



RESEARCH PAPER

The Growing Importance of Regime Change toward Mid-Career Progression of Graduates at Public Sector Universities in All over Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

This paper advocates that graduate degree earned from a reputable university must be accompanied with a mid-career progression. Unfortunately, the situation is very grim and a thought of career progression has taken a worst form of depression, anxiety, gender sensitization and rage among fresh graduates. After WW1 & WW2, mid-career progression malaise has cut the corporate economy all over the world. Since, it is believed that every transition is the beginning of new career therefore, researcher adopts a survey study partaking five career progression trajectories which are responsible for regime change i.e., *Rising Careers Progression, Renewing Careers Progression, Entrepreneurial Careers Progression, Continuous Careers Progression, Unstable Careers Progression*. Close-ended questionnaire collects the data from mid-career graduates (N =200). All major/minor projects are perused in order to determine respective mid-career trajectory before completion of final transcript/degree. The present study discusses the growing importance of regime change toward mid-career progression of graduates at public sector universities of district Lahore, Pakistan.

KEYWORDS Change Regime, Corporate Economy, Financialization, Mid-Career Progression, Uncapped Budget Expansion

Introduction

If we retrospect, it can be understood that education is no longer a linear process, apart from skills, knowledge, and attitude. One can learn and build through the most visible education perspective, i.e., regime change. Career progression comes after achieving credentials and signal power of earned certificate of respective course/degree. Let us say X years in school, Y years in college, and following Z years of career line. Career progression represents a deliberate and continuous engagement with academics that has the potential to reach beyond regime change in the educational sector. Certainly, economic imperatives and social constraints contain complexity (Kristoffersen & Smith, 2013).

Numerous theories, namely the 'big five' on career progression, emerge in the late twentieth century and are still dominating today, i.e., Work Adjustment Theory (Khan, 2018), Vocational Personalities in Work Environment theory (Holland, 1997); Self-concept of Career Development (Super, 1963); Circumscription and Compromise theory (Gottfredson, 1981), and theory of Social Cognitive Career (Valentina et al., 2014).

According to Khan (2021), these theories believe in the growing importance of regime change toward career progression as they attempt to explain the decision-making and sense-making skills among individuals over their academic years till they get over the career line

This complex process interplay between the academic years in an institutional environment alongside career progression, which depends on individualistic traits (hereditary factors) and motivations (intrinsic & extrinsic factors). Therefore, it is a dire need to keep one's knowledge updated on ongoing educational degrees and certificates (Bazgha et al., 2021).

The present study emerges due to the need for career progression and development during the study period. This globalization era demands practitioners to take an interest and focus positively while acknowledging such challenges and concerns. Higher education institutions in Pakistan now offer graduation degrees/certificate courses that incorporate the job industry through these micro-credentials. Ultimately, this boosts student morale toward attaining certification, recruitment, and employability at the graduate level. Ever since this job industry and academia have collaborated, students are well equipped, knowing more about skills, and experiencing hands-on skills, which certainly prepare them to head start to enter the workforce after graduation (Tomlinson, 2019).

Besides recruitment and employability at our students' graduate level, it ensures clearer and more focused outcomes. It also capacitates the potential to reduce the education cost for families, disburdening the socioeconomic gap among societal classes.

Literature Review

According to the results of previous studies that if we connect skill-based learning with skill-based hiring, we must unpack our academic learning while expanding it to diverse syllabi. Let us look around our academia and students coming from diverse cultures and SES, and we need to expand their talent to further pipeline their knowledge for the job market. World-class universities worldwide possess entry-level certificate courses to help them be professionalized (Akbarzadeh, 2019).

Industries working for micro-credentials and micro-financing for career-oriented skills launch such training through valid degree programs that improve graduate employability and their recruitment ratio. As per New Education Policy, it has been noticed that permanent change toward Higher Education sector is high need, which is only way to discourage graduate unemployability. A key notion is motivation through innovation to revise all the outdated concepts of academia (Sohail et al., 2021). Such an academic bank of credits allows students to multiply their experiences before entering the academic pool or after exiting the graduate professional degree.

Primarily, the focus on the attainment of opportunities calls for change. In this era of development, continuous improvement has shown alternative pathways for selecting professional careers with the enhancement of possibilities. The alternative pathways are pleased to see the professional and support development towards the career selection after completing the graduate / higher education certificate. Using a pragmatic approach, it has demonstrated the importance of a regime change in problem-solving skills. The ultimate aim is to contribute to society and help people grow their knowledge and career positions. The underrepresented experiences during the academic years within a scholarly context have had no impact so far (Sohail et al., 2021).

Physical and psychological changes according to Alexander (2020), physical and psychological changes have a big role in increasing the importance of regime change toward the career progression of graduate-certified students. Much research has been examined to cater to the gendered nature of academia, with a huge wealth of evidence that has indicated biasness, discrimination, and sexism across the whole education system. Literature does not allow full exploration of career development. Instead, it has focused on variables such as self-efficacy, career interests, regime change, etc. They have reciprocated the context of educational setups for the representatives and respondents in the best interest of

individuals. Each individual's feedback has been interpreted and helped flourish the experiences around their academic career.

Beyond the formal qualifications, various components of career pathways have given training, critical development experiences, avocations, and competencies for strengthening success factors. Such examples regarding competencies have included critical thinking, problem solving skills and oral and written communication, digital technology, intellectual efficiency, intact professionalism, work ethic, and teamwork (Bazgha et. al., 2019).

Often, such career progression factors have referred our students to the competitive academic job market while giving them a tacit/implicit understanding of an organization. It has helped our students enhance their focused goals during the academic year and later prepare for recruiting years of career progression. These two components have moved the intelligential paradigm to the situational paradigm. Public and private sectors universities offered development of desired skills. This has customized both the components, i.e., critical experiences and competencies on the way of developmental career path (Laaksonen et al., 2018).

Many universities have offered training after research that professional development learning must be part of academic or non-academic jobs; for example, it may include how to look for or apply for grant funding. Such regime changes must be offered at departmental, faculty, or institutional levels (Posselt et al., 2014).

Traditionally, 'training' is taken as an ad hoc activity between supervisor and supervisee, which stands out with no standards. Seminars, workshops, campaigns, pamphlets, etc., are available for getting feedback which is checked over if there exists any offensive or inappropriate content (Baruch, 2016).

Traditionally, a career is associated with transitions of various jobs switch over while looking for a better and most suited option. Through this, career prospects progressed, which is a multi-faceted and multi-orientated way to get higher and better status in organizational order. It is important to graduate with mid-career choices, i.e., transitions from entry to professional and managerial job levels (Bouret, 2016).

According to Baum (2017), graduation can become essential, which frames the concept of survival of the fittest for the particular interest regime. It has gained new positions towards their job selection which they already occupy. Thus, it has enhanced their career progression and upward mobility. It has generally resonated with what is known and what is unknown. The economic benefits at the level of higher education are receiving a graduate stipend/premium to shape better learning, practiced employability, high-end status, augmented wages, and maximized job platforms and opportunities.

Brynnner et al. (2017) believe that such advancements have led occupational careers to chin up their per capita socioeconomic status and lowered the likelihood of unemployment. However, there is a common connection between growing graduates and career growth. The related benefits act as a ceiling effect that enhances the average return on higher education. It might be expected to increase or decline as not all graduates benefit from their new degrees. However, these adult graduates' careers may receive relatively low attention during university.

In earlier research, many theories have developed for understanding adaptability and multi-directionality, which may be used to frame the dimensions of respective post-graduates. Career trajectories have shifted to a perpetual change like flexibility, adaptability, and patterned possibilities. Afresh career conceptions have included various aspects such as expert renewal, interpersonal networking, personal transformation, and tailored choice of career development (Arene, 2019).

Böckerman et al., (2021) labeled such kind of new career system as a multi-directional career approach. Many people can select a single option from the number of options for achieving career success. Uncertainty and unpredictability have emerged as new career conceptions, which have reflected dynamic labor markets with increased projects and teamwork. In this regard, career progression is growing daily as individualistic skills, lifestyle, and expectations.

Part-time work increases in twenty-first century, contingent paid work, freelancing, amazon, or contract work. These very kinds of self-employment and multiple tasking in the mid-career of an individual have tailored an updated set of skills in them. The undertaking of formal studies and engaging them in lifelong learning competition is a real labor market (Jamieson et al., 2019).

According to Brennan (2021), result-oriented employability has become a new fashionista that is more complex. Before the early century, such research on regime changes for career progression has no history or footings. In the late century, many researchers have emphasized career pathways or 'career trajectories as regime change for fresh graduate employability. It is an organizational term identifying different pursuits in a labor market history.

In many other studies, career trajectories are understood concepts for a facilitator and student. It combines subjective receptions, objectives and career reflection dispositions (Honkanen, 2016). In this study, I have used the term regime change towards career progression, which is named dynamically as a career trajectory. This racecourse is about emphasizing the latest, progressive economical, time-friendly, and changing nature of careers. It is not only a hierarchical career progression but also gives an idea of moving in different directions in/between organizations.

Indeed, given freedom allows mid-career graduating candidates multi-directional trajectories through which they can move forward or backward, or they want to remain static or involve sideways moves, changing the direction with the change of aspirations (Bazgha, 2013). All these movements are meant to provide contentment, inner satisfaction, and autonomy; however, they can give the magnitude of objective career success, but this kind of regime change in income, job title, and status is observable.

Material and Methods

Employability at the graduate level, starting from the mid-career to post-graduate progression, has focused on the mid-life of learners who enter the labor market right from attaining the final transcript/degree of higher education. Five kinds have been recognized:

Mid-career progression, rising career progression, renewing career progression, entrepreneurial career progression, continuous career progression, and unstable career progression. Data was gathered through a mid-career progression survey where participants N =200 filled in the small-scale graduation survey questionnaire. The questionnaire collected data from mid-career graduates, their SES, interests, motivational level, efficiency, and morale (Kivinen, 2019). It was an efficient method to gather data through a survey study where respondents could fill in the close-ended questionnaire. All main activities recorded they had been involved in until the final transcript/degree was attained. Every question on the questionnaire got to answer concerning date and year. Likewise, an accurate self-recording about the early years of mid-career graduation to post-graduate progression was obtained through reflections (Vipunen, 2013).

Additionally, each main activity of the survey questioned the respondent: -

1. Their principal activity,
2. Occupation/profession,

3. Activity starting date/date of joining the employment (date wise/month wise/year wise),
4. Activity ending date/date of ending terminal employment (date wise/month wise/year wise),
5. The employer,
6. The job positions,
7. Work correspondence concerning education, job position,
8. Work correspondence concerning the field.

For items 7 & 8, *yes or No* answer asked from respondents. They were asked to evaluate work correspondence concerning education and job position. However, from education to work placement, the level of correspondence between education and field of work was evaluated based on the fresh graduates' self-assessment. In this survey questionnaire, the graduates were fairly to access activities, starting date/date of joining the employment (date wise/month wise/year wise), activities ending date/date of ending terminal employment (date wise/month wise/year wise), work correspondence concerning education, job position and work correspondence concerning the field, notwithstanding relationships where the job in question was equivalent and appropriate with the field and education level of acquired degree/transcript. The sole purpose was to determine the willingness of a mid-career graduate who had decided on the prospective job concerning the expected level of education (Teichler, 2018).

Participants of the research instrument and sample

Retrospectively, data was gathered through a mid-career progression survey as a research instrument where participants (N =200) filled in the small-scale graduation survey questionnaire. The questionnaire collected data from mid-career graduates, their SES, interests, motivational level, efficiency, and morale (Downey, 2020). It was an efficient method to gather data through a survey study where respondents could fill in close-ended questionnaires and also statements in written forms which were recorded on different phases of their career development. The survey participants were fresh graduates from public sector Social Sciences universities from all over Pakistan, having wide-ranged periphery coverage. The participants had graduated from 2016 to 2020, and data was collected by 2020 (i.e., 1-5 years had graduated, previously). The participants had represented under following graduation subjects, i.e., General Science, Educational Psychology, and Educational Planning & Financing (Silverman, 2016).

Research Analysis Methods

Analysis showed that into diverse types of careers observed consistency by connecting past patterns. In the present research study, a small-scale survey identified a patterned mid-career progression regarding choice, interests, and career trends. It was based on homogeneous groups, which were divided into subgroups depending on their main characteristic (Spilerman, 2019). The researcher determined the mid-career progression of fresh graduates from the viewpoint that they are employed, unemployed, and transferred outside/away from the workplace.

However, employed status had different natures, relationships, numbers, frequency, and quality as it was quantified that each category of career type was recorded as frequency and percentage and was not generalized for all categories (Sullivan, 2017).

Results and Discussion

Table 1
Demographic Information

		Frequency (f)	Percentages (%)
Gender	Male	75	37.5
	Female	125	62.5
Age	Under 27 years old	40	19.9
	27-24 years old	78	39.1
	24-21 years old	67	32.9
	21-18 years or older	15	07.1
Field of research study	General Science	66	32.9
	Educational Psychology	44	22.1
	Educational Planning & Financing	88	44.0

The researcher was more interested in how diverse career types were divided into data samples, where, additionally, the frequency and percentage increased the reliability and accuracy of the mid-career categories. (Silverman, 2016). Initial recruitment of mid-career progressions has emphasized the post-graduate career. It was observed whether there was any change in the mid-career path within one year after the completion of the final degree/transcript compared to the changes that had happened over time or after the graduate degree. The reason was that final transcript/degree had great direct impact on mid-careers progression during a year after completing a graduate degree. It was called the *ceiling effect*, observed through a *graduate's return* obtained after completing a higher education degree. Other factors were also involved, like productivity, and working experience, which influenced career advancement and development. It has reduced the effect of completing higher education (Brynnner et al., 2017).

Mid-career progression of fresh graduates while completing a graduation degree

Under completion, the degree/career towards permanent employment, there was an involvement for three sub-sets i.e., temporary/contract to permanent/full employment, wherein new jobs were started after full/permanent degrees, or switch over of place of work. The present study has produced five career progression trajectories which are labeled as under:

1. Rising Careers Progression,
2. Renewing Careers Progression,
3. Entrepreneurial Careers Progression,
4. Continuous Careers Progression,
5. Unstable Careers Progression and tabulated as under:

Under *Rising Careers' Progression*, fresh graduates learn advancement in their respective career

- Vertical line professional mobilization.
- Full/permanent or Full/temporary employment.
- Task-oriented correspondences to these fields and levels of education toward careers progression.

Under the *Renewable Career's Progression*, there was an involvement for three sub-sets i.e., temporary/contract to permanent/full employment, wherein new jobs were started after full/permanent degrees, or switch over of place of work.

- The change of Full/permanent or Full/temporary employment after graduation degree.
- More than 2/4 jobs
- Mobilization in a profession was horizontal; it had often changed from a level up to another.
- Task-orientation of work correspondences to these fields and levels of education toward careers progression.
- Starting about new job after completing graduation degree, firstly one permanent/full employment.
- Task-orientation of work correspondences to these fields and levels of education toward careers progression.

Under, *Entrepreneurial degree/career* towards permanent employment, temporary/contract to permanent/full employment, wherein new jobs were started after full/permanent degrees, or switch over of place of work.

- For an entrepreneur, completion of a degree/working as an entrepreneur.
- Completion of degree routes towards an entrepreneur career.
- Entrepreneur career continues after completion of the degree.
- Entrepreneurial career corresponds both for level and field of education.

Under, *Continuous career degree/career* towards permanent employment, temporary/contract to permanent/full employment, wherein new jobs were started after full/permanent degrees, or switch over of place of work.

- The same career corresponds with the completion of a degree
- Working in one mainly permanent full-time job
- Employment has begun, but before completing a degree.
- Work tasks correspond mainly to the level of education and the field of education.

Under, *Unstable career degree/career* towards permanent employment, temporary/contract to permanent/full employment, wherein new jobs were started after full/permanent degrees, or switch over of place of work.

- Work for multiple job places.
- Focusing mainly on Full/permanent or Full/temporary employment after graduation.
- Mobilization in a profession was horizontal; it had often changed from one level up to another.
- Task-oriented work corresponds mainly subjected to the level of education and the field.
- Multiple stage career orientations for few unemployed cases.

Discussion

The present study assessed the mid-career typology, which provided counseling and guidance to fresh graduates before they finished their degrees. More focus was laid on permanent careers and graduates' aspirations during their study goals that genuinely

benefit fresh graduates and their employers. However, over time, the worth and value of a general graduate degree have increased. There is always a gap for the upgradation of our higher education systems to fill in fresh graduates' employability. For this purpose, dynamic strategic needs to be introduced in working life and career (Järvensivu, 2015). Different strategies were identified through the study to accomplish a fresh graduate's mid-career goals, which could be made visible and communicated among fresh graduates. This helped them understanding the reasons and gaps of unemployment even after graduated degrees in Pakistan.

Conclusion

It is better acknowledged through the present study that mid-career progressions were dominated mostly by the females. Those were belonging to the public sector universities and their related field was Social Sciences focusing on the subjects such as psychology, Education, Curriculum & Instruction, Gender Studies and General Science etc., and for male, dominated subjects were Business Administration, Agriculture, Criminology, Educational Planning and Financing, Technology, IA etc (Ahola, 2020).

Recommendations

The nature of university graduate employability depicts a rich array of opportunities for extended studies so this grave issue of the whole nation must be addressed under the umbrella of financialization of governmental bodies alongside investment from corporate economy. Viable resolution must be adored in alliance with counselling centers before completion of a degree from a reputable institute. The glitches toward regime change may be directed through the mechanism of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) while reconstructing educational curriculum in line with pedagogical skills, reformations, professional development courses for the teachers, placement of vocational education, apprenticeship etc. Government should disburse an uncapped budget expansion for the mid-career progression in form of benevolent funds / Ehsas Program / Qarz-e-Hasna / Student Loan Scheme/scholarship for postgraduate level which does not expect to repay in full/partial from the beneficiaries (Ahonen et al., 2021).

According to Khan, (2021) Such financial management through governmental bodies will encourage corporate economy for future investments. In this regard, current Director Dr. Abdul Qayyum Chaudhary has taken the initiative for organizing such Job Fairs, Job Expos, Job Market, E-Rozgar etc., right after assuming the charge of Directorship at well-recognized university of the subcontinent, the University of Punjab, Institute of Education and Research.

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