

CAREER MANAGEMENT IN THE LEARNING ORGANISATIONS: FACULTY REFLECTIONS

Abida Nasreen*, Anjum Naz**

*Assistant Professor, Institute of Education and Research, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan.

E-mail: abidasnasreen@gmail.com

**Lecturer, Department of Education, University of Sargodha, Sargodha, Pakistan.

E-mail: anjumnaz@hotmail.com

Abstract A key ingredient in the knowledge economy is the development of people's careers. All development starts with self development and self development is the essence of human resource development (HRD). All types of organisations are striving for the best practices at work. Among these best practices, career management is crucial for the individual and organisational success. In this paper, we present the findings of an empirical survey of career practices in the old and new universities of the Punjab, Pakistan and examine how these are applied.

Keywords: *Creer Management, Learning Organisations, Faculty Reflections*

1. INTRODUCTION

The present study explores the area of career management systems and the way in which organisational career systems are put into operation. Career is here taken as a process of development of the employee along a path of experience and jobs that may be in one or more organisations (Baruch & Rosenstein, 1992). Career management describes the active and purposeful management of a career by an individual. It is often seen as being underpinned by a series of attributes, abilities and skills. A key aspect of career management is the ability to research opportunities and then to make career choices. Another is the ability to reflect on their current career and on labour market opportunities and then to make career changes (Hansen, 1996). As far as the career planning is concerned, it is a deliberate process to be aware of personal skills, interests, knowledge, motivations, and other characteristics and establish action plans to attain specific goals (Krumboltz & Schroeder, 1965). In other words it is the process of establishing career objectives and determining appropriate educational and developmental programs to further develop the skills required to achieve short- or long-term career objectives (Buddeberg-Fischer, Klaghofer, Abel, & Buddeberg, 2003). The concept of Career Development is a "continuous lifelong process of developmental experiences that focuses on seeking, obtaining and processing information about self, occupational and educational alternatives, life styles and role options" (Hansen, 1976). In other words career development is the process through which people come to understand them as they relate to the world of work

and their role in it. Advanced level training of faculty is, therefore, vital for quality higher education.

Human Resource Management (HRM) in organisations includes many practices that are concerned with the management of careers. Strategic HRM emerged in the 1980s as an attempt to associate HRM with the strategy and direction of organisations (Fombrun, Tichy, & Devanna, 1984; more recent efforts include those of Ghoshal & Bartlett, 1997, and Gratton, 2000). Closely following, came theoretical works relating to careers as a system within the organisation, and relating them to strategy and HR practice, including those by Von Glinow, Driver, Brousseau, & Prince (1983); and Sonnenfeld & Peiperl (1988). Little research, however, has examined the actual process of career management within organisations. Similarly very little research has been conducted on career management at higher education. Quality of universities and programs is determined with the quality of services provided by the teaching faculty. A teacher, in a general sense, engaged himself in teaching, research, personal studies, and interacts with the students in and outside the classroom, in curricular and co-curricular activities. According to the Standard Practice Guide of Michigan University, the HR office is responsible to provide orientation for new staff members to acquaint them with university operations, programs, benefits, and facilities. University regulations further instruct all staff members to attend an orientation session as promptly as possible. University of Melbourne (2008) is offering an extensive range of learning and development

programs, consultancies and individualized coaching to their faculty. They are providing these opportunities under performance development framework to achieve personal and professional goals which are aligned with the strategic and operational agenda of the university (<http://www.hr.unimelb.edu.au/development>).

In Pakistan, developmental strategies for teachers at all levels are stated in the National Education Policy 1992-2002:

“Teacher training institutes will be equipped and strengthened and their faculty will be provided training to update their knowledge and skillA regular in-service training programme will be launched for teachers at all levels.....A system of incentives will be created to encourage teachers to undergo in-service training. Special awards will be instituted for invention and creative work.” (p: 26)

The policy provision in the National Education Policy 1998-2010 on faculty development stated:

“A Teacher Service Training Academy shall be established for imparting intensive in-service training in the fields, such as educational management (administrative and financial), curriculum development, research methodology and teaching methods.” (p: 79)

Higher Education Commission (2008) discussed faculty development in a report titled “Achievements of the Higher Education Commission, July 2004- June 2006” that human resource development is considered as an important area in HEC’s reform process. HEC is striving to achieve the objectives of increasing institutional capacity and promoting and expanding local research activities.

Participation in development opportunities prepares individuals for the future. It focuses on learning and personal development in their career. It is a continuing process whereby an individual sets career goals and identifies the means to achieve them. Greenhaus cited by Ivancevich (2003) defines career as “the pattern of work-related experiences e.g. job positions, job duties, decisions, and subjective interpretations about work related events, and activities over the span of the person’s work life.” Career planning involves matching an individual’s career aspirations with the opportunities available in an organisation.

In order to achieve excellence individuals aspire to achieve higher and higher. And for this they want to build their careers, upgrade their knowledge and skills and improve their competence through learning and experience. Higher achievability is the way to excellence and self development is the key to higher accomplishment. All development starts with self-development which is the essence of human resource development (HRD). To achieve maximum, individual need to establish clear life and career goals. They need a working understanding of organisational politics and networking, and need to manage their image and time

to best effect. The individual should have clear perspective of his/her strengths and weaknesses and accordingly he/she should set his/her goals as well as seek to go ahead through initiative, perseverance and self improvement. University of Melbourne (1998) is providing a range of references, tools, and programs to all staff at all levels to drive their own careers. This is done with the help of career workshops, online programs, information and resources on career development, and mentoring (<http://www.hr.unimelb.edu.au/development>). According to the university of Adelaide Australia’s principles, normally all positions shall be advertised within the university as a minimum to provide staff with career development opportunities (<http://www.adelaide.edu.au/hr>).

In educational institutions, particularly in universities, teachers can develop their knowledge and interest to such an extent that they can plan their career and set their goals. Universities should provide all kind of facilities for faculty development. Faculty must add to their qualifications regularly because their future depends on the freshness and quality of their qualifications, as well as the depth of their expertise and the breadth of their experience.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The specific objectives of the study were to:

1. examine the system of career planning and development in old and new universities of the Punjab.
2. evaluate the opinions of teachers and administrative staff of universities on career development opportunities in old and new universities.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The universities were divided into two groups for comparison i.e. old and new: For the purpose of this research, the universities having more than 25 years of their establishment in 2005 were classified as “old universities”. In Punjab the number of such universities was five and all were included in the study. Other public sector universities in Punjab have been established in 1993 or afterwards but for the purpose of this study, the universities which had completed less than five years in 2005, were excluded because they might not have established HR practices. Five new universities were included in this research. In this way total of ten (10) universities (five old and five new) were taken for the research study. The underlying speculation to get information on old and new universities’ management practices and needs was that the old universities may be having well established faculty management practices as compared to new universities.

3.1. Sampling Technique

Two stage random sampling was used. In the first stage required number of departments was selected and in the second stage teachers from each department were selected.

3.2. Sample Size

Number of teachers from each department included two Lecturers, two Assistant Professors, one Associate Professor, and one Professor. In this way six faculty members from each department were taken as sample of study.

A questionnaire was used to collect data from the teaching faculty of old and new universities.

The opinion and information from administration was collected through interview.

Following were the results of the study.

4. RESEARCH RESULTS

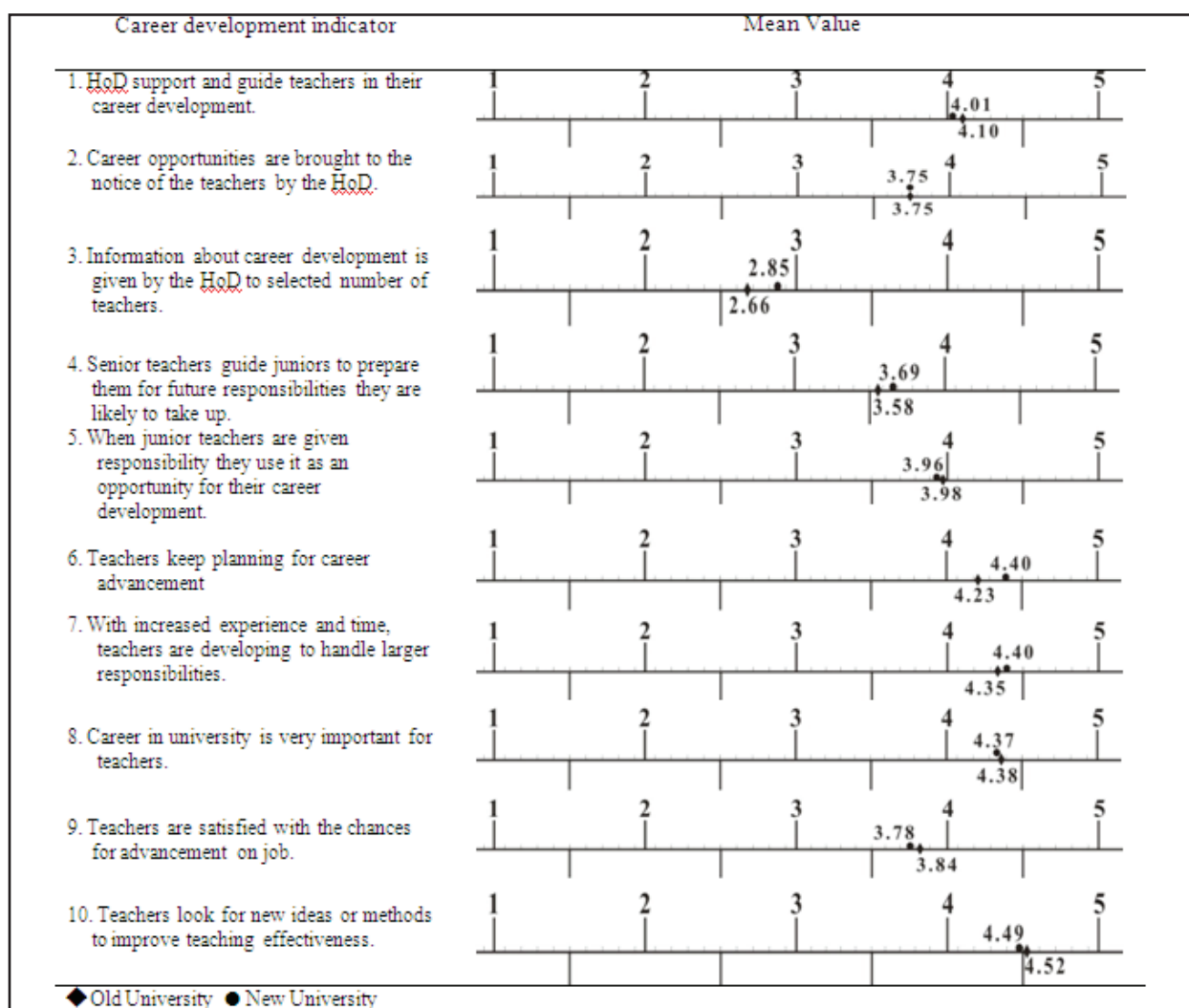
There was no career development centre/ cell in old and new universities. Mostly career development opportunities were brought into the notice of teachers by the Heads of the Departments (HoDs). No formal guidance was provided to them on career development and progression. Teachers were making individual efforts for their career planning and development. Practices regarding career planning and development were analyzed on the outline given below:

1. Teachers' opinion
2. Registrars' reflections

Table 1: Old and New Universities Teachers' Opinions on Career Development

Career development indicator	Type of University	Number of teachers	Degree of response level						X ²	Sig. level
			S.D %	D %	UD %	A %	SA %	Mean value		
1. HoD support and guide teachers in their career development.	Old	404	1.5	5.0	9.4	50.0	34.2	4.10	2.603	.626
	New	188	1.1	6.9	10.6	52.7	28.7	4.01		
2. Career opportunities are brought to the notice of the teachers by the HoD.	Old	403	3.0	9.2	18.1	49.1	20.6	3.75	1.019	.907
	New	186	4.3	8.6	16.1	50.0	21.0	3.75		
3. Information about career development is given by the HoD to selected number of teachers.	Old	401	16.2	31.9	26.4	20.2	5.2	2.66	3.852	.426
	New	183	11.5	30.6	26.8	23.5	7.7	2.85		
4. Senior teachers guide juniors to prepare them for future responsibilities they are likely to take up.	Old	403	5.0	15.1	16.4	44.2	19.4	3.58	8.033	.090
	New	186	5.9	9.7	11.8	54.8	17.7	3.69		
5. When junior teachers are given responsibility they use it as an opportunity for their career development.	Old	403	.7	6.7	11.9	55.1	25.6	3.98	.855	.931
	New	186	.5	6.5	14.5	53.2	25.3	3.96		
6. Teachers keep planning for career advancement	Old	402	.2	2.5	8.0	52.5	36.8	4.23	7.900	.095
	New	186	.0	1.1	4.3	47.8	46.8	4.40		
7. With increased experience and time, teachers are developing to handle larger responsibilities.	Old	401	.7	1.0	5.5	48.1	44.6	4.35	6.151	.188
	New	186	1.6	.0	2.2	49.5	46.8	4.40		
8. Career in university is very important for teachers.	Old	397	1.3	2.8	4.5	40.1	51.4	4.38	4.824	.306
	New	186	1.1	.5	6.5	44.1	47.8	4.37		
9. Teachers are satisfied with the chances for advancement on job.	Old	402	2.7	10.9	14.2	44.0	28.1	3.84	1.709	.789
	New	186	4.3	10.8	16.1	40.3	28.5	3.78		
10. Teachers look for new ideas or methods to improve teaching effectiveness.	Old	402	.5	1.3	2.0	41.5	54.8	4.52	.760	.944
	New	188	.5	.5	2.1	43.1	53.7	4.49		

Figure 1: Relative Means Difference of Old and New University Teachers' Opinions on Career Development Indicators



4.1. Teachers' Opinion

Teachers' opinions were collected on ten items regarding career development. Following table presents the summary of mean and χ^2 values for each statement.

The results of the χ^2 test revealed that responses of old and new university teachers on all the career development indicators were independent of the type of university. In other words, there was no association between the type of university and teachers' opinions on career development indicators.

Teachers of both types of universities opined that HoDs support and guide their career development and inform them about career development opportunities. Their opinion was further confirmed with their response on item 3 where they negated that information about career development was given by the HoDs to the selected number of teachers.

The old and new universities' teachers further stated that senior teachers guide juniors to prepare them to take up future responsibilities and whenever junior teachers were given responsibility; they use it as an opportunity for their career development. They also opined that with the increased experience and time they were developing to handle bigger responsibilities.

Mean values on item 9 and 10 showed that teachers of both types of universities were satisfied with the chances of advancement on their job and they look for new ideas and methods to improve their teaching effectiveness. Further, responses on item 6 indicated that career in university was very important for teachers of both types of universities. In spite of the similar type of responses of old and new university teachers, a further comparison of mean scores showed that teachers in new universities ($\bar{x} = 4.40$) were more inclined towards continuous planning for their career advancement than teachers in old universities ($\bar{x} = 4.23$).

Figure 1 further shows the relative difference of teachers' opinion on a scale ranging from 1-5, on all the indicators of career development:

4.2. Registrars' Reflections Collected Through Interview

Eight out of the nine Registrars were satisfied over the career development opportunities provided to the teachers in the form of training programs, workshops, seminars, and opportunities for higher education etc. One of the Registrars of a new university reflected in these words:

"Yes we are conducting training programs. We are sending 2-3 teachers abroad per year. Linkage with foreign universities is also being established. Workshops, seminars are also conducted. Computer software exhibitions etc are also organized."

Another Registrar of an old university stated that the training programs are very important for the career development of faculty members, both old and young teachers should be sent on trainings to be more effective in the field. He said,

"Career development is a continuous process for the improvement of a professional.... To make him aware of the current situation and to become more instrumental and significant for the stake holders there is a need that he or she should be sent on job as well as off job trainings. Regular short courses are conducted to enhance the delivery skills, subject expertise and to inform about latest developments in the field..... Now universities are supposed to do as corporations, profit oriented entities. So it is meant for service, as well as to generate revenue. If the manpower is not short, off campus trainings can be imparted...."

5. MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

1. There was no career development center/ cell in universities. Mostly career development opportunities were brought into the notice of teachers by the HoDs. No formal guidance was provided to them on career development and progression. Teachers were making individual efforts for their career development.
2. **Teachers' opinion:** In spite of the similar type of teachers' responses of old and new universities, a comparison of mean scores showed that teachers in new universities (4.40) were more inclined towards continuous planning for their career advancement than teachers in old universities (4.23). However, chi-square value was not significant.
3. Teachers of both types of universities said that HoDs inform teachers about career development

opportunities. Their opinion was further confirmed when they negated that the information about career development was given by the HoDs to the selected number of teachers.

4. The results indicated that senior teachers in both types of universities guide juniors to prepare them to take up future responsibilities.
5. Old and new universities' teachers stated that whenever junior teachers were given responsibility, they use it as an opportunity for their career development and with the increased time and experience they were developing to handle bigger responsibilities.
6. Teachers of old and new universities were satisfied with the chances of advancement on their job and they look for new ideas and methods to improve their teaching effectiveness
7. It was found that career in university was very important for teachers of both types of universities.
8. Old and new universities' teachers opined that HoDs support and guide their career development.
9. **Registrars' reflections:** Eight out of nine Registrars were satisfied over the career development opportunities in the form of training programs, workshops, seminars, and opportunities for advance studies.

6. DISCUSSION

It was revealed that teachers and registrars of both types of universities were generally satisfied with the career development opportunities in their universities. Both teachers and registrars were also well aware of the importance of on the job chances of advancement. Teachers were also seriously and consciously working for their career development in their respective discipline. Registrars were also of the opinion that their universities are facilitating teachers with developmental opportunities through conducting training programs, workshops, seminars, and provision of opportunities for advance studies.

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