurs; Baker & Aldrich (1996) used a sample of 32 local entrepreneurs and Robinson & Miner (1996) used a sample of 24 professionals. Moreover, in terms of the scope, the majority of studies have focused on single organizations or industries i.e. Jones (1996) tested employees from the US film industry; Saxenian (1996) focused on professionals from Silicon Valley, Bruce and Scott (1994) used a sample of 742 naval officers and Robinson & Rousseau (1994) and Schner & Reitman (1997) tested career processes on the samples drawn among MBA graduates.

This limited nature of the samples and settings prevailing in the field is surprising since the boundaryless career concept, defined as a move across boundaries of occupations and organizations, can be more easily tested across different groups of employees and across different organizations. An additional advantage of using a cross-sectional design to study career is that it facilitates pooling respondents who are at different stages of their career

and who are at different places in organizations. In this study we use a heterogeneous sample of 1592 employees, which is nearly evenly split between males and females, but who vary in characteristics such as age, tenure, level and educational background. Moreover, we test career attitudes in a sample of employees working for seven different organizations in different industrial sectors, thus we address some of the limitations of previous empirical studies on the boundaryless career.

To sum up, the major aim of the present study is to test the proposition of the boundaryless career concept that increased development causes increased mobility among employees. In addition, we have two interconnected goals. First, we aim to explore the relevance of the boundaryless career concept to the model of development offered in seven organizations in different industries to all groups in their workforce. Second, in view of the changes in the composition of the workforce we discern a special need to study females, older and longer tenure employees and non-managerial groups.

Theory and Hypotheses

The primary meaning of the boundaryless career concept is that it is a form of career for all (Hall, 1976; Schein, 1978). Unlike hierarchical advancement, which is offered only for the fast-tracks, it has been proposed that this lateral, boundaryless model has clear advantages for all employees. It is supposed to focus on every employee, not only on 'high fliers' by offering more accessible development opportunities regardless of individual differences. Although scholars view this meaning with optimism we need to test empirically whether organizations are able to sustain the boundaryless system in terms of providing opportunities for development to all employees. Therefore, our first hypothesis will test whether developmental opportunities are offered to all employees regardless of their individual differences:

Hypothesis 1: The significance of development is independent of the individual characteristics.

If this hypothesis is rejected by our data next hypothesis will test the following:

Hypothesis 1a: There is a positive relationship between being a female, an older employee, with longer tenure and to be in a non-managerial position and development experiences.

Secondly, the boundaryless career concept implies that employees are more mobile and flexible and move across the boundaries of roles and across the boundaries of several employers (Arthur, 1994; Sullivan, 1999). The relationships between mobility and individual characteristics such as gender, age, tenure and job level has been well researched in the literature on careers. Studies suggest that characteristics such as old age and high tenure are negatively related to mobility (Cotton & Tuttle, 1986; Krecker, 1994). Young and early career employees have higher mobility expectations and accept these opportunities more readily (Landau & Hammer, 1986; Blau & Lunz, 1998). Middle to late groups are less likely to be mobile due to fear of the consequences of flexibility and mobility on their competence (Feldman & Weitz, 1992).

No simple pattern was observed when examining gender and turnover (Mobley et al. 1979). For example, Stroth et al. (1996) found that females had a higher propensity towards mobility than men due to a lack of career opportunities, the glass ceiling, the lack of promotion opportunities and low satisfaction with pay. However, the study of Blau & Lunz (1998) indicated that it is men who showed a stronger intent to leave due to promotion and monetary reasons. Similarly, studies on mobility and occupational groups generated different pictures depending on the group and causes of mobility studied. For example, Baron and Hannan (2001) found that turnover associated with organizational change appeared to be concentrated among the most senior employees suggesting old guard disenchantment. However, Jackson et al. (1991) found that tenure correlates with turnover among employees who hold positions below the level of the top management team due to the fact that organizations invest more in high tenure employees and this binds them to their employers. As we can see there is no simple pattern of mobility among

different groups of employees suggesting that demographics alone are an inadequate basis for understanding mobility (Mobley et al. 1979; Mobley, 1982). In our next hypothesis, however, we want to explore the impact of individual characteristics on mobility in our sample to see how mobility both as movements between functions and across organizations is distributed among different groups of employees.

Hypothesis 2: There is an association between individual characteristics and propensity to mobility.

Hypothesis 2a: There is a positive relationship between being a female, an older employee, with longer tenure and to be in a non-managerial position and propensity to mobility.

The concept of the boundaryless career posits that the increased mobility of employees results from all types of development of new portable skills, knowledge and abilities (Bird, 1994; Hall & Mirvis, 1995). There is an emphasis on learning and on a variety of opportunities for development which should encourage people's mobility and flexibility in the market. Therefore, our next set of hypotheses will deal with the fundamental issue of the effects of different development experiences of employees on their mobility attitudes. Here, apart from testing demographic variables, we consider development as a second explanatory variable linked to mobility and look closer at how mobility perceptions are shaped in different groups of employees. Further, even if organizations are able to offer the conditions under which different groups of employees may increase their skills and improve their core competencies, we aim to see whether these groups become more mobile as a result of their development.

Firstly, we test the role of rotations and lateral development and their link to mobility perceptions. In boundaryless career arrangements the emphasis has been placed on rotations as bringing opportunities for cross-functional skill learning. Our next hypothesis will test therefore that:

Hypothesis 3: There is a positive relationship between development through lateral moves and propensity to mobility. This relationship is stronger for females, older, longer tenure and non-managerial groups.

Another form of development in the boundaryless career is learning from external networks and information as ways of getting knowledge and resources to other people (Kanter, 1989; DeFillippi & Arthur, 1994). This development resulting from social networks is facilitated by lateral moves and rotations within and between organizations. In particular, networks with superiors established via coaching and mentoring can provide significant information regarding learning, career advancement and mobility. Despite the fact that both coaching and mentoring are supported by a traditional career structure their relational nature makes them very important sources of development in the context of boundaryless careers. If hierarchical advancement is not possible employees need external support and encouragement that can help them with renewed self-confidence and the establishment of new career goals. In particular, there may be more need for such help among females, longer tenures and employees on lower levels. Our next hypothesis is therefore:

Hypothesis 4: There is a positive relationship between development through coaching and mentoring and propensity to mobility. This relationship is stronger for females, older, longer tenure and non-managerial groups.

Another basic tenet of the boundaryless career concept is the growing importance of self-management in an individual's career when individuals have to adopt entrepreneurial approaches to be successful (DeFillippi & Arthur, 1996). Accordingly, learning and opportunities for development now rest fully with the individuals who have to be oriented to both internal and external opportunities for their career development (Hall, 1996; Adamson et al. 1998). Employees are supposed to pursue their career regardless of structural constraints and independently of traditional organizational arrangements such as career paths or development practices. Therefore the next hypothesis is:

Hypothesis 5: There is a positive relationship between development through self-motivation and propensity to mobility. This relationship is stronger in females, older, longer tenure and non-managerial groups.

Finally, according to the definition of the boundaryless career hierarchical reporting and advancement principles are broken (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996). These less formalized career management processes and more fluid career paths leave employees with decreased personal predictability and control, thereby potentially creating more room for discrimination, politics or favoritism. Career opportunities can become less a function of performance, tenure or seniority and more a function of many other factors such as politics, luck or favoritism (Landau & Hammer, 1986; Beehr & Juntunen, 1990). For example, Beehr and Taaber (1993) found that satisfaction with promotion, job satisfaction and turnover intention were significantly related to the perceptions of performance-based mobility criteria versus criteria based on personal characteristics such as gender, race or appearance and factors such as luck or favoritism. We believe that testing the role of all such factors will contribute to the knowledge about the processes by which employees make intra or inter firm transitions as part of their career growth. If boundaryless careers are about having more career opportunities, then the factors impacting on availability of these opportunities are important determinants of the overall perceptions of the career processes and opportunities. Therefore our next hypothesis deals with the role of these factors:

Hypothesis 6: The relationship between different development experiences and propensity toward mobility is mediated by the perceptions of performance and non-performance factors impacting on career opportunities.

To sum up, in this study we assess whether the boundaryless career occurs: 1) by testing how different types of development and mobility are patterned in different groups of employees; 2) by analyzing the effect of development experiences on propensity towards mobility; 3) by analyzing how different career factors impacting on career opportunities

affect propensity towards mobility. Thus the key research question to be tested in this study is: Can development significantly account for mobility (intent to leave the organization or intent to move within the organization) after controlling for personal variables (gender, age, tenure and level) and further by controlling for variables related to career opportunities? We concurrently assess individual characteristics, perceptions of development and career opportunities in relation to mobility in an attempt to analyze simultaneously all these effects and account for a greater proportion of the variance in their propensity to mobility.

Method

Data Collection Procedure and Sample

This study is part of a larger longitudinal study focusing on the alignment of HR strategy and practices with business goals in seven organizations that have undergone significant downsizing and restructuring. The sample combines three consumer and industrial goods companies which include a high electronics, pharmaceutical, and a food company; two large-scale banking organizations and two service industries dealing with the provision of standardized public services such as health and telecommunications. The current research is based on data collected in a second phase (1996-97) of the study. A basic method of data collection was a questionnaire designed to capture employee's experiences and views of different HR practices. In each organization we identified one UK based business unit and surveyed a representative sample of its employees. Our aim was to sample in each organization 10-20 % of the total population of the chosen business unit. A total of 1592 individuals completed and returned the questionnaires, leading to a response rate of 56%.

Procedure. We start with an exploratory data analysis, which provides a description of the data and the definition of variables to be used in this investigation. First, we examine the distribution of responses on individual characteristics and development experiences. Second, we test whether the perceived significance of a development experience is

independent of the respondents' individual characteristics. If this hypothesis is rejected, we can then concentrate on the significant associations that can be inferred from the correlation structure. We thus consider the bivariate correlation, more specifically the Spearman non-parametric correlation coefficients, and check whether there is a linear relationship between responses.

We proceed by analyzing the mobility data. Given the correlation among the eleven mobility variables, we first normalize the responses to each variable and then use factor analysis for reducing the dimension of the data. Consequently, we extract the main common factors in the eleven items that lead to measures that summarize the respondents' perceptions of their future career moves. We choose these factors to be independent (orthogonal), so they can be interpreted as different types of propensity to mobility, which respondents can have at varying degrees. We thus have measures for each respondent on each factor and can address our research questions and test the hypotheses described in the previous section.

We simultaneously investigate hypotheses 1a to 5. That is, we test whether propensity to mobility is a linear function of development experiences, individual characteristics and possible meaningful interactions between development experiences and individual characteristics. We use a backward regression procedure to unveil the significant associations. We start with a very general linear model that has the mobility measure as the dependent variable and include all possible independent variables (development experiences, characteristics and various interactions) and gradually eliminate insignificant variables.

Further, we hypothesized that the relationship between mobility, development experiences and individual characteristics may be influenced by external career factors. Thus, we first consider the association between the development experiences, mobility measures (factor scores) and career factors. As a result of this analysis, we eliminate those factors that are independent as well as assess the strength of the influence. Second, we include possibly

significant career factors in our general linear model and once more run a stepwise backward regression procedure. We used SPSS version 9.01 in all the analyses that follow.

Measures

Development experiences. Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which specific career development experiences were playing a role in the development and acquisition of new skills and knowledge. The interest was about the quality rather than the quantity of the perceived development arising from each experience. The general question ‘Which of the following have played a significant role in developing your work performance since you joined the organization?’ had nine options, which are listed in Table 1. These options tapped the variety of development experiences via traditional means such as training and job challenge, via lateral movements such as secondments and job rotations, via interpersonal development practices such as coaching and mentoring and finally via self motivation.

Mobility perceptions. We considered questions which represent propensity or intent towards mobility, which are not the actual measures of mobility in itself, but are the cognitions that consist of the basic elements of psychological models of employee mobility (Campion et al. 1991; Sager et al. 1998). These questions are based on Rousseau’s (1990) scale for careerism. This scale assesses an individual orientation toward his/her employer as an instrumental stepping-stone up the career path (items 1 to 5 in Table 3). To the original scale we added a new item ‘I want to stay with the present organization for the rest of my career’. Responses were coded on a five-point scale, that is: 1 (Strongly Agree) - 3 (Neither) - 5 (Strongly Disagree). Hence, we re-coded (reversed the order) responses for items 2, 3 and 5, so that items are consistent with an implicit scale that would suggest increasing mobility.

In addition, we considered two other questions that also relate to mobility. The first was item 7 in Table 3 ‘How many more years will you stay with this organization?’ Responses were coded on a scale from 1 to 5 (‘Up to 1 year’, ‘Up to 2 years’, ‘Up to 5 years’, ‘Up to 10 years’, ‘More than 10 years’). The different categories imply different intervals, thus we created a new variable, which takes the maximum number of years: 1, 2, 5 and 10. Since we lack information on the maximum number of expected years for the last category (‘More than 10 years’), where we find 25% of the individuals, we arbitrarily established a ceiling and made it equal to 11. This procedure provided some discrimination, where career changes are more likely to take place. The second question: “How would you feel about the following career options?” had 4 response possibilities (items 8 to 11 in Table 3). Responses were also coded according to a five-point scale (1- Very Positive to 5 Very Negative). As before, we re-coded the answers in the direction of increasing mobility. Hence, we reversed responses to items 8 and 9. Our mobility measures were created by factor analysis, thus, in contrast with additive scales, they do not necessarily place equal weight on all items, but represent a certain amount of the variance in the data. These are described in more detail in the following section, when we describe our results.

Career factors. Perceptions of performance and non-performance factors influencing career opportunities were tapped by the general question ‘How much are your career opportunities affected by each of the following factors?’ had six response options listing such factors as performance, luck, favoritism, location, politics and own interests. These can be seen in Table 6. Responses were given in a decreasing five-point scale: 1 - Greatly, 2 - Quite a lot, 3 - Moderately, 4 - Slightly, 5 - Not at all.

Individual Characteristics

Given that there were a number of categories for each variable, we developed binary (dummy) variables for all but one category.

Gender. Gender was measured by asking respondents whether they were male or female. That is, a variable, which we called male, was made equal to 1 if the respondent was male and 0 if female.

Age. Age was measured by asking respondents to group their age in the following five categories: '20 or under', '21-30', '31 to 40', '41 to 50', '51 or over'. We did not measure the actual age. Four dummy variables were created indicating membership of each of the first four categories.

Tenure. Tenure was measured by asking respondents to classify themselves into five categories: 'Less than 6 months', 'More than 6 months and less than a year', 'More than a year and less than 5 years', 'More than 5 years and less than 10 years' and 'More than 10 years'. We did not measure the actual tenure. Similarly to age, we created four dummy variables indicating membership of the first four groups.

Level. We have added a job level variable to the demographic variables. Following Mobley et al.'s (1979) suggestion that any complete model of individual mobility behavior should be able to account for differences in turnover among occupational groupings (i.e. blue collar workers versus white collar workers). In our study job level we assessed by one question asking the person to chose the following five descriptions which best apply to his/her job: 1. 'I am in charge of a team that includes people who manager others'; 2. 'I am directly in charge of my own team'; 3. 'I work in a professional or technical capacity, but am not in charge of other people'; 4. 'I have an administrative, clerical or secretarial job and am not in charge of other people'; 5. 'I have a manual job and am not in charge of other people'. We defined two binary variables relating to the first two questions, these were coded 'one' if the responses were positive.

Results

The Individual Characteristics of the Respondents

Out of 1542 respondents 766 (48.1%) were male, thus the data is fairly even split as far as gender is concerned. Most respondents were between 31-40 years old (39.9%), 31.7% were less than 30 (only 1.1 % were 20 or under), 20.5% were between 41 and 50, and just 6.5% were over 50. When we considered the distribution of responses for tenure, we observed that the median respondent had been between five and ten years with the organization (26.8%), though most respondents had been working in the organization for more than ten years (46%). Only 5.7% were in the organization for less than a year and 20.4 % between one and five years. Unsurprisingly, the data shows a higher correlation between age and tenure (Spearman's $\rho = 0.40$) and gender and level (Spearman's $\rho = 0.30$). That is, older people who were with the organization for a longer time and were male were at higher levels. Otherwise, the Spearman correlation coefficient between these characteristics varies from 0.01 to 0.08, thus suggesting no association shown in Table 2.

The average respondent was at a professional or technical level (56.6 - 35.9%). There is a nearly even split between managers (28.4%, out of which 8.2% are top managers) and administrative or clerical staff (29 %). Only 3.7% had manual jobs, these were mainly men (67.2%). There is a clear association between gender and the professional level of the respondent (Chi-Square = 251.19 on 4 degrees freedom thus significant at 0%, Kendall's Tau-b = 0.269 also significant at 0%). If only managers were considered, 38.2 % were female (28.9 % at the top level). By contrast at the administrative and clerical level, women constituted 81.28%. Out of those in the top level 71.1% were male. Overall, those who were managers and male corresponded to 61.8%, thus indicating a gender gap in managerial positions in our sample.

The Development Experiences

According to Hypothesis 1, if the perception of the quality of development experiences was similar for all respondents, we should expect responses to be independent of the individual characteristics. We therefore ran Chi-square tests (Pearson Chi-square, Likelihood Ratio and Linear-by-linear). Results from the three tests were very consistent and thus we report only the Pearson Chi-square values and their significance in Table 1. We observe that overall there is association between the perceived quality of the development experience and the individual's characteristics. The exceptions are: mentoring in relation to gender and level; external training in relation to gender. The data indicates that even if development experiences had been equally provided for all respondents, the perception of the importance in their career progress varied according to their individual characteristics. According to these results, we reject the hypothesis of no association.

Insert Table 1

When examining the pattern of individual responses to the question concerning career development experiences, as shown in Table 2, we observe that the perceived value of the experiences follow different distributions. For example, most respondents rated all types of secondments and the attendance of an external training program as not at all significant. By contrast, most rated their own motivation as very significant. The average respondent valued his/her experience of coaching, self-motivation and job challenge, was neutral towards training and did not see the other experiences as significant. All in all, the variance in responses was not large as can be seen either by the standard deviations (lowest variance on self-motivation) or the quartile interval (Q_1 , Q_3).

Table 2 displays the Spearman's Rho non-parametric correlation coefficients. We observe that there is stronger correlation between the perception on the significance of the different types of development experiences. By contrast, we note that the association between development experiences and individual characteristics is generally weak (range

from 0.00 to 0.30), but most are statistically significant. In terms of gender, only self-motivation and job challenges show difference between male and females. The small positive correlation indicates that women value these experiences less than men do. Age is significantly correlated with all experiences, but secondment/move abroad and self-motivation. Given that the coefficient is consistently positive, the older the individual the less importance is attached to the experiences. As for tenure, correlation coefficients, with the exception of secondment/move to another part of the organisation, are all significantly positive but quite low. They indicate that the longer the individual is in the organisation the less significance s/he places on developmental experience. Level is independent of the perceived experiences of being mentored and attending an internal training program. The lower the level, the more the individual values his/her experience, especially job challenge and self-motivation, which have the higher correlation coefficients of about 0.3.

Insert Table 2

In order to define measures of the quality of development experiences that related to specific aspects that implied little or no overlap, we analyzed the correlation among responses to the above items, by computing the Spearman correlation coefficient and testing its significance. As we can see in Table 2 that some are highly significant. Consequently, for further analysis, we consider their average as a single measure, which reduced the number of independent variables in our model as well as multicollinearity. That is, responses to the first two items ($\rho_{12} = 0.48$) were averaged, leading to a variable, which we call 'Mentoring-coaching'. Similarly, responses to items 3, 4 and 5 ($\rho_{34} = 0.60$, $\rho_{35} = 0.40$ and $\rho_{45} = 0.44$) were averaged, leading to a measure of 'Secondments' and items 6 and 7 ($\rho_{67} = 0.45$) resulted in a measure of 'Training'. Although the correlation between responses to items 8 and 9 is relatively larger ($\rho_8 = 0.52$), we find no substantive reason to combine these items in a single measure. We note that as in the original scale, in the new variables, which we here defined, significance decreases with the importance of the development experiences.

Mobility Perceptions

Table 3 summarizes the distribution of responses and the correlation structure of the mobility perceptions and individual characteristics. The descriptive statistics suggest that the average individual in this sample: does not expect to move often between organizations; would expect to stay up to 10 years with his/her present organization; would be positive to move to a similar role of a similar type within the organization and is positive about his/her present position, but would be happy with a promotion (as suggested by the distribution of item 9). In addition, most respondents are either neutral (mode=3) regarding possible movements in their career or appear to expect few changes in their career prospects (mode=2 for items 3 and 4). If we consider what we already know regarding the average respondent. That is, with respect to: age (39.9 % with age 31-40); the number of years, which she/he had been working in their organization (46 % with over 10 years tenure); and level (35.9% on professional and technical level). The indication of lack of inter-organizational mobility shown by the skewed distributions of items 2, 5, 7 and 11 is not surprising.

As for the correlation structure, which again is described by the Spearman's Rho, we observe an overall association in the response to these items, which varies in degree, but is consistent with our expectations on lower levels of mobility in our sample. The exceptions may be items 9 and 10, which relate to moves within the organization and are independent of a few other items.

When focusing on the association with the respondents' characteristics, a varying degree of linear correlation is observed, which gives support to our Hypothesis 2. Although most of the correlation is significant, very high correlation coefficients are not observed. The level of the respondent appears to have had less influence in the responses. By contrast, age and tenure were more significant. There is also indication that women expect to stay in the organizations for a shorter period than men (negatively correlated). Responses to items 2, 4 and 5 are not associated with either gender or level, thus suggesting that the respondents' perceptions of moves from the present organization are not influenced by

these characteristics. All in all, given that there is also correlation between mobility items, we cannot generalize from these observations. However, we may conjecture patterns, which are then explored in further stages of this investigation, when we have independent factor scores that summarize these mobility variables.

Insert Table 3

Next we conducted a factor analysis, using the normalised data on mobility. We used a principal component extraction method with the criterion that only those components, whose eigenvalues were greater than 1 should be extracted. First, we reduced the 11 items into 3 main dimensions, which explained 59% of the variance. However, there was significant residual correlation, suggesting that we should exclude either item 10 or item 6 from the model. The exclusion of item 10 led to 2 factors that together explained 53% of the variance, whereas the exclusion of item 6 led to three factors that explained 40%, 12% and 11% of the variance (63% in total). We consider the latter solution in the analyses that follows.

Table 4 shows the factor-loadings that resulted from a varimax rotation of this model and led to three independent factors. Since the data were normalised, a positive loading for an item, with the exception of item 7 (maximum number of years expected), implies a propensity mobility. On the other hand, again with the exception of item 7, a negative loading implies lack of mobility. According to these loadings, we can infer that the first and main factor is a “Propensity to inter-organisational mobility”, because all items, except for item 7, have positive loadings and item 9 is relatively small. The second factor loads positively on the maximum number of years expected to stay in the organisation, negatively on items: 1, 11, 2 reversed. In addition the highest load was on item 9 (which was reversed, thus indicating a move to a higher position). Hence, we conclude that it describes a ‘Propensity to intra-organisational mobility’. The third factor loads predominantly on remaining in the same position, staying with the organisation and not looking for an organisation to spend the entire career with. Thus, it is a

'Propensity to stay' factor.

Insert Table 4

Impact of Development Experiences on Mobility Factors

In order to simultaneously test the remaining hypotheses (1a, 2a, 3, 4, and 5), we assessed whether development experiences are associated with these mobility factors, when we control for individual characteristics. We chose to have as baseline in our models the following categories: non-managerial, female, longer tenure (over 10 years) and older (over 50). In addition, we included a range of interactions in order to test whether or not certain development experiences become significant in these subgroups. Gradually, non-significant independent variables are deleted from the model. In order to respond to the question which variables determine mobility as defined by the three factors we considered regression models, where the dependent variable was one of the three mobility factors. A backward search for the most appropriate specification, in so far as variables are available in the data, was done and the starting independent variables were the following:

- Dummy (zero-one) variables indicating membership in the first four age groups, thus the baseline was over 50;
- Dummy (zero-one) variables indicating membership of the first four tenure groups, thus the baseline was over 10 years with the organization;
- A dummy variable that is equal to one if male and zero otherwise;
- The five variables that indicate the quality of development experience: job challenge, self-motivation, mentor-coaching, secondments and training (these are as such that the more important the experience was rated the lower the value);
- The interaction between male and age;
- The interaction between male and manager;
- All possible two-way interactions between each of the following development experiences: mentor-coaching, training, secondments, job challenge and self-

motivation; with membership of each of the following groups: over 50, longer tenure (over 10 years), female, administrative and clerical.

Factor 1 'Propensity to Inter-Organizational Mobility'

After 15 iterations, the predictors are: the first three age groups (under 40), being in the organization between 6 months and a year or from 1 to 5 years, the quality of secondments, self motivation. In addition, two-way interactions were also significant. In the case of secondments and mentoring/coaching, the interactions were with the following: being female, working in an administrative-clerical position and being in the organization for over 10 years. Hence, we observe that belonging to these subgroups strengthen the relationship between these two types of development experiences (secondments, mentoring-coaching) with the propensity to inter-organizational mobility. In the case of training, only the interaction with being a woman was significant. The final model, which has a relatively low R^2 adjusted (26%) and shows the relative significance of the variables in this study, is given in Table 5.

We notice by examining the constant term that, not surprisingly, our baseline (older, longer tenure, female, non-managerial) shows a negative propensity to inter-organizational mobility. Propensity to inter-organizational mobility is stronger if the individual is younger (we recall that there is a relative small number of under 21's in the sample) or has been in the position between 6 months and 5 years. We recall that the less significant the development experience, the higher the measure. Hence, when we examine the coefficients in Table 5, we observe that the less significant self-motivation was in the development of the individual's career, the higher propensity to mobility.

As far as mentoring and coaching is concerned, it shows effects on underprivileged groups, but these vary. The less importance associated to it, the higher propensity to mobility for those more than 10 years in the organization or in clerical/administrative positions. By contrast, the more significant they were for the average woman's career

development the smaller propensity to inter-organizational mobility. Secondments are predictors, though stronger when particular groups are compared. In general, the worst experience the higher propensity to inter-organizational mobility. However, the opposite is observed in case of those in clerical and administrative functions or in the job for over 10 years. Training is weakly significant in the case of women. The negative coefficient shows that the less significance attached to it, the lower propensity to inter-organizational mobility. Thus suggesting that the better quality of the training for women, the greater propensity to inter-organizational mobility.

Factor 2 'Propensity to Intra-Organizational Mobility'

After 22 iterations the final model, whose R^2 adjusted is equal to 23% is given in Table 5. The predictors for this factor are: secondments, self-motivation, job challenge, being directly in charge of his/her own team and the interactions between: mentor-coaching with either female or clerical/administrative and training with either over 50 or in the organization for over 10 years. Again, we recall the direction in which the measures of development experiences were coded. We first notice that, with only one exception, the coefficients corresponding to development experience predictors are negative. Hence, they show that within the organization mobility increases with positive experiences of challenging jobs, training for over 50, training for those with more than 10 years in the job, self-motivation and mentoring and coaching for women. These are interesting findings, given the fact that in this particular sample most respondents have been with their organization for a reasonable time. We also observe that belonging to groups (females, clerical/administrative staff, being older or in the job for a long time) can strengthen the relationship between development experiences and mobility. The interaction between mentor and coaching and clerical administrative was also a significant predictor. However, it suggests that the worst experience of mentoring and coaching the higher intra-organizational mobility for this group.

As for individual characteristics, being directly in charge of his/her team is weakly associated with an increase in the propensity to intra-organizational mobility. The estimate

for the constant is positive and indicative of an overall propensity to intra-organizational mobility. Apart from managers who have propensity to intra-organizational mobility, no other possible individual characteristic came out significant. When we ran a One-Way ANOVA of factor 2 of responses on secondments to other parts of the organization results show that there are significant differences in mean ($F=10.69$, $p\text{-value} = 0.000$). In addition, when we did a post-hoc test that assumed unequal variances, it showed that those who thought that secondments to other parts of the organization were very significant had a far higher mean propensity to intra-organizational mobility. By contrast, those who found it not to be at all significant had a lower mean propensity to intra-organizational mobility than those ranging from very significant to neutral (not significantly different from those who said that it was not significant).

Factor 3 'Propensity to Stay'

The final model (from 19 iterations) has a much lower R^2 adjusted, suggesting that variables other than those, which we considered, may be best predictors. The predictors were: under 20 years, between 31 and 40 years, male, job challenge, mentor-coaching. The significant interactions were: between mentor-coaching with female, over 50 or over 10 years in the job; between secondments and each of the following: female, clerical/administrative and over 10 years in the job.

First, we observe that the constant is not significantly different from zero, thus suggesting that the average respondent in our baseline is neutral. The predictors were: under 20, between 31 and 40, male, mentor-coaching, job challenge. As for significant interactions, these were: mentor-coaching and female, mentor-coaching and over 50, mentor-coaching and over 10 years in the job, secondments and clerical/administrative, secondments and female, secondments and over 10 years in the job. Belonging to the first age group (under 20) leads to a significantly large decrease in this propensity to stay. Being male significantly increases the propensity to stay. The higher importance attached to job challenge, mentoring and coaching in career development the lower propensity to

immobility. Nevertheless, the less the importance attached to mentoring and coaching in the following groups: over 50, female and over 10 years in the job, the higher propensity to immobility. As for secondments in less advantageous groups, the picture is more diverse. According to these results, the less importance women attach to secondments the higher their propensity to become immobile in their careers. By contrast, for those in clerical or administrative positions or for over 10 years in the job, the better the secondments, the lower their propensity to remain as they are.

Insert Table 5

The Impact of Career Factors Variables

From an exploratory data analysis of these variables, we observed that generally these career factors were perceived as having significant effects in the respondents' career opportunities. Most responses were in the lower end of the scale and variance is also quite low. Hence, they suggest that respondents had less difficulty in answering these questions, because they clearly differentiated the relevant factors (medians, modes and means tended to be lower than in the case of other questions). As for the correlation between career factors (shown in Table 6), although most are significant, they tend to be low. When we consider the association with the individual characteristics, it is either weak or non-existent. The exceptions are the respondents' own wishes and interests and job performance that become less important with increasing age and tenure. Furthermore, responses to luck and being liked by your boss are independent from three characteristics, there is only slight indication (low coefficients), that luck becomes more important with seniority and that being liked by the boss is seen as more important for women.

An outstanding Hypothesis 6 focuses on whether the inclusion of perceived external career factors would mediate the relationship that has been described above. We therefore start by examining the bivariate associations between these career factors and dependent and independent variables from the previous analysis.

In Table 6, we observe that correlation coefficients are not high. If we focus on the association with the career factors (items 6 to 11), we first note that 'How well the respondent is liked by his/her boss' is not associated with most development experiences. Furthermore, when it is associated, the absolute value of the correlation coefficient is less than 0.1, thus suggesting a weak association. Second, we see that only two career factors are significantly associated with all development experiences: 'How well the respondent performs his/her job and 'Your own wishes and interests'. In both cases, the correlation coefficients are always less than 0.25 in absolute value. The respondents' own motivation is associated with all career factors, though the association with 'Your own wishes and interests' is not as high as one may have expected ($\rho = 0.18$). It may be worth observing that whenever the association between variables other than the career factors with luck is significant, the respective correlation is negative.

As for the association with the mobility measures, also summarized in Table 6, we first observe that, despite the very low correlation, different career factors are associated with different aspects of mobility. Luck, being liked by current boss and internal politics are negatively correlated with inter-organizational mobility. Performance, part of the organization where the respondent works and his/her own wishes and interests are negatively correlated with intra-organizational mobility. However, the location is less significant. As for Factor 3 'Propensity to stay', internal politics and being liked by current boss are positively correlated, but the latter to a lesser extent. In addition, performance and own wishes and interests are negatively correlated with this factor. According to these results, we needed to consider different career factors when examining the relationship between development experiences and mobility. That is, for each mobility factor, we added the possibly significant career factors to the model described earlier.

Insert Table 6

When we ran the extended regression model (which included luck, favoritism and internal politics as additional independent variables) for Factor 1. Most coefficients in the model described in the first part of Table 5 were basically the same. Changes were less than 0.010 in absolute value (far less than one standard error) and significance level were as before, with the exception being secondments that were no more significant (coefficient dropped to 0.06, p-value = 0.12). In addition, luck and internal politics were significant (coefficients equal to -0.08 with p-value = 0.03) and -0.07 (p-value = 0.02) respectively. Consequently, the relationship between Factor 1 and secondments is mediated by these two career factors variables. We observe that the higher the importance attached to these factors, the higher the propensity to inter-organizational mobility.

In the case of Factor 2 ‘Propensity to intra-organizational mobility’, the introduction of career factors variables (job performance, location, own wishes and interests) in the model, which is described in the second part of Table 5, resulted in the elimination of one independent variable. ‘Being directly in charge of your own team’ is no more a predictor (coefficient became 0.11 and p-value = 0.13). Other predictors kept to the same significance level and suffered very marginal changes in their coefficients. Job performance was the only significant career factor (coefficient = -0.11 , p-value = 0.001), it is therefore a predictor of the propensity to intra-organizational mobility, which mediates the relationship between this mobility factor and the individual characteristic of being in a managerial role.

As far as Factor 3 is concerned, the model described in the third part of Table 5 was the most affected by the inclusion of career factors variables (job performance, favoritism, location, internal politics, own wishes and interests). R^2 adjusted increased by 4.5%. Overall, predictors remained basically the same and no mediating effect was observed. Nevertheless, internal politics (coefficient = 0.09, p-value = 0.01) and own wishes and interests (coefficient = -0.17 , p-value = 0.00) are additional predictors of Factor 3.

According to these results, the less importance the individual attaches to internal politics in the development of his/her career the higher the propensity to immobility. By contrast, the higher the significance given to his/her own wishes and interests, the less the propensity to immobility.

Discussion

The present results provide some empirical evidence of the boundaryless career concept, which claims that more development is associated with a greater propensity to mobility. While failing to offer clear support for the boundaryless career in the context of the whole workforce, the clear patterns of association of some types of development with mobility for females, older, longer tenure and non-managers offer some backing. The question why these groups should have proven to be the only groups to display this relationship is very interesting. There are at least two possible interpretations.

The positive interpretation suggests that these groups benefit the most from boundaryless career arrangements. Development gives them new knowledge, skills and abilities and by acquiring these portable 'assets' these groups become more mobile and want to compete in a wider market. However, we do not know the psychological mechanism of this mobility, i.e. whether employees move because they feel more confident to compete on new markets or whether it is because they are dissatisfied with the lack of career opportunities within organizations. The boundaryless career concept does not indicate precisely why people should be willing to move over rather than up and what such moves entail (Osterman, 1996). For example, according to Zabusky & Barley (1996) people decide to move laterally to improve their odds of getting back on a vertical track. Therefore, a negative interpretation can be offered that although development opportunities are provided for these groups this might result in their increasing mobility because of the limited promotional opportunities (Murrell et al. 1996). Thus, according to our results, the development experiences that were provided for females, employees with tenure over 10 years and to lower level administrative and clerical staff in fact might

prompt them to consider changing their places of work. It might be that career opportunities, which offer only development, though provide more flexibility but break employees' security and stability causing their dissatisfaction. Schein (1996) has suggested that many people form strong career anchors around security and stability rather than around change and mobility in their career. The studies of Mirvis and Hall (1994) and Murrell et al. (1996) also indicated that employees find it very difficult to adjust to the new demands of careers based only on development.

Impact of Individual Characteristics

When examining the relationship between development experiences and gender, results indicate that females valued job challenge less than men did. This may suggest discriminatory practices in organizations concerning the allocation of job assignments to them as suggested by the theory of statistical discrimination (Kanter, 1977; Kirchmeyer, 1998). It may be that the challenge of jobs offered to women limits their development gains, since they receive assignments which do not develop their new skills and knowledge. Also, a more traditional interpretation can be offered in that different job assignments offered to women may be difficult to accept due to family reasons. In this light the differences in results between males and females may stem from common differences in the family roles between men and women.

In terms of gender and mobility, women were found to expect to stay in the organizations for a shorter period than men and showed more inter-organizational mobility. This propensity to mobility among females was still observed after controlling for influences of development and career factors. It was stronger in the case of females who had positive experiences of mentoring, coaching and training and those who attached less significance to secondments. These results suggest that if development opportunities are to retain employees these have to be accompanied by career opportunities within the organization. For those who have limited promotional opportunities, such as for example females, any development is a way to prepare to search for better job prospects elsewhere.

In terms of the impact of age and tenure on development experiences the results suggest that the older the individuals and the longer they were in the organizations the less importance they attached to the developmental experiences. These groups of employees lacked inter-organizational mobility and this propensity was stronger if the individuals were between 21 and 30 years old. This confirms well known evidence from other studies that older employees are not treated in the same way as younger workers in gaining access to training and higher propensity to mobility among younger workers (Sterns & Miklos, 1995; Barth et al. 1993). It is important to notice, however, that as the developmental experiences among senior and longer tenure employees become significant, our results indicate that their propensity to mobility increased.

Our sample indicates that the average employees did not expect to move often between organizations and expected to stay up to 10 years with their employers. They expected few changes in their career prospects preferring to move to a similar role or promotion. One of the possible interpretations of this immobility is that employees may still perceive their career as simply upward progression rather than in developmental terms. As suggested by Nicholson (1996), dislike of inter-organizational mobility supports the dominant paradigm of career as a progression in one organization and assessed in terms of personal income, hierarchical level and promotions.

In terms of the impact of job level, mobility between organizations was linked positively to level but when external career factors were considered this was not significant. Overall, there was a propensity to intra-organizational mobility among managerial groups. This dependency of managers upon one employing organization may suggest that managers' view of their own mobility is influenced by what they see the organization is providing in traditional ways of development and career progression. These findings support the argument of Schnerer and Reitman (1997) that managerial populations take highly traditional views of their career development and progress.

Development and Mobility

Role of job challenge. Although individual learning and development in sampled organizations were fostered through a number of individual and organizational actions our results indicate that the significant experiences occurred merely through on-the-job challenge and coaching. Formal training or more specialized activities were not so significant. The main sources of learning derived from day-to-day work activities and from the relations with immediate supervisors. Such results focus our attention on the type of skills which are being developed through these daily experiences rather than through specialized organizational development programmes. On one hand, the high-quality job assignments on challenging and autonomous projects may be more important in career development than receiving training. Through job challenge employees can build the base of experiences that can positively influence their career success in later years.

On another hand, however, the problem with a model of development based on job challenge is that those who have remained within one function are more likely to have non-portable and specific skills. The nature of these skills may only be changing when skills in one function can become broader as well as the nature of an individual job may become broader (Batt, 1996). In our sample job challenge was associated with intra-organizational mobility and propensity to stay. This confirms the evidence from other studies that satisfaction with job content is among the strongest correlates of turnover and have a consistent negative correlation (Mobley, 1982).

Role of lateral moves. We found evidence that significant rotations were associated with higher propensity to move to another organization for females, longer tenure and clerical/administrative staff. The basic tenet of the boundaryless career concept which suggests that more cross-functional development is associated with more mobile employees was confirmed. However, overall there were poor experiences of secondments reported in our sample suggesting that rotations may be not always related to learning and skill acquisition (Campion et al. 1994). It is worthwhile to notice that the experiences of

rotations were more significant for managers and mid career employees in their 40s and this may indicate that organizations are providing more rotational development opportunities for groups of employees who are at risk of plateauing in flatter organizations.

Role of training. For employees over 50 and with tenure longer than 10 years the significant role of training was associated with higher propensity to intra-organizational mobility. Although Lawrence (1996) and Lashbrook (1996) found that expectations regarding promotion decline with age, in our study older and longer tenure groups displayed a higher propensity toward intra-organizational mobility if properly trained. This suggests that once retrained older employees remain stimulated and interested in work and want to move within organizations. They do not disengage from their career aspirations and involvements and want to use opportunities for training for their own career progression within organizations. Increased intra-organizational mobility among senior groups may suggest that development offered to them is very organizationally specific. Indeed, studies on development and mobility suggest that organizationally supported training contributes to job satisfaction and decreases job mobility by building organizationally specific, but externally non-transferable, knowledge and skills (Becker, 1964; Mobley, 1982).

Role of mentoring and coaching. If development implied benefits from working relationships such as coaching and mentoring there was a clear implication for mobility. Females who reported more significant experiences of mentoring and coaching displayed a greater propensity to intra-organizational mobility. The picture for senior employees and clerical and administrative staff was quite different, since it suggests that the less they valued mentoring and coaching, the greater was their propensity to move in the organizations, but the lower was their propensity to move to other organizations. These results raise some interesting issues around the role of coaching and mentoring both on individual and organizational levels. Both practices are often based on close personal

interactions and are ways of creating interpersonal networks and links whose consequence can be very beneficial for individuals.

On the individual level, the significance of coaching and mentoring and its link to intra-organizational mobility means that informal sponsorship and paternalism embedded in these practices can be important for ensuring movements up the ranks. For example, good relations with the supervisor may help in having greater control over assignments and career enhancing opportunities. If the supervisor establishes a positive personal relationship with an employee and creates a supportive environment the employee may be less likely to quit because of personal factors. Coaching and mentoring, therefore, can play an important role in overcoming the deficiencies of organizational career progress. The supervisory supported development, however, is important for employees who value paternalistic employment contracts and this again may suggest that the females in our sample have a preference for the old model of career.

The results about the links of mentoring and coaching to intra-organizational mobility among older workers may suggest their need for these type of relational networks. We know a lot about the role of coaching among early employees when during the early stages of socialization it is a primary source of role information, feedback, and social support (Mobley, 1982). In youth diverse social contacts are central to the acquisition of knowledge and career opportunities (Carstensen, 1992). However, as Hansson et al. (1997) have suggested, less attention has been paid to the relational or support networks among older adults in the workplace. Our results about the links of mentoring and coaching to intra-organisational mobility can be interpreted as signs of older workers' continued social integration into a workplace. In this way our study widens the knowledge about the role of relational networks across one's work life.

On the organizational level, coaching and mentoring are crucial bonding practices of employees to organizations who need to retain skilled people (Gratton & Ghoshal, 1999). In our study, coaching was reported as the second most significant source of development.

This growing importance of coaching signals the change in the nature of managerial jobs where coaching becomes one of the major roles of managers. Similar results were indicated by Batt (1996) who found that the managerial jobs became more cross-functional where managers coached rather than directed their subordinates.

Role of self-motivation. The results indicate that most employees rated their own motivation as a very significant factor in their development. Further, the importance of self-motivation appeared to be quite strong as far as propensity to mobility was concerned. Those employees who reported a higher role of self-motivation displayed a lesser propensity to leave the organization. It is clear that individuals preferred to devote all their efforts to succeed and develop within one organization rather than to leave the employer. The importance of self-motivation indicates that employees become proactive in their own development and career growth in acquiring new skills and new relationships at work. Indicative of this pro-activity is also the significant role of the individual's wishes and interests in developing their career opportunities in comparison with the minor role of such factors as luck, politics or favoritism. This means that employees undertake actions designed to have their interests and aspirations known to others and they actively choose their career options in order to overcome obstacles to their career growth.

Such results indicate a shift in the mentality of employees whose motivation, own interests and wishes are the most significant drivers in their development and career growth. However, although employees are becoming more responsible for their development and career progress, this is still within the old model of upward progression and hierarchical advancement within one organization. They do not want to move between organizations, they prefer to move and progress within one organization sharing a model of employment for life preferring security and stability. What is new is the nature of their psychological contract which appears to be based now more on an employees' responsibility rather than on paternalistic company career programmes (Robinson et al. 1994; Sullivan, 1999).

Factors Influencing Career Opportunities

Of all the career factors which we operationalised, politics and luck were particularly good predictors of inter-organizational mobility for all groups in our sample. This means that both luck and internal politics may become associated with the decisions of an individual's departure. The less the respondent valued luck and/or internal politics as a factor in the development of his/her career, the lower was his/her propensity to inter-organizational mobility (both had significant negative coefficients). Further, the less importance the respondent attached to internal politics in the development the higher was his/her propensity to stay. By contrast, the higher significance was given to his/her wishes and interests in career opportunities the lower was his/her propensity to stay was lower and he/she was more mobile. In addition, a career factor such as job performance was a good predictor for intra-firm mobility for managers.

The above results on the internal labor market (Osterman, 1996), i.e. the rules and procedures that shape career within the enterprise suggest the importance of perceptions of fair rules and procedures when considering career growth and opportunities. First of all, the strong association of performance with intra-organizational mobility suggests that the framework in which careers evolve is based on transparent and controllable indicators of career growth. This suggests that the performance criteria, which are skill and merit based, are better in retaining employees within organizations than those in which political games are flourishing (Cameron, 1994). Secondly, the association of politics with departures suggests that flattery, conformity and trading of favors as means for attaining career opportunities de-motivates employees and causes them to leave in search of organizations with more transparent and predictable procedures in career processes.

Implications

On the methodological level, researching employees' perceptions was a first step in redefining the understanding of the career concept in boundaryless terms. In our study the processes constituting the framework in which careers evolved in organizations were

viewed from the individual perspective of employees' interpretations of their development and career situations. This individual rather than organizational perspective addressed the limitations of the conceptual models of studies on mobility which are usually based on rates of turnover or managers' perceptions of their subordinates' careers (Mobley et al. 1979; Sullivan, 1999).

This study explored the processes of development and mobility along the pathways that the boundaryless career concept suggests. These pathways did not always lead to new discoveries. First, the emergence of a new organizational reality characterized by the growing importance of networking from coaching and mentoring was accompanied by the importance of job challenge a traditional source of career learning. The study shows clear evidence that work relationships and challenges are becoming the most crucial when other resources for career development have vanished (Hall, 1996). Second, the emergence of a new mentality among employees suggested by the growing importance of self-motivation occurred still within a well-known traditional model of upward progression which was indicated by the employees' propensity to stay within organizations.

Overall, the results of this study provide support that employees display increased self-motivation and determination in order to succeed in organizations. If in the boundaryless career environment success is most likely to be achieved by individuals who are highly motivated, who know how to detect changes in the environment and create opportunities for themselves - our study shows the evidence of such attitudes. Such pro-activity and determination are necessary features to navigate non-traditional career tracks (Beckman, 1996; Campion et al. 1994).

Although our results indicate that mobility is still attributable to generational differences this is not the case when associated with the role of development. Signs of changes among older and longer tenure employees indicate their ability to build on their current experience base and their adaptability to new occupational challenges. If older and longer tenure employees can display mobility as resulting from learning, the stereotype of them as being

inactive has to be abandoned. In order to respond to this increasingly active older work force employers have to expand the programmes of career and development to these groups.

Limitations

This study used a heterogeneous sample in diverse organizations, which contributed to a fuller picture of career related attitudes among different groups of employees. Our sample enhanced the generalisability of our findings since the respondents appeared to be a representative cross-section of employed adults. However, several limitations of the study should be born in mind when interpreting these results.

Firstly, the bias of the sample as immobile should be considered. The fact that most of respondents have been with the organizations for a considerable time suggests that the sample may be less mobile than one would expect in reality. This immobility may be connected also to the organizational size in that way that larger organizations in our sample can provide fewer opportunities for inter-organizational mobility and more for intra-organizational mobility.

Secondly, with regard to the scale measuring the role of development experiences we seek to explain the variation in the value and quality of development, but not the quantity that could moderate the effects of development on mobility. The scale measured which type of development experiences were perceived as significant, not so much about which type of development was offered and how often. Also in the measurement of age and tenure it has to be noted that results might have varied had we measured their actual age and tenure in the organization rather than having respondents group their age and tenure in the present categories, which caused the loss of variance.

Thirdly, the model tested is not 'self-contained' in the sense that it does not include all the relevant causes for dependent variable of mobility. Clearly there are other causes of

mobility, thus, the association between the quality of development experiences and mobility may be inflated because other potentially relevant variables were not included. Therefore, there is a need for analytical models that will identify the mechanisms that link other predictors to mobility such as for example the impact of pensions, vacation time build up and other hazards of leaving an organization. Also, we do not have economic or market variables in the models, which are likely to influence mobility. To a certain extent the fact that responses were taken at the same time controls some economic factors, because the whole sample would be subject to them. However, the job market may be perceived differently according to the industry.

Finally, we ran a one-way ANOVA for each of the three mobility factors, in order to check whether average scores varied between companies. The results were significant, although the variances of scores were not significantly different between companies, the mean scores were. They suggested that companies could be grouped in up to three subsets according to their mean scores. These indicate different propensities to mobility between the companies, which appear to relate to the industry as well as the size of the organization. This suggests that career attitudes cannot be studied without the concurrent study of the industrial setting in which they occur and they are sensitive to variations in the context. However, as the number of companies per industry in our sample is very small, we cannot generalize from these results, however, we want to stress that the impact of industrial sector is possible and is worthy of future study.

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TABLE 1
Chi-Square Tests

| Development experiences variables | Gender | Age | Tenure | Level |
|--|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| 1. Coaching by my boss /another person | 16.21*** | 68.03*** | 28.55** | 27.78** |
| 2. Having a mentor to guide you | 5.71 | 41.15*** | 29.31** | 19.20 |
| 3. Secondments to special projects or teams | 19.67*** | 39.47*** | 49.95*** | 65.92*** |
| 4. Secondment/move to another part of the organization or other function | 9.22* | 45.73*** | 23.59 | 60.18*** |
| 5. Secondment/move abroad | 15.33* | 23.79* | 26.06* | 46.68*** |
| 6. Attending an internal training program | 10.34** | 35.95*** | 36.02*** | 56.56*** |
| 7. Attending an external training program | 2.99 | 27.32** | 41.10*** | 81.60*** |
| 8. Being faced with challenging jobs | 32.82*** | 64.86*** | 57.64*** | 162.64*** |
| 9. Your own motivation | 31.94*** | 30.73** | 40.70*** | 143.55*** |

Note: * p-value < .10
 ** p-value < .05
 *** p-value < .01

TABLE 2
Development Experiences and Individual Characteristics: Descriptive Statistics and Spearman Correlations Coefficients

| Variables | Mean | Mode | SD | Q1 | Median | Q3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | |
|---|------|------|------|----|--------|----|------|------|-----|------|------|------|------|-----|-----|------|-------|-------|--|
| 1. Coaching by my boss/ another person | 2.59 | 2 | 1.21 | 2 | 2 | 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. Having a mentor to guide you | 3.40 | 4 | 1.24 | 2 | 4 | 4 | .48 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3. Secondments to special projects or teams | 3.63 | 5 | 1.28 | 3 | 4 | 5 | .24 | .33 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4. Secondment/move to another part of the organization or other function | 3.74 | 5 | 1.37 | 3 | 4 | 4 | .20 | .25 | .60 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5. Secondment/move abroad | 4.46 | 5 | 1.02 | 4 | 5 | 5 | .07 | .24 | .40 | .44 | | | | | | | | | |
| 6. Attending an internal training program | 2.98 | 3 | 1.08 | 2 | 3 | 5 | .36 | .24 | .23 | .20 | .14 | | | | | | | | |
| 7. Attending an external training program | 3.27 | 5 | 1.32 | 2 | 3 | 5 | .19 | .25 | .36 | .30 | .31 | .45 | | | | | | | |
| 8. Being faced with challenging jobs | 2.18 | 2 | 1.02 | 1 | 2 | 3 | .26 | .20 | .19 | .25 | .14 | .31 | .36 | | | | | | |
| 9. Your own motivation | 1.74 | 1 | 0.83 | 1 | 2 | 3 | .21 | .13 | .20 | .17 | .10 | .25 | .23 | .52 | | | | | |
| 10. Gender | 1.5 | 2 | 0.50 | 1 | 2 | 2 | .00† | .00† | .09 | .03† | .05 | .02† | .01† | .12 | .14 | | | | |
| 11. Age | 3.00 | 3 | 0.91 | 2 | 3 | 4 | .20 | .15 | .08 | .13 | .05 | .09 | .08 | .10 | .06 | -.07 | | | |
| 12. Tenure | 4.11 | 5 | 1.01 | 3 | 4 | 5 | .10 | .09 | .16 | .05† | .07 | .06 | .13 | .15 | .11 | -.08 | .41 | | |
| 13. Job level | 2.99 | 3 | 1.00 | 2 | 3 | 4 | .08 | .02† | .18 | .11 | .04† | .14 | .17 | .30 | .27 | .30 | -.02† | -.01† | |

Note: † Correlation coefficients are not significant at 5% level.

TABLE 3
Mobility Perceptions and Individual Characteristics: Descriptive Statistics and Spearman Correlations

| Variables | Mean | Mode | SD | Q1 | Median | Q3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
|--|------|------|------|----|--------|----|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|------|-------|-------|
| 1. I want to stay with the present organization | 2.76 | 3 | 1.20 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. I see this job as a stepping stone to a better job with another organization | 2.67 | 3 | 1.05 | 2 | 3 | 3 | .47 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3. I expect to work for a variety of different organizations in my career | 2.73 | 2 | 1.14 | 2 | 3 | 4 | .49 | .55 | | | | | | | | | |
| 4. I do not expect to change organizations often during my career | 2.58 | 2 | 1.21 | 2 | 2 | 4 | .35 | .32 | .51 | | | | | | | | |
| 5. There are many career opportunities I expect to explore after I leave my present employer | 2.67 | 3 | 1.08 | 2 | 3 | 4 | .49 | .49 | .58 | .36 | | | | | | | |
| 6. I am looking for an organization to spend my entire career with | 2.84 | 5 | 1.29 | 2 | 3 | 11 | .35 | .18 | .33 | .33 | .21 | | | | | | |
| 7. How many more years will you stay with this organization? | 7.27 | 3 | 3.59 | 5 | 10 | 4 | -.59 | -.31 | -.34 | -.22 | -.39 | -.26 | | | | | |
| 8. Leave your organization for another employer | 3.10 | 2 | 1.15 | 2 | 3 | 5 | .58 | .40 | .37 | .28 | .41 | .11 | -.44 | | | | |
| 9. A move to a position at a higher level with greater responsibility within organizations | 3.87 | 2 | 1.08 | 3 | 4 | 3 | -.05† | .16 | .15 | .11 | .13 | .03† | .06 | .08 | | | |
| 10. A move to a new role or type of work at similar level within organization | 2.49 | 2 | 1.12 | 2 | 2 | 4 | .16 | .03† | .01 | .06 | .05 | .07 | -.16 | .06 | -.26 | | |
| 11. Remain in your current position | 2.60 | 2 | 1.24 | 2 | 2 | 3 | .32 | .27 | .23 | .21 | .24 | .08 | -.22 | .34 | .21 | .06 | |
| 13. Gender | 1.5 | 2 | 0.50 | 1 | 2 | 2 | .17 | -.02 | -.05 | -.04† | .03† | .08 | -.15 | .05 | .18 | .07 | -.11 |
| 14. Age | 3.00 | 3 | 0.91 | 2 | 3 | 4 | -.35 | -.28 | -.25 | -.13 | -.28 | -.15 | .12 | -.21 | .14 | -.02† | -.21 |
| 15. Tenure | 4.11 | 5 | 1.01 | 3 | 4 | 5 | -.33 | -.29 | -.44 | -.25 | -.34 | -.21 | -.21 | -.18 | .17 | -.05 | -.15 |
| 16. Job level | 2.99 | 3 | 1.00 | 2 | 3 | 4 | -.08 | -.02† | -.02† | -.03† | -.01† | -.01† | .03† | -.18 | -.17 | -.00† | -.02† |

Note: † Correlation coefficients are not significant at 5% level.

TABLE 4
Factor Loadings from the Three-Factor Model of Mobility

| Item | Factor 1 | Factor 2 | Factor 3 |
|--|----------|----------|----------|
| 1. I want to stay with the present organization | 0.20 | -0.26 | -0.13 |
| 2. I see this job as a stepping stone to a better job with another organization | 0.18 | 0.23 | 0.00 |
| 3. I expect to work for a variety of different organizations in my career | 0.20 | 0.15 | 0.27 |
| 4. I do not expect to change organizations often during my career | 0.15 | 0.05 | 0.37 |
| 5. There are many career opportunities I expect to explore after I leave my present employer | 0.19 | 0.10 | 0.05 |
| 6. I am looking for an organization to spend my entire career with | 0.11 | -0.19 | 0.55 |
| 7. How many more years will you stay with this organization? | -0.17 | 0.32 | 0.15 |
| 8. Leave your organization for another employer | 0.17 | -0.11 | -0.39 |
| 9. A move to a position at a higher level with greater responsibility within organizations | 0.04 | 0.70 | 0.02 |
| 11. Remain in your current position | 0.12 | 0.21 | -0.46 |

TABLE 5
Results of Regression Analyses

| Factor 1 'Propensity to Inter-Organizational Mobility' | Coefficient | Significance |
|--|-------------|-------------------|
| Constant | -0.71 | .000 |
| Age up to 20 | 0.60 | .068 [†] |
| Age between 21 and 30 | 0.57 | .000 |
| Age between 31 and 40 | 0.41 | .000 |
| Tenure between 6 months and 1 year | 0.82 | .001 |
| Tenure over a year, but less than 5 years | 0.42 | .000 |
| Self Motivation | 0.14 | .001 |
| Secondments | 0.07 | .076 [†] |
| Mentor-Coaching x Clerical/Admin. | 0.18 | .009 |
| Mentor-Coaching x Female | -0.12 | .021 |
| Mentor-Coaching x Longer Tenure | 0.11 | .027 |
| Secondments x Clerical/Admin. | -0.14 | .011 |
| Secondments x Female | 0.16 | .001 |
| Secondments x Longer Tenure | -0.19 | .000 |
| Training x Female | -0.08 | .073 [†] |
| R ² Adjusted = 26% | | |
| <hr/> | | |
| Factor 2 'Propensity to Intra-Organization Mobility' | | |
| Constant | 0.89 | .000 |
| Job Challenge | -0.15 | .000 |
| Self Motivation | -0.17 | .000 |
| Directly in charge of own team | 0.12 | .099 |
| Mentor-Coaching x Clerical/Administrative | 0.16 | .002 |
| Mentor-Coaching x Female | -0.15 | .000 |
| Training x Over 50 | -0.07 | .002 |
| Training x Over 10 years in Job | -0.16 | .001 |
| R ² Adjusted = 23% | | |
| <hr/> | | |
| Factor 3 'Propensity to Stay' | | |
| Constant | 0.12 | .614 |
| Job Challenge | -0.11 | .002 |
| Mentor-Coaching | -0.22 | .000 |
| Age (under 20) | -1.15 | .000 |
| Age between 31 and 40 | 0.20 | .014 |
| Male | 0.76 | .008 |
| Mentor-Coaching x Female | 0.13 | .050 |
| Mentor-Coaching x Longer Tenure (>10 years) | 0.12 | .030 |
| Mentor-Coaching x Older (over 50) | 0.10 | .000 |
| Secondments x Clerical/Administrative | -0.05 | .013 |
| Secondments x Female | 0.12 | .050 |
| Secondments x Longer Tenure (>10 years) | -0.17 | .000 |
| R ² Adjusted = 9% | | |

Note: [†] Not significant at 5 %.

TABLE 6
Bivariate Correlation: Development Experiences, Career Factors, Mobility and Individual Characteristics

| Variables | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1. Mentor-coaching | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. Secondments | .30 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3. Training | .34 | .38 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4. Challenging jobs | .26 | .30 | .39 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5. Own motivation | .19 | .20 | .27 | .52 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6. How well you perform your job | .23 | .19 | .17 | .22 | .19 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7. Luck: Being in the right place when opportunities arise | -.08 | -.12 | -.08 | .02 | .07 | -.12 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8. How well you are liked personally by your current boss | .01 | .03 | -.01 | .03 | .09 | .06 | .39 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9. The part of organization you happen to work in | .00 | .04 | .02 | -.09 | .13 | .01 | .34 | .34 | | | | | | | | | |
| 10. Internal politics | -.07 | -.08 | -.04 | .04 | .11 | -.10 | .38 | .39 | .39 | | | | | | | | |
| 11. Your own wishes and interests | .20 | .17 | -.24 | -.24 | .18 | .35 | -.18 | -.15 | -.08 | -.23 | | | | | | | |
| 12. Inter-organizational mobility | .04 | -.05 | .04 | -.02 | -.03 | .03 | -.05** | -.07** | -.01 | -.07** | -.01 | | | | | | |
| 13. Intra-organizational mobility | -.12 | -.21 | -.21 | -.32 | -.27 | -.17** | -.02 | .00 | -.07** | -.02 | -.10** | .00 | | | | | |
| 14. Propensity to stay | -.09 | -.11 | -.10 | -.13 | -.08 | -.10** | .05 | .08** | .06** | .11** | -.21** | .02 | -.04 | | | | |
| 15. Gender | .01 | .07 | .02 | .12 | .14 | .01 | -.01 | -.09 | .10 | .06 | -.01 | .02 | -.32 | .00 | | | |
| 16. Age | .21 | .14 | .09 | .10 | .06 | .17 | -.06 | .03 | -.06 | -.06 | .12 | -.33 | -.10 | .03 | -.07 | | |
| 17. Tenure | .11 | .12 | .11 | .15 | .11 | .16 | -.07 | -.02 | -.08 | -.04 | .23 | -.39 | -.09 | -.15 | -.08 | .41 | |
| 18. Job level | .06 | .15 | .18 | .30 | .27 | .13 | -.04 | -.04 | -.09 | .01 | -.09 | -.04 | -.23 | -.07 | .29 | -.02 | -.01 |

Note: ** p-value < 0.05 indicating significant association between career factors variables and mobility factors.