Climbing the Career Ladder: Understanding Lived Experiences of University Faculty with Delayed Progression

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Abstract- The purpose of the present qualitative study was to examine the lived experiences of university faculty who have experienced a delay in their career progression even after meeting the selection criteria in order to better understand that phenomenon. The study was conducted in public sector universities of Pakistan. In this study the term "delayed progression" is defined as having been in same rank without being selected to next rank for more than five years even after fulfilling the promotion criteria set by HEC and respective university. The study used "an integrative model of human growth at work" presented by Gretchen M. Spreitzer and Christine Porath as theoretical framework to conceptualize behavior at both individual and organizational level. This study flowed from constructivist paradigms. Participant for the study were faculty member with delayed progression who were selected through purposive sampling according to established criteria. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was used as method to analyze the interview data. Five themes emerged from the analysis of data which represent mean for progression, delay or denied, between eligibility and non-eligibility, injustice and balancing stress. The study is expected to contribute to the existing literature in many ways by providing theoretical bases to construct a support mechanism for faculty development at university level.

Key Words: Faculty Progression, IPA, Thriving, Injustice

I. INTRODUCTION

Universities are competing in a global environment which places many challenges to them to secure top positions in international ranking. To survive in academic market place they attract and recruit top faculty prospects and offer positions to those members who they judge to possess those skills and aptitude necessary to compete in international scholarly environment. In last few years the status of faculty with PhD is improving in every institute of Pakistan (HEC, 2016). As a result, it is being observed that scholarly activities in universities are increasing day by day. The contribution of Pakistan in global scholarly production is also increasing every year as institutes are now more involved in contributing to existing literature than ever(Makri, 2018). Research intensive institutions invest a lot of resources on their faculty in supporting and developing them for scholarly production and support them in their academic and career endeavors. In a research intensive university the selection decision to next rank for a faculty member is an affirmation of that individual's some specific criteria set by HEC and followed by a standard review process. Therefore, the phenomenon must be understood in that context which is explained in the following paragraphs. Currently, two types of service structure systems including BPS (Basic Pay Scale) and TTS (Tenure Track System) are implemented concurrently in universities of Pakistan. BPS are on regular basis and TTS are on contract and received next tenure after meeting specific criteria. Almost 90% faculty in the universities all over the country is on BPS and only 10% of faculty is working on TTS since its launch in 2006(Basharat, 2018). Therefore, for this study we shall consider faculty working under the BPS system. Second reason for selecting BPS is that the selection criteria for both systems are very different. Thirdly, HEC is trying to resolve conflict over two parallel service structures by introducing a uniform system in the institutes (Basharat, 2018). Hence it is not possible to study both in one research. Fourthly, in most part of Europe the concept of TTS doesn't exist. Mostly European universities offered faculty positions on permanent basis including United Kingdom, Spain and France (Schiermeier, 2019). Hence it provides room for studying only one system deeply. Lastly with so many reforms in HEC the BPS system now also has become a performance based system. HEC has introduced standard criteria for faculty progression working on BPS in different fields. This includes PhD for Assistant Professor; PhD with 10 years teaching/research experience or 05 years post PhD teaching/Research experience and 10 publications in HEC recognized journals with at least 04 publications in last five years for Associate Professors and PhD with 15 years teaching/research experience or 10 years post PhD teaching/Research experience and 15 publications in HEC recognized journals with at least 05 publications in last five years for Associate Professors(HEC, 2019). Despite of set criteria, an atmosphere of competition to produce more and more research is also being observed in almost every institute of country. Faculty on BPS have changed their working style to a research-oriented system and performing near to faculty on TTS. HEC set rigorous criteria for faculty selection for different ranks including assistant professors, associate

professors and professors. It is designed to assess junior faculty members' ability to engage themselves in high level scholarly activities in the university and also to check if they are able to do it for long run in future. In university setting an individual's scholarly production not only serves to add new knowledge in the existing literature but it also serves as a vindication for individual's skills and worthiness as prospective candidate to be selected for next rank(Bensimon, Polkinghorne, Bauman, & Vallejo, 2004; Hambrick, 2005). Furthermore, scholarly activities of a faculty member in a university are taken as major criterion by the researchers conducting research on development of faculty (Brooks, 2005; Graham & Diamond, 1997; Webster & Conrad, 1986). If scholarly profile of a candidate is sparse as compare to other competitors, he will consider as week candidate in terms of academic progress and productivity in future. As a result his/her selection decision will be effected. These high standards of scholarly performance are also coupled with a fixed duration of teaching experience for each rank. These criteria manufacture a working environment where faculty must remain focused on their scholarly productivity in order to get career progression.

In an ideal situation with appropriate operating mechanisms of a university, each faculty member selected for promotion to next rank will possess the requisite abilities to perform at a level commensurate with standard criteria. He will also find a supporting environment in their academic endeavors by the university and will ultimately be selected for next rank at the conclusion of his period in the present rank. Implicitly universities are placing high expectations from faculty through successful selection of candidate to next rank. University expect from the prospect faculty members that after selection for next rank, they will continue to contribute in scholarly activities in a significant ways and their growth and productivity will also continue. Subsequent to their promotion if faculty members sustain their pace of scholarly activities to contribute to the production of knowledge, they will typically accumulate a scholarly reputation and publication record. This would be sufficient for their merit promotion. The promotion of a faculty member represents a vindication for the university. Universities actually recognize that the future scholarly contributions that were predicted at the time of appointment have been realized(Clark, 1987).In some cases this vindication arrives earlier while later in others. For some cases in never arrives and people retired without being promoted. Our understanding of the phenomenon indicates that some faculty members once appointed never been promoted to next rank and got retired. The selection criteria for different ranks involve research production, place faculty to a highly challenging environment. More visibility of research outcomes (Fairweather, 2002; Marginson, 2006) push universities to appraise faculty on the basis of "prestige enhancing publications" (Backes-Gellner&Schlinghoff, 2010; Coggburn& Neely, 2015). For universities, research production by their faculty has become a benchmark for national and global prestige. Therefore, it is been considered as key variable for selection decision for university faculty members (Higgins &Kotrlik, 2006).These high expectations for scholarly outcomes promote anxiety among faculty members. They have to survive in a highly competitive environment in terms of producing a meaningful, solid and statistically sound study and getting through the judgments and critiques by peer reviews. These reviews serve as a key to promotion for a specific faculty position. Therefore, involve stress and anxiety. Furthermore, faculty has to manage their research work among other teaching and services activities on and off campus which involve another challenge in terms of scarce time. The phenomenon becomes more important to investigate when the faculty fulfills specific selection criteria in an environment of stress and anxiety and still not progress in their career.

An academic career afford autonomy, intellectual challenges, and freedom to pursue personal interests (Gappa, Austin, & Trice, 2007). This means that some degree of intrinsic motivation towards scholarship plays a role in one's selection of this career path. If a slowdown or cessation of scholarly pursuits is observed, it will characterize and interpreted as waning of intrinsic motivation. In Pakistani universities we come across many such cases who are not stagnant professionally and continuously involved in scholarly production. They published extensively and exceed HEC criteria for promotion. They have secured prestigious grants. They presented research work in many international conferences and have research collaboration with international scholarly community. They have supervised many MPhil and PhD scholars and succeed in a variety of other academic areas. In short, these senior faculty members are at the top of their profession. Nevertheless, they remain stagnant to their present rank and didn't receive promotion for many years. They remain withdrawn in important ways in their own university. The problem is not unique to a single institution but prevailing in all the public sector universities of the country.At this stage, our understanding of the reasons and challenges for delayed progression is less clear. Availability of literature on this phenomenon is a limitation in the present study. From literature it is being observed that a great deal of energy has been directed towards the study of development programs to provide a support mechanism for progression to next rank. It mainly focus on the needs of proper orientation, mentoring, justice and equality, meritocracy, socialization process and support mechanism for faculty development(Baldwin, DeZure, Shaw, &Moretto, 2008; Boice, 1992; Buch, Huet,

Rorrer, & Roberson, 2011; Gardner & Blackstone, 2013; Sorcinelli& Austin, 1992; Tierney & Rhoads, 1993; Turner, González, & Wood, 2008). In short, the focus of above mentioned studies is to explore why faculty member could not fulfill the required criteria; what challenges did they face and what type of support would they require to develop? However, there is far less scholarly attention is given to the experiences of those who have fulfilled the required criteria but still not selected for next rank and they are stressed and frustrated that have caused less motivation to work in the academia. The present study is designed to explore that how faculty experience delays in their personal and professional life. The participants' experiences of their reaction and response towards delay progression to the next rank particularly experiences of the level and nature of unrest, anxiety and anguish towards the prevailing system of upward career mobility will increase understanding of the phenomenon being investigated. It is significantly important to grasp an understanding of how teaching and research activities and potential to pursue further avenue of knowledge are shaped due to the feelings of unrest and anxiety in the state of delayed progression. The study will also explore and illuminate those reasons and challenges in order to suggest development of a better support system for university faculty to sustain their academic productivity.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the present qualitative study was to examine the lived experiences of university faculty who have experienced a delay in their career progression even they fulfill the eligibility criteria for their selection in the next academic position. The study aims to grasp an understanding of the phenomenon under investigation by unveiling the feelings, experiences and reactions of the participants who have been waiting for a long period of time to be selected for the next academic position.

Research Questions

This study is based on a single research question of my PhD dissertation. That is

Q. No 1: How do university faculty experience delayed progression in their personal and professional life?

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study utilized "an integrative model of human growth at work" presented by Gretchen M. Spreitzer and Christine Porath, as a theoretical frame work. "The model identifies how the three nutrients of autonomous motivation (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) mediate the relationship between key elements of the social context (including decision-making discretion, broad information sharing, a climate of trust and respect, and performance feedback) and thriving at work"(Spreitzer&Porath, 2014). The model provides an understanding of how an organization can provide a more productive work environment to enable employee performance, well-being and sustainability. It indicates that how supporting or thwarting employees basic need of autonomy, competence and relatedness affect thriving at work.

Figure 1. Theoretical Framework

This model comprehensively examines the conceptual underpinnings of workplace motivation. Thriving predicts a broad range of outcomes for individuals and organizations including performance, proactivity, adaptation and health. Organizations have to think about the ways of enhancing autonomy, competence and relatedness to promote thriving at work. The organization that intends to provide an experience of thriving to its employees should focus on the context where employees can experience a reasonable amount of decision making discretion, broad information sharing, climate of trust, feedback, sense competence in their role and feel a sense of community or relatedness among their fellow workers.

III. METHODOLOGY

The researcher adopted Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to explore the in-depth experiences of university faculty with delayed progression. Researchers focus on IPA in order to explore in-depth personal experiences and how people perceive, ascribe meaning and make sense of their

experiences(Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2008).The IPA was chosen for this research as the most appropriate methodology for a number of reasons. Firstly, the scarcity of peer-reviewed articles relating to educational psychology using IPA(Hefferon& Gil-Rodriguez, 2011). These are also rare in organizational psychology. Although it is rooted in health psychology (Smith, 2004), I argue that use of IPA in organizational and educational context would also be fruitful. Therefore, I took it as an opportunity to fill this gap. Secondly, IPA is particularly useful approach to adopt in exploring a previously neglected area (Reid, Flowers, & Larkin, 2005). This seems particularly pertinent to current study because it is aiming to explore experiences of faculty who are experiencing delay in progression which is particularly scarce under the BPS system. The inductive nature of approach allowed me to not rely on existing literature rather provides possibilities to arise novel and unexpected experiences. Thirdly, a touchy debate and researchers' commentary about the epistemological underpinnings of IPA also attracted the researcher. IPA is open to a number of epistemological positions. This appear as strength of the approach(Larkin et al., 2006). IPA is itself a representation of an epistemological position (Smith, 2004). This is due to the focus on context dependent knowledge (rather than objective knowledge) and the acknowledgement of the active interpretative role of the researcher. Fourthly, In terms of the analysis process, IPA offers a comprehensive guide to help the researcher to work their way through a number of steps and stages(Larkin et al., 2006; Smith et al., 2009). Fifthly, IPA emphasizes on flexibility and lack strict instructions. It means that it doesn't focus on completion of analysis in the right way but to stick to the general principals underpinning the analysis process. Last but not the least, the cyclic and interactive analysis process also appealed the researcher because it offers something more dynamic than a linear approach. This allow for deep immersion in the data and in necessary facts. These clear guidelines for analysis process justified to adopt this approach and provide me reassurance and comfort.

Participant and Data Collection

All the faculty members in Pakistani universities who are facing delay in their career progression are population for this study. The methods of sampling were purposeful and snowball. Purposeful is in the sense that it can provide an opportunity to select a sample who share particular criteria and fulfill the purpose of the study. Reason to go for snowball is that we don't have exact data about the availability and access to faculty facing this delay. Therefore, the researcher moved stepwise. First of all, I gained access to a specific faculty member and then with the help of that participant I moved towards other participants sharing similar characteristics.

Smith et al. (2009),suggest that the best data collection method for IPA should "invite participants to offer a rich, detailed, first-person account of their experiences" and "facilitate the elicitation of stories, thoughts and feelings about the target phenomenon". Researchers mostly used Semi-structured interviews as a tool to collect detain IPA (Reid et al., 2005). For the purpose of this research, I used semi-structured interview to collect data.

Analytical Plan

In this qualitative study researcher used Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) approach. Analytical plan of this study was guided by a number of stages for data analysis outlined by (Smith et al., 2009) which were reading-re-reading; initial noting; developing emergent themes; searching for connections among emergent themes; moving on to the ext case; looking for patterns across cases. These are no clear right or wrong ways of conducting IPA. The process only provides few guidelines to assist researcher (Smith et al., 2009). The developing analysis involved moving from a focus on the individual to a more shared understanding and from a descriptive level to a more interpretative one. It was a cyclic processes rather a linear one.

Trustworthiness

For this study we shall use four dimension criteria of ensuring trustworthiness in a qualitative research articulated by (Yardley, 2000, 2008) that are sensitivity to context, commitment and rigor, transparency and coherence, and impact and importance. This criteria can be used in a study using IPA (Tallman, 2015)because suggested criteria are broad ranging and offer a variety of ways of establishing quality. Second, they attempt to offer criteria which can be applied irrespective of the particular theoretical orientation of a qualitative study (Smith et al., 2009).

Analysis

This study was design to investigate the phenomenon of delayed progression as consciously experienced by faculty members who are experiencing delay in their career progression. It was a systematic effort to describe and uncover the internal meaning and structures of lived experiences of faculty with delayed progression by focusing on their point of view on the phenomenon at hand. Five themes emerged from the careful analysis of interview data which represent mean for progression, delay or denied, between eligibility and non-eligibility, injustice and balancing stress.

Mean for progression

The theme will elaborate the meanings progression/ delay progression has in faculties experiences. How they look at progression; what they mean for progress and why they need progression. Additionally, in the absence of progression what benefits will they miss? How the absence of these benefits will impact their individual and organizational performance. From the analysis of interviews it is extracted that faculty sees progression as a source of self-satisfaction, recognition, autonomy and power. If they don't have progression in their career, they would miss these potential benefits and as a result their potential performance will effect. Faculty members at this level need recognition of their work. They want a balance between their performance at work and their rank. If they are performing according to next rank and have fulfilled the prerequisite criteria for selection to next rank they will surely demand that rank. Whatever the reasons are behind delay, for faculty members it is a symbol of social recognition. If they don't get promoted they will suffer negative emotions. DrAsghar who is an assistant professor; waiting for progression for eight years lament on the situation that'

"I love my profession. I cannot live without my profession. That's why I am growing professionally but not getting rewarded. This thing makes me frustrated as I am not equally recognized".

We came to know during our investigation that sometimes this happens with highly professional members that they don't get progression timely. They have set few goals and have planning according to that coming progression. They also have shared this potential career growth with their family and friends. In this situation how many years can a person wait for this status and how they can satisfy their family and friends' expectations? Draamir, who is working as assistant professor, have post doctorate from top ranked university of his field and still waiting for promotion for fourteen years express his grief that,

"the situation is totally embarrassing for a person like me, who can do everything in his professional life. I went to ABC University (a top ranked institute of his field) and performed above there as a scientist, still not got selected here".

The situation became bitterer for a person when people ask the reasons for not being promoted and you don't have answer for that. DrAkmal, a lecturer, waiting promotion for five years explained that, *"everybody ask why you are not being promoted".*Drasad, who is working as Assistant Professor and waiting for progression for nine years unveiled another reality that,

"The students which we supervised few years ago have preceded me after joining another institute. The situation makes me discomfort when they ask me reasons of not being promoted".

Autonomy and power are also important motives behind getting promotion as constructed from faculty's point of view. People need to assert their decision making power by getting to such ranks which provides them autonomy to do so. If a faculty member have such potential and he think that he can contribute in policy making by providing his input, he will surely demand promotion. It's a bitter reality in our system that "as a lecturer you are neglected" and being ensured that you are not at this level yet to contribute in decision making. Eligible and competent people feel hot burning when they feel that senior is taking wrong decision and my input would value better if it is incorporated. Dr. Ali who is waiting for progression for 16 year and still working as lecturer even after getting his post doctorate from top ranked foreign university stressed that,

"As a lecturer we are closer to students and know their problems better than others. Therefore we should provide chance to participate in key decisions of department but most of times we are realized that our input has no worth and do not incorporate our input".

Unfortunately, this doesn't happen in reality. You need to be head of department or closer to him to influence key decisions in the departments. These people are in educational setting and their ultimate goals are to provide students with better educational facilities. Although, there are people who are closer to students and their thoughts are more align with students, nevertheless their voice is not being heard in important decisions of departments.

This theme also unveils a reality that people usually not want progression only for monetary rewards. If a person is foreign qualified and have a doctorate from an indigenous university, it is an indication that he is from a stable family background which is able to bear his educational expenses. So we can extract that money is lesser important in career progression. As Dr. Asad, who is Assistant Professor and waiting for progression for eight years shared his experiences that he came from a remote area. I started residing in a posh area. My children got elite class education. *"There is no difference in my lifestyle and a Professor's life style".*

Another aspect of financial benefit which faculty shared is that they are rewarded with financial benefits of next rank few years before but not awarded with next rank. Here an important situation emerged from the discussion that during these years they did not get many other benefits including involvement, membership of different boards etc. Dr. Ali who is waiting for progression for 16 year and still working as lecturer even after getting his post doctorate from top ranked foreign university stressed that,

"During last five years not a single student approaches me for PhD supervision because as a lecturer I am not a member DPC (doctoral program committee)."

If people are not awarded promotion timely they face potential loss of research collaboration. So they missed the chance of working on national forums. How monetary benefits can compensate their loss if he missed such an important opportunities. They faced opportunity cost in terms of not receiving an potential research collaboration. Although they got some money along with two steps increment in service book but this doesn't fulfill their loss. As publication is a main criterion in selection dossier and students are main source of publication at this level. If somebody find students with good research skills he will surely have publication support from those students but if you don't find supervisees, you have to cross this destination all alone. Dr.Asad showed his frustration when he was saying that,

"Ah! I could not got benefits from students' contribution. I was all alone in this journey".

Additionally, People feel you competent or incompetent on the basis of your rank. Same is with the students. Dr. Zafar , a lecturer , eligible for next rank for eight years express his feeling that.

"Knowledge at every rank is same but change in title changed peoples' opinion towards you".

Before getting promoted juniors are degraded at each platform. They feel incompetent in awarding lectures. They do not get PhD class. They do not got supervision of doctoral students. As soon as they got promoted everything changed for them. Now promote is good in knowledge and all other aspects. As elaborated by Dr. Zulfiqar who is Associated Professor and eligible for next rank for seven years,

"People are title driven. Knowledge wise I am same as I was yesterday. But a single notification changed me for people".

This seems very tragic. This is totally a nonprofessional approach of students and academia. Dr Ali further express that I am working on single dimension for twenty years. I find no support from students as a lecturer. If I had few supportive members from MPhil or PhD, I would have done this work easily and timely. I have to collect data by myself which could be done by my supervisees. Moreover if this work is done by more participants with scholarly collaboration this will have more width and depth and would be done at better level.

Last but not the least people demand promotion for support. With next rank people may find support in terms a furnished office and supporting staff including NaebQasid and Clerk. Before progression a person have to type each and every word by him. Now he may not type a single word by himself. This includes many other things including tea, water and cleanliness facility. We can observe a rush of students in senior ranked offices. They choose them because of their power in BOS and publication etc.

Delay or denied

Faculty with delayed progression perceives delay in three ways. First, delay means actually delay. This may be because of some personal or institutional barriers and after some time they are going to have promotion in their career. Secondly, delay means actually denied. They realized that they are not going to get promoted anymore. This delay is actually a bureaucratic subterfuge to make employees optimistic and satisfied. This will never get promotion and got retired while waiting for promotion. Thirdly, they perceive delay as delay but this long delay makes promotion nickel-and-dime for them. Now they have reached to a point where above mentioned benefits of progression are frivolous for them. Following paragraphs are description of these three states.

In the first situation faculty perceive delay as a delay. They are optimistic about their selection to next rank. In this stage they are motivated and working on their development in fulfilling selection criteria. They don't stop working after having disappointment from promotion refusal but increase efforts to appear in next selection board with more spirit. Dr. Awais, who is Lecturer and waiting progression for five years explained that,

"I am very much engaged with the system to improve myself".

Faculty members face the situation with smiling face and take it as part of system not a discriminating act for them. Dr. zulfiqar who is Associated Professor and eligible for next rank for seven years elaborated that, *"I faced very interesting circumstances but I remained connected".* They don't try to revolt the system and make their own way. They fulfill all tasks which are assigned to them within the department. They create space within their job and never try opportunities outside the job. They devote time to research activities within job. Even though, they are rejected and neglected many time but still they are energetic and motivated to prove their position. Their vitality and learning at job never suffered.

If the feel that their delay is because of organizational politics, they engaged in political bargaining. It is common that different pressure groups at institutional level have effects on selection of faculty to next rank. Those pressure groups in turn need more and more individual support. Faculty with positive mindset do engage themselves in these political activities. With their friends circle they try to get assistance for their promotion in future selection boards. DrAsghar who is an assistant professor; waiting for progression for eight years justify that,

"We ensured them that we are also worthwhile for you. I too have a friend circle which can assist and harm some political group's interests".

Actually they offer their favor to pressure groups as a transaction. They in turn ensure their help in future selection boards.

Moreover they have ego centric approach. People usually feel you competent or incompetent on the basis of your rank. Their inability to got promotion in next rank never makes them disappoint. If never allow people to define them competent or incompetent on those bases. They never take stress of this inability and prove their competence at every platform. DrAkmal, a lecturer, waiting promotion for five years explained that,

"I neither lower my performance nor leave working hard".

In second situation where faculty with delayed progression has realized that they are not going to further promoted. This is end of their career development and this delay is actually a denial for promotion. They are no more motivated to work for improving selection criteria to next rank. They are contented with what they have achieved so far. Individually this problem is because of fewer opportunities available to a member in his area of interest or difficulties in aligning with institutional demands. Problem emerges when people cannot find enough publishing opportunities in local journals. Usually we have fewer journals and more to publish. As a result people have two options that either they move their interest towards those journals that don't publish in their area of interest or stop putting effort in research and publication. Draamir, who is working as assistant professor, have post doctorate from top ranked university of his field and still waiting for promotion for fourteen years point out that,

"We are left with only one option that we should change our interest according to that journal where I can have access to publication otherwise stop research activities".

As a result students also suffer when they have to write in that area because of the reason that it could publish. The system is pushing people towards nonprofessional approach. Some members are writing where they don't have interest at all just for sake of publication and to complete their luck number of required criteria. However there are people who cannot survive with this approach so they revolt the system and stop working in research. As a result they lose their chances of promotion because they could not fulfill required publication criterion.

The nature of work demand from faculty also pushes them to willingly behave in a selfless way. This involves demanding such attitudes and action from the faculty that produce some specific goals and outcomes in the benefit of institute, department or other colleagues, but are not necessarily support the career development of faculty members.

Sometimes it happens that department demands work which is not align with the faculty's area of interest. They wanted or unwanted accept it but cannot perform well in that area and waist institutional resources and their own time and energy. Dr. Ali who is waiting for progression for 16 year and still working as lecturer even after getting his post doctorate from top ranked foreign university stressed that,

"Working out of interest is a big reason for not getting promotion in time. People are not usually well aware of their abilities and skill. They are unable to choose in which area to work proficiently. This is really difficult that somebody tell us to work in a specific research area that is not align with our own area of interest. We cannot do at all. But tragedy is that we don't have culture of refusal. We don't have word "NO". We accept that work and in the end neither it benefit us not our institute or country".

Moreover, institutes have tasks and demands which sometimes conflicts one another. It needs people for administrative work along with competent teachers and successful scholars. The department unreasonably expect from individuals to fulfill all the tasks at the same time with equal energy. That time faculty consciously or unconsciously accept those assignment and they have to pay the price when comes to meet selection criteria. So far as selection criteria is concern. It mostly revolves round scholarly contribution. The people who have devoted much time to teaching in the past were not able to pay attention to research work. They neither have required publication criterion at this point of time not have energy and interest to devote time to research activities. Resultantly they perceive delay as ultimate denial.

In third state people feel long delay as actually delay but in terms of meaning of promotion now acquiring promotion has become meaningless for them. Now they feel no charm in the potential benefits of next rank. People relate promotion with its potential benefits such as self-satisfaction, recognition, autonomy and power etc. they want to achieve them at certain level of age. As it continues delaying, it will become measly for them. They feel that at this stage progression cannot substitute their loss. As Dr. Asad, who is Assistant Professor and waiting for progression for eight years shared his experiences that,

"They mark such a dent in our career which can never be healed".

As a result they lower concentration on their promotion and leave trying to fulfill selection criteria to next rank. Draamir, who is working as assistant professor, have post doctorate from top ranked university of

his field and still waiting for promotion for fourteen years point out that, *"I have left thinking about my promotion".* They think they every way of progression has blocked. At this stage he could not test his potential in some other professions. They feel disappointment. Dr. Zafar , a lecturer , eligible for next rank for eight years express his feeling that. *"I am not left with any other option".*

It happened that few institutes started giving financial benefits to faculty with delayed progression but did not award rank. This benefit has not enough worthwhile for them. They don't take it as compensation of their loss due to delay. Dr. Zaheer, who is associate and waiting for promotion for nine years, illustrate that,*"Financial support is not enough support for delay loss"*. They are hopeless from every authority. They feel that no one can fulfill their lose. Neither university nor HEC can compensate their loss.

Finally they perceive that their family matter has more important to them. Despite of thinking their own progression, they start looking at the achievements of their children. Faculty with delayed progression talked about the achievements of their children. They think their achievements as a substitute to their own success in career.

Between eligibility and non-eligibility

This theme describe a situation where faculty with delayed progression experience them rolling between eligibility to not eligibility. They encounter such a situation where they unanticipated known that they are not eligible for next selection, since they have met the previously said selection criteria. Sometimes this is happen at departmental level and sometimes at HEC level. Delayed members shared an interesting situation. Their perception of ultimate refusal is based on selection criteria for next rank which mostly remain inconsistent at different point of time. We are in multidisciplinary world where department and subjects are linked with each other. A math department need faculty from physics, statistics and so on. Similarly in Education department we need people from English, Science and many other departments. This need create a problem for few faculty members in their career advancement. Institutional heads use this for their own interest and delay their career progression. For example, a member having basic qualification in English selected earlier in Education department to teach subject "Teaching of English", when comes to selection for higher rank asked to improve his qualification in Education. Similarly, a member having qualification in Math but working in Physics asked to improve his qualification in Physics. Dr. Awais, who is Lecturer and waiting progression for five years, concluded that

"People become eligible to not eligible after serving a long time. When selected to specific department, they were eligible but suddenly told that they are not eligible. What can they do now? How they can satisfy themselves and face their family and friends".

At the time of first selection they were appointed on different criteria. Now it has changed without communicating these reforms to the employees. They suddenly have known at the time of recruitment in next rank. Now they are bound to even not apply for that post for which they have served a long time.

The criteria for selection remained unclear mostly which provide room for institutes to make eligible to not eligible and vice versa. Universities are to follow HEC set criteria but usually they set their own criteria according to their own needs. This creates an ambiguity in candidates. Almost all candidates pointed out an unclear state that they are devoting much time in teaching but are evaluating only on research contribution. Where is their major contribution of teaching? Are they wasting time in teaching? One faculty member asked me to research on those faculty members who got promoted that how better they are in teaching. Dr. Zafar , a lecturer , eligible for next rank for eight years express his feeling that.

"I assure you that who are devoting times to students are not getting reward but who are busy on their laptop conducting research are getting promotion. There is not a single mark of teaching in selection board. Why we are here? Everybody is busy in research. No one is willing to teach".

Another unclear aspect which helps in making eligible to not eligible and the other way round is timing of selection board. Sometimes it takes years to conduct a selection board because of several reasons. In this situation candidates cannot decide their personal and personal activities outside the job or out of country. This creates another type of problem. Behind this is the purpose of manipulation of selection board. Dr. Zafar , a lecturer , eligible for next rank for eight years express his feeling that.

"I was abroad to perform Haj. They manage a selection in another selection board and select a candidate from my competitors. I was not given chance to apply".

DrAsghar who is an assistant professor; waiting for progression for eight years justify that that'

 "I was in Cambridge for my Doctorate and working on my dissertation. I came back just to appear before selection board. I was refused and another person from outside university is selected whose marks were far below to me. I was so disappointed that never came back to complete my dissertation".

As we are performing in a developing country where reforms in every institution is essential so higher education has no exception. If people face a long delay as more than ten years, policy reforms are indispensable within these years which can affect their previously fulfilled criteria for next selection. People are making eligible to not eligible technically. As shared by Dr. Ali that before 2008 HEC had no

clear guidelines regarding the worth of a journal. Just a journal should have peer review and editorial board to accept article for selection. This policy benefitted many people but who faced delay suffered a lot. Now they are not eligible. With new reforms their publication has gone to garbage. They have to start new journey. Even few international journals were banned where people had invested a lot for their publication. DrAkmal, a lecturer, waiting promotion for five years explained that,

"I paid more than 4000$ for publications but HEC black list those journals. Where HEC was before people started publication".

It is not only the selection criteria which are affected by inconsistent criteria but people lose ownership of their work. Dr. zulfiqar who is Associated Professor and eligible for next rank for seven years, indicate that,

"I had published my PhD research in a journal which is now banned. I approached to HEC to have permission to publish it in some better journal but they refused. I am agony that I have lost ownership of my work".

Injustice

Organizational justice means the extent to which employees are treated justly (Elovainio et al., 2005). Moreover, the outcomes obtained and the processes carried out are fair at workplace (Hubbell &Chory-Assad, 2005). The organizational injustice is concerned with people's perceptions of fairness and violations in the workplace. At the university level, justice is the extent to which faculty feel that they are being treated fairly. After the careful analysis of interviews injustice emerged as a major theme of this study. Faculty with delayed progression perceives this situation as injustice in many ways.

Sometimes injustice caused by culture of organizational politics which influences selection process and criteria. The nature of politics varies from institute to institute. It includes politically affiliated groups, linguistic, religious, cast based and friend groups. The people have same mindset group together and create pressure for their own interest. As a result people become victims to nepotism. During interviews I came to know different ways of giving benefit to someone favorable persons in the selection process and discriminating someone unfavorable. People are made eligible to not eligible just because of fear of potential competition. Pressure groups need some favorable persons in power so they support them. As a result eligible people have to suffer injustice. Dr. Asad, who is Assistant Professor and waiting for progression for eight years shared his experiences that

"We both were eligible to next selection. Somebody selected to next rank had to nominate as department chair. To avoid competition my selection was refused and my competitor is now department chair".

Draamir, who is working as assistant professor, have post doctorate from top ranked university of his field and still waiting for promotion for fourteen years point out that,

"We have two groups (A and B). When acting vice chancellor is from group A, he will surely incline towards his group. For example if he has to select four members he will try to give one seat to opposite party to calm down the situation and three will be selected from his favorite group".

This situation caused delay for everybody in the waiting line if victims go for legislation or use their own pressure group in over selection board. Sometimes department want to select some favorable people but because of the pressure of other group cannot do so, as a result selection for all the people are delayed. Dr. Ali who is waiting for progression for 16 year and still working as lecturer even after getting his post doctorate from top ranked foreign university stressed that,

"Some institutional heads are coward. If there are nine applicants eligible for selection to next rank and he want to select only four. He could not do so because of potential threat from remaining five persons. Actually his dishonesty is the main reason behind. Otherwise standing on justice cannot create any problem for him. If some have to manipulate criteria to favor someone special, he will fear. Otherwise he don't care. Someone will surely have fear in facilitating the person of his own will and resultantly will delay the meeting of selection board".

Sometimes delay in selection backed by favoritism totally spoiled peoples career. Assume a situation where faculty doesn't find opportunity to apply for next selection for ten years. People become eligible and got retired without being promoted to next rank. They finished their career at lower level of what they deserved. Dr. Awais, who is Lecturer and waiting progression for five years, concluded that

"We had a Director who remained departmental head for ten years with three extensions. She conducted not a single selection board during his whole period".

Balancing Stress

This theme explains how faculty members with delayed progression balance the stress caused by delay. This will further discuss what types of counter strategies they adopt to overcome the situation. There are different types of members. Members with ego centric approach face the hardships within job and continue efforts to prove them in the organization. Those who find fewer opportunities there start separate assignments outside the organization and utilize their potential in outside activities. On the other hand employees with amotivation try to show contentment on what they have at hand and see

their successes in their children success. They increase focus on their family matters rather than job. They show absenteeism, burnout, stress, aggression, disobedience etc. Therefore, it can be concluded they people involve in two types of counter strategies. First they want to improve them according to changing requirements of job. Secondly, they want to control distraction caused by long delay in their career progression by engaging them in counter strategies.

There are employees who don't get disappointed by the harsh situations and continue working on their improvement. Dr. Alyan, who is Lecturer and eligible for next rank for six years, explain that,

"Whenever I neglected, I respond them with my performance. Mostly, my publications are mostly during those periods when I was refused progression".

Respondent explains that they become more socialized as a result of denial. They increased their research collaboration. They start negotiating with pressure groups and ensure them their presence. Some employees show pessimistic approach and satisfy them by perceiving delay as part of their fate. They are contented on whatever they have achieved in their career. They satisfy them by ensuring that this is from God. They can do nothing in this situation.

There are people who have trust on their abilities. If department is unable to utilize their potential and don't provide them chance to perform they will surely test them somewhere else. Many respondents explain that they are engaged in outside projects which are running very successfully. Somebody engage in consultancy and somebody have their post graduate programs in other institutes. People are also running their journal successfully. Dr. Awais, who is Lecturer and waiting progression for five years, concluded that,

"I have to utilize my potential at any cost therefore; I focus on outside department to prove myself. I wanted a place where I could have decision making power and autonomy over my actions. I want to run a department according to my opinion".

As people grow professionally their family expectations increased. Suppose after PhD family would expect to have a rank of Assistant Professor. But if this progression is delayed they family will hurt as a result employee feel frustrated. We constructed that people in this situation usually pay more attention to their family. They talk about children who are studying in medical or engineering colleges. They perceive their success everything for them.

Finally, researcher constructed a situation where faculty member with delay progression engage in legislative procedures. They challenge this discrimination in high court. There are many examples of this sort of activities. Legislation between BPS and TTS is one famous example. If an institute wants selection board of one side, the other side engages in legislation and gets stay from court. Hence, spoil the whole procedure. This cause further delay in selection procedures.

People have their own areas of interest where they want to grow. You cannot bound them to work forcefully. As a counter strategy they focus on two different dimensions one is to publish for survival and second is to publish for self-interest and self-growth. In this situation university cannot expect one-dimensional research work from them. They compromise quality of work for the sake of publication.

IV. DISCUSSION

The present study was designed to examine the lived experiences of university faculty who were experiencing a delay in their academic progression and it aimed to focus both on the unique characteristics of individual participants and the patterns that emerged among their experiences. Theoretically the study was supported by "An integrated model of human growth at work which integrates two concepts, thriving and self-determination theory, specifically for organizational context."Thriving is a psychological state composed of the joint experience of vitality and learning"(Spreitzer, Sutcliffe, Dutton, Sonenshein, & Grant, 2005). Employees who are thriving experience growth at work and momentum marked by both a sense of feeling energized and alive (vitality) and a sense that they are continually improving and getting better at what they do (learning)(Spreitzer et al., 2005). In a work place setting vitality and learning perform a joint role to have true spirit of thriving. Both components have their own significant role towards growth and development at work(Spreitzer& Sutcliffe, 2007). If one is learning but feels depleted, thriving will suffers (Spreitzer et al., 2005). For example, consider a faculty member, who is learning as he or she mastering new research paradigms, methodologies and use of ICT etc. but feels exhausted with his or her work, will experience limited thriving because of missing one component (vitality). His or her development is stunted. Because of one week component, lower energy level, he or she can't fully utilize learning. On the other hand, if someone feels alive and energized at workplace but his personal learning is stagnant, he might feel limited thriving. A faculty member may feel energized by satisfying students' needs. He may find few learning opportunities to improve from routine work but he is not provided with training and development

activities. In this case, the faculty member will also experience limited thriving because this member is energized but not improving in learning. Thriving represents the joint experience of a sense of vitality and learning and is most accurately conceptualized as a continuum, where people are more or less thriving at any point in time, rather than a dichotomous state of either thriving or not(Saakvitne, Tennen, & Affleck, 1998).

According to Self Determination Theory, there are three basic psychological needs which impact intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The three needs are autonomy – the extent to which one feels control over their own choices; competence – the perception that one is capable of doing the work at hand; and relatedness – a feeling of connection with others in a group. These three needs have the ability to positively or negatively impact motivation (Deci& Ryan, 1985). According to model factors of self-determination theory mediates the relationship between contextual enablers and thriving at work which in turn affects employees' performance. In our situation if people are provided with growth opportunities they with enjoy autonomy, competence and sense relatedness. Employees' means for promotion in the first theme are achieving self-satisfaction, recognition, autonomy and power. If they are provided promotion along with these factors they will be motivated and show satisfactory performance. On the other hand if they are neglected only ego centric people were reacted positively at work but many other tried their potential outside work activities to prove them. As a result organization deprived from their potential services. Other people with amotivation reacted with less work, absenteeism, burnout, stress, aggression, disobedience etc. They left think about their promotion and concentrated on family matters. They looked their successes in the successes of their children. They thought that now they have no way to forward and not left with any option to grow at individual level within the organization.

V. FINDINGS

It was found from the analysis of interview data that promotion is significant for the faculty because they want it as a source of self-satisfaction, recognition, autonomy and power. If they don't have progression in their career, they would miss these potential benefits and as a result their potential performance will effect. They explained delay in three ways. First they perceived delay as a delay and were hopeful for their progression. Secondly, they perceived delay as an ultimate denial. They were not hoping promotion now. Thirdly, this long delay had snatched the charm of promotion for them. Now they experienced it equally whether they are promoted or not. Faculty with delayed progression didn't find consistent approach for selection criteria. They experienced themselves swinging between eligibility and non-eligibility. They encounter such a situation where they unanticipated known that they are not eligible for next selection, since they have met the previously said selection criteria. Additionally faculty took delay as organizational injustice. They felt that they were not being treated fairly at university level. Faculty members responded delay progression in different ways. Few members with ego responded this challenge with their performance and proved them within the job. On the other hand few members started testing their potential outside the departments. The members with amotivation showed contentment on their fate and perceive this situation as a result of God's will. They increase focus on their family matters rather than job. They show absenteeism, burnout, stress, aggression, disobedience etc.

Policy Implications

Examining university faculty's experiences of delayed promotion would provide an important framework for continued understanding of the progression process throughout the universities in Pakistan. This study is significant because it is going to fill the gap in the limited literature on the said topic. Relevant studies focused on examining the barriers to achieve required level in meeting criteria for selection to next rank in terms of education, publication, research grants, supervision etc and suggested a support system for their mentoring and growth (Baldwin et al., 2008; Boice, 1992; Gardner & Blackstone, 2013; Sorcinelli& Austin, 1992; Tierney & Rhoads, 1993; Turner et al., 2008). On the other hand, present study addressed the situation where faculty already hadd achieved set targets for promotion and still waiting for selection to the next academic position for a long period of time. It addressed those personal and institutional factors which are contributing to this delay and how are they coping the situation. The recommendations of this study would be used to develop and implement policies and programs that favor and support faculty with delayed progression in their career. The present study also provided a window or vision into the situation facing by faculty throughout the country. Furthermore, it will encourage institutional commitment to focus on the problems of faculty in such situation.

The findings of this study provided a better understanding of promotion experiences and perceptions of university faculty and served as a foundation for developing a body of literature in this field. Further, this study provides important implications for theory building in the discipline of higher education in the country. The findings constitute important contribution not only to the knowledge base, but to the

discipline of education, academia, and society as a whole. Our focus of interest for this study was the faculty members who remained stuck to existing rank for many years. Usually those faculty members who couldn't maintain a satisfactory level of engagement (Rice, 2003) could become stuck. They become professionally stationary both in terms of rank and institution. This phenomenon of terminal or stuck involves difficulties for institutions as well as for individual faculty themselves. From an institutional viewpoint, the faculty member who is not actively engaged in scholarly activities and producing nothing is representing an opportunity cost. He/she occupy a scarce position in faculty line that might otherwise be held by a more productive faculty member who would contribute actively in enhancing departmental and institutional profile and would attract more students and colleagues (Weyland, 2011).Institutions can benefit to promote those members who have an active research agenda, have proven success in scholarly publication, and possess a strong promise of future productivity. Departments want to achieve continuing improvement and progress and to avoid stagnation (Weyland, 2015). From an individual perspective, an economic cost is attached to this stuck in the form of lower annual increase in salary and less funding opportunities for research projects. For a personal perspective, faculty members may bear risk of psychological cost in the form of loss of respect in personal and professional community. Evidence from literature suggest that faculty may experience derogation or ostracization from other more successful collogues from the faculty (Gilstrap, Harvey, Novicevic, & Buckley, 2011; Pfeffer& Fong, 2005). The phenomenon of delayed promotion has both institutional and personal implications. It carries both economic and non-economic costs. The cost can be more severe if this delay is due to meeting professional requirements rather it is institutional. As we are focusing those faculty who have fulfilled required criteria but still not being promoted. What would be the prestige of this king of system in the eyes of scholarly community? How an institute can compete and survive in international market with the employees having this level of job satisfaction? Can an institute hope for continued scholarly production from these employees. The results from this study provided a framework to address these issues on individual and institutional level.

International competitive environment and performance based promotion criteria has pushed faculty to a "publish or perish" situation. This phrase has lost its meaning by using as an academic cliché. It would be more significant for faculty if it is restated as , 'if you are not growing (as scholar), you are dying" (Tallman, 2015). Hence research production is more visible than teaching oriented outcomes (Fairweather, 2002; Marginson, 2006) therefore, institutions are focusing more on research instead of teaching, advising and community services (Backes-Gellner&Schlinghoff, 2010; Rotherham, 2011; Schaefer Riley, 2012; Youn& Price, 2009).To perform in that kind of work environment is full of challenges and anxiety (Higgins &Kotrlik, 2006). A researcher face challenging situation during whole process of a research starting from selection of research title that can convince a reputable journal to publication. What would be the anxiety or depression level if faculty members bear all challenges to meet the set publishing criteria for progression and still not progress in time? Can institutions remain their faculty motivated to continue future scholarly production. Moreover, how institutions can stop them being depressed or disappointed? How could they retain their valued faculty? These entire questions were satisfactorily be answered by the results from this study.

Most of the studies are directed at the development of programs for proper orientation, mentoring, socialization process and support mechanism for faculty development(Baldwin et al., 2008; Boice, 1992; Buch et al., 2011; Gardner & Blackstone, 2013; Sorcinelli& Austin, 1992; Tierney & Rhoads, 1993; Turner et al., 2008). They focused to explore why faculty member could not fulfill the required criteria; what challenges did they face and what type of support would they require to develop? However, there is far less scholarly attention is given to the experiences of those who have fulfilled the required criteria but still not awarded promotion. This lake of attention indicates a gap in this field of research and a waiting opportunity to improve individual work lives and the institution as well. By focusing on the experiences of faculty who experience this delay, we might better understand the challenges they face and provide guidelines for future researchers to develop strategies, mechanisms and models to assist faculty in getting out of the situation at individual and institutional level.

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