Managerial Career Development in Foreign Multinationals in Pakistan: Perceptions, Policies and Practices

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Sara Chaudhry

Manchester Business School
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Abstract

This thesis analyses the career orientations of locally recruited host country managers in the specific organizational context of foreign multinationals operating in a culturally and institutionally distant developing economy like Pakistan. The key research objective is a pluralistic consideration of the individual, organizational and institutional/societal levels of analysis. To this end the project focuses on the uptake of distinctly Anglo-Saxon protean and boundaryless career concepts as well as the international career orientations of a pre-internationalized employee group within the MNCs’ international operations. Existing ‘new’ careers literature is limited in its consideration of different organizational and cultural/institutional contexts. Moreover, international HRM literature discusses the diffusion of HRM but fails to adequately highlight that this process is complex, incomplete and likely to lead to hybridization in deinstitutionalizing, yet culturally distinct, countries like Pakistan. With the purpose of addressing these specific research gaps a qualitative case study approach was applied and interviews were conducted with employers/senior managers as well as managerial employees in four foreign subsidiaries operating in Pakistan. Analysis reveals that the combined application of Western and traditional work values in these four Pakistani subsidiaries leads to a hybridized and contested employment relationship whereby ‘marketization’ is evident but subject to implicit societal pressures and transmutations. Secondly, these host country managers’ career mobility perceptions and patterns highlighted the need to take a more nuanced approach to physical and psychological mobility that simultaneously considers increased ‘boundary-crossing’ and ‘boundary-creation’. The results highlighted the importance of recognizing the differential impact of individual, organizational and institutional/societal factors on the transfer, implementation and internalization processes and the implicit and explicit inter-linkages between these factors.
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Chapter 1 - Introduction

In recent years a lot of theoretical and practitioner interest has been generated by the rise of popular career models such as boundaryless (Arthur and Rousseau 1996), protean (Hall 1976; Hall et al 1977; Briscoe and Hall 2006), kaleidoscope (Mainero and Sullivan 2006), post-corporate (Peiperl and Baruch 1997) and portfolio careers (Handy 1996); collectively seen to represent the ‘new’, ‘contemporary’ careers. This thesis specifically considers the protean and boundaryless careers that represent ideal career types promulgated in response to technological, structural and societal flux (Inkson 2006). Butler et al (2006) argue that a specific range of internal and external influences (such as organizational restructuring, pressures for numerical flexibility, ascendancy of shareholder value and a more market-mediated employment relationship) precipitated the demise of ‘previously durable ties between employers and employees’ (p. 175), hence paving the way for these ‘new’, individualized careers. Since these developments primarily took place in the Anglo-Saxon context there is scope for considering these models in different organizational and institutional domains. Therefore, the goal of this thesis is to contribute to a better understanding of the applicability of the protean and boundaryless concepts for managerial careers within the specific organizational context of foreign multinationals (MNCs) operating in the distinct societal and institutional Pakistani environment.

It is interesting to explore whether multinationals, credited with the cross-border diffusion of HR policies and practices (Rubery and Grimshaw 2003; Edwards 2004), facilitate the implementation of these Western career concepts and to what extent these models are internalized by host country managers. Given multinationals’ preoccupation with management development through international transfers (Edstrom and Galbraith 1977) there is an additional need to understand the implications of these ‘new’, individually-driven, unbounded career concepts for locally recruited managers’ international career orientations and for the global staffing strategies of MNCs. Exploring the protean, boundaryless and international career orientations within the specific
organizational context of multinationals is particularly useful because many senior managers and executives have been found to be resistant to change in existing career structures (Briscoe et al 2006). Moreover, many multinationals still have large bureaucratic structures despite restructuring, increasing business pressures and global outreach (Bartlett and Ghoshal 1989; Harzing 1996) and continue to deploy bureaucratic control mechanisms across their international subsidiaries (Ferner 2000). Therefore, while MNCs have the capability (and the competitive economic rationale) to transfer these contemporary notions of self-directed careers, the actual implementation process might be quite problematic if organizational structures, power relations and senior management attitudes are slow (and even reluctant) to respond in kind.

Moreover, the implementation of these career models in institutional environments with different local norms, social structures and economic context (Briscoe and Hall 2006) is likely to give rise to very diverse patterns of career development. Therefore, considering these careers in the context of Pakistan has considerable research promise. Firstly, since HRM in the developing/emerging country context has been under-explored in management literature (Jackson 2004), there is a need for a shift in research focus from the consideration of formal, developed and mature markets to emerging, culturally distant markets like Pakistan. An attempt to redress this literature gap, by considering the Pakistan case specifically, could also offer useful insights, regarding HRM in general and managerial career development in particular, for a wider range of emerging economies which are more likely to share similarities in historical, religious, economic and political conditions (Debrah and Budhwar 2001) with Pakistan than commonly researched Western economies like US, UK and Germany. More importantly, the receptiveness of a developing country like Pakistan, and the applicability of Western ideals in its specific societal and institutional environment, needs to be explicitly problematized in view of the institutional and cultural distance (Kostova and Zaheer 1999; Kostova and Roth 2002; Hofstede 1980, 1991) from advanced capitalist economies. Since the application of Western management techniques in developing countries can result in a serious conflict of values (Jaeger 1990;
Jackson 2004), and lead to distinctive and complex patterns of ‘hybridization’ (Gamble 2010), introduction of ‘new’ career concepts in Pakistan will not only be more interesting because of the contextual contrast involved, but can also offer wider comparative lessons for multinationals with vested interests in emerging markets.

Given these different levels of analysis and associated literature gaps, consideration of ‘new’ careers in the context of foreign multinationals in Pakistan necessitates a multi-level approach – i.e. individual managerial employees’ career perceptions and the career management policies and practices of MNCs within the specific institutional/societal context of Pakistan. In order to combine these different levels of analysis a qualitative, case-study approach was taken to highlight the degree of individual internalization and organizational implementation of ‘new’ career concepts in a culturally and institutionally distant and distinct country like Pakistan. This study primarily relies on qualitative interviews not only with managerial employees at different stages of their career lifetimes but also employer-level interviews with senior management in the four case-study MNCs. This dual approach was taken in order to highlight host country managers’ career orientations against the backdrop of varying MNC structures. Moreover, the qualitative emphasis of the project allowed the implicit societal and institutional influences and dualities to emerge from the data.

The thesis begins with a critical review of the key theoretical areas of research and debates surrounding individual protean, boundaryless and international career orientations, the influence of multinationals’ strategic, structural and staffing characteristics on their internal labour markets (ILMs) and the key institutional and societal pressures on the Pakistani managerial labour market. Chapter 3 outlines the research design and the analytical approach and Chapter 4 provides a primarily descriptive contextualization of the four case-study MNCs in order to provide the organizational backdrop for further analysis. Chapters 5 to 7 present the empirical findings. Chapter 5 explores the extent to which individual Pakistani managers have internalized protean and boundaryless career orientations while Chapter 6 focuses on the organizational
and societal/institutional influences on managerial career management and development in MNCs’ Pakistani subsidiaries. Chapter 7 analyses international career orientations by considering the individual and organizational levels of analysis in conjunction. The concluding chapter reviews and discusses the key findings of the thesis, their theoretical contributions and the implications of these contributions for HRM practices in multinationals.
Chapter 2 – Managerial career development: Individual orientations, organizational structures and institutional/societal influences

2.1 Introduction

The overall research aim is to understand managerial careers within the context of foreign multinationals’ subsidiaries in Pakistan. Within these thematic boundaries the key objective is to explore the individual, organizational and institutional and cultural factors that shape careers. This requires an understanding of the prevailing organizational career structures, the individual managers’ careers perceptions, the development of careers on intra-organizational and inter-organizational levels, and the extent to which these individual perceptions and organizational policies and practices are contingent upon the external host environment. Exploring these research goals through a multi-level analysis also helps establish the scope of relevant literature. The ‘new’ careers literature is reviewed to understand the individual career actor’s conceptualization of career development in terms of protean, boundaryless and international career concepts. Next literature on the organizational perspective provides insights into how multinationals manage their international staff across geographic boundaries, different employees groups and host country internal labour markets, and the nature of MNC-specific responses to changes in the employment relationship and career boundaries. Finally, literature on the dominant societal and institutional influences on Pakistan’s managerial labour market is considered to ground the understanding of individual career orientations and organizational career management within a culturally and institutionally distinct environment.

2.2 Individual career orientations: protean and boundaryless career concepts

An overview of existing research on careers reveals distinct research traditions that have tended to focus on different levels of analysis. Arthur (2008) encapsulates these theoretical trends by arguing that contemporary careers
research is built upon three different research trajectories. The first is represented by a research group that has traditionally focused on careers from the perspective of their respective social science disciplines such as psychology, sociology etc. with inter-disciplinary work both limited and inhibited. A second tradition, concerned with ‘vocational guidance’ and the ‘psychology of careers’, deals with careers primarily in the occupational context (Arthur, 2008: 165). Finally, there is the body of work that has positioned careers research and theories along the interface between individuals and organizations (ibid: 166). A study of career development and management in large multinationals would necessarily fall within the third tradition of organizational careers research and its inter-disciplinary approach to the relationship between individual employees and organizations.

Over the past few decades the focus of the careers research agenda, including both theoretical and practitioner perspectives, has been on the juxtaposition between traditional careers versus the more contemporary, less bounded understanding of careers. In traditional careers, employees’ career development was the responsibility of the employer achieved by ensuring job security and upward mobility along a well-defined career ladder (Granrose & Baccili, 2005: 164-165). This historical understanding between the employer and the employee meant that in exchange for security and promotion employees promised performance and loyalty (conceptualized as working for a limited number of organizations over a lifetime) (Waterman et al 1994).

In terms of contemporary careers the two most popular career models that have exerted considerable influence on theory and research within this area of study are the boundaryless career and the protean career. Even though the two constructs are undeniably interrelated, they are not inter-changeable - a testimony to the fact that ‘in actuality these careers are multidimensional and developmental’ and cannot be reduced to single variables such as organizational mobility or individualism (Briscoe & Hall, 2006: 2). Arthur and Rousseau’s (1996) conceptualization of boundaryless careers envisioned careers as work experiences over time and across different employer boundaries, validated/marketable without organizational support, sustained by
external networks and communities, defiant of traditional organizational career hierarchies, involving a different work-life balance and most importantly the *perception* of a ‘boundaryless future regardless of structural constraints’ (p. 6).

Sullivan and Arthur (2006) have argued that this definition invoked individual agency and mobility across both physical and psychological boundaries. Physical mobility involved transitions across different jobs, organizations, occupations, and even countries while psychological mobility focused on employee ‘perception of the capacity to make transitions’ (ibid, pp. 21). However, subsequent research has primarily investigated boundarylessness in terms of physical inter-organizational mobility and underexplored psychological mobility (Sullivan and Arthur 2006; Arthur et al 2005). Therefore, it is important to highlight that consideration of all six meanings originally ascribed to the concept by Arthur and Rousseau (1996) capture the multifaceted nature of boundaryless careers, involving several levels of analysis from the physical to the psychological and the subjective to the objective. Therefore, a boundaryless career might be simultaneously perceived by individuals as a subjective element of their working life or categorized by others through objective measures such as physical movement across different employers.

However, Hall’s (1976) and Hall et al’s (1977) concept of protean careers is largely subjective and underlines the ‘independence and self-directed career behaviour’ (Briscoe & Hall, 2006: 1) of the individual career actor. The protean career orientation is predicated on the individual rather than the organization and therefore, focuses on individually-defined goals involving a holistic, values driven approach to life and giving precedence to ‘psychological success rather than objective success such as pay, rank or power’ (Hall, 2002). Protean careers orientation towards self directed career management and a values driven attitude to careers is symptomatic of ‘a mindset about the career - more specifically an attitude toward(s) the career that reflects freedom, self-direction, and making choices based on one’s personal values’ (Briscoe & Hall, 2006: 6) rather than an exposition on behaviours and specific actions such as job mobility.
Therefore, protean careers can be seen as work experiences underlined by the assumption that ‘a self-directed, or protean career actor is more likely to cross career boundaries’ while boundaryless careers focus on career actions such that ‘a boundaryless person is more likely to act in protean fashion’ (Briscoe & Hall, 2006: 1). Thus, boundaryless careers and protean careers are inter-related concepts that nevertheless have independent constructs and several studies have been conducted to clarify the relationship between the two career models. Briscoe et al (2006) sought to empirically clarify the two dimensions by constructing scales to measure both protean career attitudes (i.e. self-directed career management and a values driven approach) and boundaryless career attitudes (i.e. the boundaryless mindset and organizational mobility). The study revealed that the protean and boundaryless constructs differed according to an individual’s stage in their career as well as the context, with some employees demonstrating strong protean and boundaryless attitudes but weak inclinations for physical mobility - implying that ‘these are indeed attitudes and not underlying personality traits or related individual differences’ (p. 44).

Briscoe and DeMuth’s (2003) study of managers in different companies also revealed that some individuals exhibited certain characteristics of the protean career such as greater emphasis on personal values and work-life balance with no evidence of exhibiting the physical mobility (across different employers and organizations) commonly associated with boundaryless careers. Briscoe and Hall (2006) took the point of inquiry regarding the complexity of protean and boundaryless careers to the next stage by exploring the combinations possible between the two career concepts. By overlapping the protean and boundaryless categories they came up with eight potential combinations of career profiles that represented different people in several organizations facing varying personal, developmental and organizational challenges. They were thus able to argue that deconstruction of the existing boundaryless and protean career templates allowed both individuals and organizations to apply varied tactics most suited to different career attitudes.
Table I.1.i Conceptualization of protean and boundaryless careers in existing literature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who’s in charge?</th>
<th>Protean careers</th>
<th>Boundaryless careers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employee-driven (focus on career self-determination)</td>
<td>Employee-driven (focus on independence from organization)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key characteristics</th>
<th>Protean careers</th>
<th>Boundaryless careers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Values-driven (i.e. personal values as opposed to extrinsic factors such as money, promotion opportunities, power etc), self-directed (i.e. the extent to which individual feels independent &amp; in charge), performance measured in terms of internal, subjective, psychological success, dominant attitudes of work satisfaction achievement &amp; job involvement</td>
<td>1) movement across boundaries of separate employers, 2) drawing validation &amp; marketability from outside the present employer, 3) sustained by external networks or information, 4) breaking traditional organizational assumptions about hierarchy &amp; career advancement, 5) rejection of career opportunities for personal or family reasons, 6) based on the interpretation of the career actor who may perceive a Boundaryless future</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core values</th>
<th>Freedom, growth, autonomy, flexibility</th>
<th>Growth, learning, social integration, improvisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career competencies</th>
<th>Protean careers</th>
<th>Boundaryless careers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adaptability (through continuous learning – relational learning &amp; diversity learning), identity changes/self-awareness</td>
<td>'Knowing-why’ (individual’s motivation &amp; identity), ‘knowing-how’ (individual’s skills/expertise/knowledge), ‘Knowing-whom’ (individual’s relationships and reputation) *all these 3 ways of knowing are interdependent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career success (measured in terms of)</th>
<th>Protean careers</th>
<th>Boundaryless careers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Successful transition from - know-how to learn-how, job security to employability, work self to whole self, chronological age to career age, organizational progression to developmental organization, organization careers to protean careers</td>
<td>Accumulated learning, retrospective sense-making skills, improvisation skills, persistence, comfort in returning to the novice role over &amp; over, tolerance for fragmentary experiences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mobility</th>
<th>Higher than traditional, organizational careers &amp; continuous</th>
<th>Movement across jobs, firms, occupations &amp; countries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

These questions of whether boundaryless or protean careers share any characteristics and to what degree they are dissimilar (see table I.1.i) have been preoccupying career theorists and researchers because these concepts, along with several other popular career models such as Mainiero and Sullivan’s (2006) kaleidoscope careers, Peiperl and Baruch’s (1997) post-corporate careers and Handy’s (1996) portfolio careers, are collectively seen to represent the ‘new’, ‘contemporary’ careers. These contemporary careers are often seen as the opposites of, and in some ways the alternative to, the ‘traditional view of career(s) as a necessarily progressive and hierarchical endeavour’ (Pringle & Mallon, 2003: 839). Considering the enormous influence these contemporary careers are exerting on existing and forthcoming careers research it is important to operationalize these career constructs and highlight their continuing theoretical and empirical underdevelopment as concepts and subsequently their explanatory limitations.

One significant limitation of contemporary careers, characterized by their lack of formal organizational boundaries, is the idea that in reality the work environment and organizational structures have not changed to the degree supposed in boundaryless career research. Jacoby (1999) has challenged the notion of the boundaryless career, arguing that ‘career jobs have not melted into thin air’ (p. 137); while Guest and MacKenzie Davey (1996) assert that ‘the rhetoric of the new organization is some way removed from the reality’ (p. 25). Existing work which contrasts traditional careers with the new boundaryless and protean careers has highlighted the continued existence of traditional features reminiscent of the ‘old’ organizational careers. For instance, Granrose and Bacilli’s (2005) work on psychological contracts reveals that ‘characteristics of a traditional psychological contract, job security and mobility up the career ladder are still important to … employees, as are characteristics of boundaryless careers and protean careers such as training and well-being (p. 176).

Therefore, it might be more useful to accept that boundaryless, protean and contemporary careers exist in conjunction with elements of the traditional career and, rather than doing away with boundaries altogether, it might make
more sense to consider careers in the light of *redrawn* boundaries. Protean and boundaryless careers should be seen as functional metaphors representing ideal career types ‘in sympathy with conditions of rapid technological, organizational and social change (and) … emancipation from the constraints of traditional careers’ (Inkson, 2006: 49). For while organizational and institutional boundaries may have become more and more fragmented and permeable as a result of globalization and technological advances, there are still boundaries to be crossed in the world of work. The important qualification is that the *perception* of individual employees regarding these boundaries has changed significantly - and there should be acknowledgement of both the ‘increasing permeability of boundaries’ as well as more ‘pro-active behaviour by the boundary-crosser’ (Inkson, 2006: 54).

However, if we work from the premise that organizational boundaries are much easier to cross, and employees are much more willing and able to make this move, we also need to entertain the possibility that crossing the organizational boundary may ‘inhibit the crossing of others (e.g. occupational, industry)’ (Inkson, 2006: 55). Currie et al.’s (2006) research on employees in the television industry and in a large retail, pharmaceutical organization supports this argument with their results revealing that ‘boundaries were reconstructed with career actors orienting themselves towards occupational boundaries that crossed organizations’ (p. 764). Arthur and Rousseau (1996) themselves have argued that there is an ‘increasing centrality of occupations in the new career arrangements’ (p. 295-296). There is a clear need to expand the focus of careers research so that further aspects such as intra-organizational mobility (across different business functions) and extra-organizational support for career development and success can also be factored in to provide a more holistic picture of the changing nature of careers (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006: 21).

Yet boundaryless and contemporary careers research has tended to focus primarily on the crossing of inter-organizational boundaries (Arthur et al 2005); which can be regarded as a disadvantage. For this approach has often ignored several other important boundaries such as boundaries within
organizations (i.e. departmental, divisional, hierarchical, and in the case of multinationals even geographical), ‘boundaries between organizations, between occupations, between industries and between work and family’ (Inkson, 2006: 55). Contemporary careers are so caught up with the idea of individual career paths and individual volition that the focus is on personal challenges and developmental challenges and opportunities of individual career actors while employing organizations are often sidelined (Briscoe & Hall, 2006: 10). The role of the individual agent is seen as central to the boundaryless/protean/contemporary career and ‘structural factors are acknowledged only in so far as they are seen as prompts for the demise of traditional organizational careers’ (Pringle & Mallon, 2003). This is a significant oversight in new careers research because many ‘organizations and executives may both be reluctant to encourage career independence in the interest of conserving the status quo’ (Briscoe et al, 2006: 37). Thus, the celebration of individuals’ self-directed management of their careers, in line with their personal values, seems almost premature if organizations’ power relations and ingrained attitudes to the more traditional careers are inherently at odds with this new approach.

Another limitation of contemporary careers research is the restricted application of the boundaryless and protean careers. The notion that career boundaries are changing seems contestable since research has been conducted on a ‘limited sample of people and within a narrow range of occupational environments, such as the film industry, the Silicon Valley IT industry and the biotechnology industry’ (Currie et al, 2006: 757; Pringle & Mallon, 2003: 842). What makes this limited applicability of the new career concepts all the more debilitating in research terms is the clear indication that even within the boundaryless context, social structures inform the ultimate path and development of careers. Briscoe and Hall (2006) acknowledge that one of the limitations of their research lies in the inadequacy of the boundaryless and protean approaches ‘for understanding and navigating the broad economic context’ (p. 16). In fact, a cursory review of existing ‘new’ careers research highlights the constant appeal of researchers to widen the field of application and consider different factors such as gender, culture, and differences in
individual opportunities (because of varied educational backgrounds, skill, competencies etc.) (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006), different contexts such as non-Western and non-Anglo cultures (where the boundaryless and protean metaphors and associated aspects of individualism, opportunity and agency will hold different cultural value) (Briscoe & Hall, 2006), and a more comparative approach to the study of careers across international and cultural boundaries (Arthur, 2008). Thus, even though limited attention has been paid to the importance of social structures in determining changing career trajectories, there needs to be a concerted effort to place these career theories within a broader economic and industrial context, which takes into account the changing social and economic realities and the national, institutional and cultural differences across geographic boundaries as well.

Thus, the redrawing of these new, and fundamentally altered, career boundaries and the accompanying limitations has several research implications for this study on career development and management of managerial employees in foreign multinationals’ subsidiaries in Pakistan. Existing careers literature not only provides justification for the aspects I seek to research but also highlights significant research gaps within which this study can be positioned. Firstly, ‘new’ careers research highlights that middle managers and professionals in particular bear the greatest impact of changing organizational forms (Jacoby 1999). Secondly, Currie et al (2006) argue that the onset of deregulation, global competition and short-termism has exposed middle managers to downsizing and restructuring. However, organizational performance is even more dependent on the contribution of these middle-level employees (ibid). Moreover, in the light of changing careers managers are also having to shoulder the burden of serving as the informal organizational tool for ensuring employee commitment in order to ‘offset a decline in organizational commitment … because of a lack of … traditional career content’ and meeting boundaryless and protean career expectations when the organization violates its traditional obligations (Granrose & Baccili, 2005: 168, 178). Finally, studying managerial career trajectories within large organizations should consider this work group across a range of organizational levels. This rationale is also supported in Currie et al’s (2006) work that looks
at the different levels of middle management so that a range of changing career expectations and work experiences can be captured - thereby supporting the definition of careers as evolving work experiences over time (Arthur, 2008: 166).

It is also important to look at contemporary careers within the context of multinationals that often still support large bureaucratic structures despite restructuring, increasing business pressures and global outreach - creating a specific context within which a myriad of factors ranging from the individual, organizational, and industry specific, to institutional reasons could potentially influence a shift in career boundaries. For not only has the ‘new’ careers literature ignored these large, internationally dispersed, bureaucratic organizations in favour of smaller start-ups in newer industries (Currie et al, 2006: 759); but more importantly, the continued existence of traditional career elements within multinationals raises the equally significant question of why there is no concomitant and equal change in careers within the multinational context. Moreover, organizational responses to business pressures and the subsequent effects on careers are likely to be very different between smaller, industry-specific organizations and multinationals for the latter need to achieve competitiveness across several countries.

Finally, a significant failing of contemporary careers research is the lack of critical analysis of the effects of changing careers on employers who may ‘face a threat from the demise of skills and competencies associated with the demise of the organization-career with benefits of an internal labour market lost’ (Currie et al, 2006: 758). Doing away with traditional careers could create a potential talent/skills shortfall that employers will have to face and respond to through their HR policies. They also face continuing pressure to provide for employees’ career development in the absence of job security and a stable career ladder. For example, Granrose and Bacilli (2005) highlighted organizational attempts to meet minimal expectations of individual career development by ‘providing skill development and career relevant information for boundaryless careers and a positive job atmosphere for protean careers’ (p. 180). Similarly, Waterman et al (1994) argued that employers needed to shift
from the traditional emphasis on *employment* to enhancing the *employability* of their workers (p. 87). Thus, factoring in the employer’s perspective when considering contemporary careers is very important because it demands an adjustment of not only the HR policy but also a change in organizational culture and alignment with the overall business strategy if employers are to preserve their competitive edge, which is often the cited rationale for changes in traditional career structures in the first place.

A review of the new careers literature with its focus on contemporary, boundaryless, and protean careers signifies an individual, self-directed, values-oriented approach to careers envisioned across organizational boundaries. However, this conceptualization of careers, while pandering to the technological, economic and social changes taking place on a global level, also gives rise to several limitations. These challenges attendant upon the contemporary careers models include the shift in boundaries rather than a complete reprisal of traditional career structures, an unequal focus on individual agency at the cost of ignoring structural constraints and also the limited application of the new career concepts to different social structures and institutional environments. In the light of these limitations there is a clear need to move away from this currently universalistic conceptualization of careers to a more context-specific approach that takes into account differences at the individual, organizational, and national/institutional levels.

### 2.3 International Career orientations and career trajectories

In recent years contemporary careers research has expanded the scope of career boundaries to also include the consideration of inter-country movement (Sullivan and Arthur 2006). This more flexible understanding of boundarylessness highlights employees’ perceived capacity and range for career mobility as well as the extent to which these perceptions can, and are, translated into actual physical mobility (based on MNCs’ organizational reality which is explored in the next section). It is important to incorporate these employee perceptions of geographical mobility in particular because researchers have argued that in an increasingly globalized economy...
managerial employees enact individual agency across multiple career contexts (Tams and Arthur 2010) because the boundaryless career ‘has taken on new characteristics that broaden its applicability to global careers beyond the simple study of expatriates’ (Thomas et al 2005: 342). This highlights an existing gap in career theory to consider career concepts such as the boundaryless phenomenon within what Banai and Harry identified as the ‘international milieu’ (2004, pp. 98). Thus, there is a need to acknowledge the changing, geographically expansive, aspects of career mobility (Inkson and Thorn 2010; Cappallen and Janssens 2005) and employees’ reactions to these changes in terms of physical and psychological career mobility.

The evolving nature of these career orientations and expectations within the specific context of multinationals raises important questions regarding the potential internationalization of these individual career perceptions. If employees have a more self-directed, values-driven approach to careers involving greater openness to movement across traditional organizational boundaries (as explored in the previous section), then within the context of MNCs a greater willingness to cross geographical boundaries can also be hypothesized. Traditionally, global careers have largely been explored within the strategic HRM framework with the focus firmly on the ‘internal institutional community’ (Elger and Smith, 2006: 68) of organizations offering expatriate managers international assignments to achieve key organizational objectives. This range of interdependent organizational considerations includes filling key positions (and transferring technical and managerial knowledge), management development (by providing international experience), and organizational development (ensuring coordination and control across international subsidiaries) (Edstrom and Galbraith, 1977; Reiche and Harzing, 2011). The ascendency of one of these organizational factors over the other is constantly in flux, and often subject to re-negotiation, because of shifting home and host country business system effects (Almond, 2011). These changing strategic orientations of organizations may impact on the number of expatriates mobilized and the geographical direction of their global careers. However, the actual deployment of expatriate managers has remained a relatively constant organizational goal business need.
Therefore, multinationals’ dominant strategic orientation determines the scope of global careers for home and host country managers. However, the importance accorded to these organizational considerations, and their perceived impact on the ILMs of different multinationals in extant research has resulted in the creation of two dominant research trajectories. Firstly, discussion of global careers has tended to favour greater representation of the organizational perspective. Study of international careers often focuses on organizational processes such as the selection, recruitment, training, managing and repatriating of employees with global careers (Caligiuri et al, 2009; Suutari, 2002; Caligiuri and DiSanto, 2001; Connor, 2000; Black et al, 1999; Gregersen et al, 1998). Multinationals are seen to face shortages of international managers (Tahvanainen et al, 2005) that are considered vital to their competitive advantage in the international arena (Black and Gregersen 1999) because of their direct impact on organizational performance (Stroh and Caligiuri, 1998).

Recent literature has attempted to balance this skewed exploration of global careers by incorporating the individual employee perspective as well (Suutari, 2002, 2003). However, this particular literature gap needs additional consideration because there is evidence to suggest that employers’ and employees’ perspectives on career capital accruing from international assignments are often quite different. Dickmann and Harris (2005) sought to explore the concept of dual dependency whereby international assignments are purported to have a positive impact on the development of global career competencies for both employees and organizations. Their results revealed that since individual employees and organizations had different end goals, the two parties ‘career capital building patterns were (also) radically different’ (p. 405-6). Organizational emphasis was on formal HR management structures which would increase employees’ career competencies through international assignments (and ultimately benefit the organization). However, employees opting for international experiences focused more on informal, on-the-job learning and increasing their social capital that directly benefited them rather than the organization.
Doherty and Dickmann (2009) expanded on this theme by specifically exploring whether international assignments created symbolic capital that in turn facilitated the development of career capital. Results revealed that while the organization gave high symbolic importance to international assignments for their positive impacts on business development and career progression, there was low subjective recognition and use of this symbolic capital by the employer. Therefore, there were lost organizational opportunities to adequately utilize the skills learnt by employees on international assignments. The authors argued that as a result of this under-utilization of international skills by employing organizations, individual employees accorded high symbolic value to expatriate assignments for enhancing their personal development and increasing their own social and cultural capital. The varied organizational and employee outcomes of international experience is evident in the authors conclusion that ‘there appears to be a difference in emphasis between the individual level capital acquired and the organizational level capital attributed to an international assignment’ (p. 315). Therefore, it is important to note that employer and employee goals and processes surrounding global careers differ and in order to fully understand the impact of international assignments on career development and management both points of view need to be considered in tandem. Exploring this literature gap is of particular importance because a clear developmental role is ascribed to international careers (Caligiuri and DeSanto, 2001). Given the increasing emphasis on employees’ boundaryless and self-managing career attitudes the global careers debate is no longer limited to the creation of organizational capital (both human and financial) but also with the enhancement of individual career capital.

A second research outcome of tying global careers to the strategic orientation of organizations has been the theoretical, and practitioner, focus on global talent management and global leadership development. This organizational exigency to develop and manage globally competent managers has also communicated itself to individual employees. Moreover, protean and boundaryless attitudes, advocating career self-management and increased mobility, are enabling individuals to respond to this organizational impetus by
focusing on gaining ‘global competencies’ and ‘international business skill development’ through personal endeavours rather than company-sanctioned international work experiences (Vance, 2005). Vance’s (2005) research considered the preparatory activities and career strategies, such as working in an MNC or studying abroad, deployed by individuals to ultimately obtain international opportunities, either through the traditional MNC track of international assignments or the immediate, self-initiated, expatriation track. While Vance’s work focused on the strategies and activities deployed by expatriates prior to their international careers, research in recent years has focused on comparing self-initiating foreign expatriates (SFEs) and with the traditional expatriates (Inkson et al, 1997). For instance, Thorn (2009) explored SFEs’ actual international movement and the motivations behind this mobility. Her research revealed that out of the top eleven motives for mobility four were career related, i.e. employees actively sought international work experience for career reasons such as ‘further professional development, new career challenges and opportunities for career advancement’ (p. 449).

There is a strong research rationale for considering the career trajectories of these SFEs in particular. Firstly, research has argued that they form a relatively large and growing percentage of the internationally mobile labour force (Carr et al, 2005 and Suutari and Brewster, 2000). Therefore, SFEs can become a valuable resource in local labour markets; deployed by MNCs as host country managers at a lower cost as compared to expatriates while fulfilling their own career ambition of international careers. Secondly, while SFEs and expatriates, when seeking international work experience, do not differ significantly along variables such as income, challenging tasks and private life they do have different career aspirations and promotion prospects (Biemann and Andresen, 2010). For instance, SFEs are more likely to experience greater cross-organizational mobility, start international careers at a younger age and have stable career orientations over time as compared to expatriates (ibid). Suutari and Brewster (2000) also found that SFEs and expatriates differed in terms of individual background variables (such as age and previous international work experience) as well as task and employer-related variables (such as length of assignment, status, function, type of
organization, location etc.). It is particularly important to highlight these
differences between SFEs and expatriates because they underline the tendency
of different work groups within the internationally mobile labour market to
have very different career expectations and subsequently distinct career
trajectories.

It has been argued that there is an increased focus on developing global talent
by organizations and an increased employee focus on developing international
careers. Moreover, boundaryless and protean career attitudes indicate a change
in individual employees’ career expectations and behaviours. Together these
considerations raise an important question: what are the implications of these
changed career attitudes, and increasingly popular international careers, for
employees at the pre-internationalization stage of careers? Current literature
tends to focus on the expatriates and the SFEs however; both these groups
represent the post-internationalized labour market segment. There is a
concomitant need to look at the pre-movement workforce by drawing
comparisons between the motivations and career orientations of employees at
the pre-internationalization stage of their careers with SFEs and traditional
expatriates. The most significant research justification for considering the pre-
internationalized group is that multinationals are expending a great deal of
resources in developing global leaders. With the increasing importance of host
country nationals (HCNs) as viable alternatives for global leadership roles (as
will be discussed in the organizational section of the literature review) it is
important for MNCs to be able to distinguish between employees with a high
pre-internationalization career orientation for global careers versus those more
domestically inclined. For the former group’s career orientations in particular
will help explain their particular set of motivations and individual
conceptualization of subsequent career tracks. Moreover, if employing
organizations fail to harness this human capital, these employees have the
motivation to seek out international career opportunities independently. And
the prevailing protean and boundaryless career attitudes enable these
individuals to make the transition from the potential expatriate cohort to the
potential SFE cohort. From an organizational perspective this will only spell
career frustration, high turnover rates and loss of valuable talent to an
increasingly competitive external labour market for global leadership skills.

In conclusion, Thomas et al (2005) have argued that a combination of factors has affected the international business arena and catapulted careers from the domestic to an increasingly global category. Firstly, organizations derive competitive advantage by utilizing varied, overseas experience. This in turn can be achieved through the development of global leaders (either traditional expatriates or SFEs) with international career competencies. Secondly, individual career actors themselves are changing. Not only do employees have more self-managing, boundary-crossing attitudes towards their careers but these global leaders are also becoming more heterogeneous, including traditional home country expatriates and host country expatriates as well as individuals pursuing self-initiated global careers outside their own country of origin. In light of these developments and complexities attendant upon the study of global careers (specifically within the complex setting of MNCs) it is important to explore the career identity of global managers in a previously under-explored developing country setting like Pakistan. Moreover, if the career expectations and trajectories of expatriates and SFEs differ considerably it will be even more interesting to explore the evolution of global career intentions in the pre-internationalization stage of careers.

2.4 Career Development and the employment relationship – an organizational perspective

A discussion on careers necessitates a consideration of the organizational point of view because even if individual employees are increasingly doing the map-reading of their careers themselves, it is organizational structures that provide the ‘road map’ in the first place (Baruch, 2004). Therefore, this research seeks to anchor individual career orientations and expectations (pertaining to new and traditional career concepts) within the specific ‘social environment’ of organizations (Baruch, 2004). A second but equally important research objective is to highlight the interplay between the individual and the organizational level of analyses. The following discussion considers the changing employment relationship from the organizational perspective and the
corresponding impact of market/competitive pressures on traditional organizational careers and internal labour markets.

Concerns regarding the changing nature of the employment relationship have led to claims such as the death of organizational careers and the increasing irrelevance of the psychological contract (Cappelli 1999a), alongside a more tempered understanding of new developments in a relationship that was intrinsically always subject to modulations (McGovern et al 2007; Jacoby 1999). The drastic nature of some these claims prompts both an exploration and a reassessment of past, present and future principles concerning careers within the context of the employing organization. To what extent have employers embraced these new notions of careers and eschewed previous traditions in career management? A useful theoretical starting point would be an understanding of the polar types governing the employment relationship continuum – i.e. the organization-oriented system (exemplified by Germany\(^1\) and Japan) at one end and the market-oriented system (represented by the Anglo-Saxon economies) at the other end (Dore, 1989). According to Dore (1989) the former included features such low turnover, lifetime employment for permanent workers, wage determination on the basis of seniority, age and merit, organizational training, internal promotion and organizational provision of security and welfare for its employees. The latter exemplified the opposite with relatively higher turnover, frequent job changes, market competitive (and therefore differential) wages, general rather than firm-specific training, entry at all levels of the organization and devolution of welfare to the individual and/or the state. Therefore, the organization-oriented system relied on internal labour market principles while the market-oriented system ‘made much greater use of external market forces’ (McGovern et al 2007). The key questions to address are firstly, whether the pendulum has swung to, and stabilized at, the extreme end of the market orientated type of organizations. The second question is whether this market orientation has individualized and ‘marketized’ the employment relationship to such an extent that employing

\(^1\) Germany also has a strong occupational labour market system that operates alongside ILMs. The varieties of capitalism literature classifies Germany as providing firm-specific training compared to general educational training (for e.g. in USA) but this differentiation is problematic (Busemeyer, 2009).
organizations’ traditional responsibility of providing an internal labour market (or at least elements of it) are becoming outdated concepts.

The ‘marketization’ of the employment relationship involves the ‘substitution of market solutions for the internal, administrative rules associated with corporate employment policies’ (Cappelli 1999a: viii). The implicit assumption is that employers view employees as commodities and employees internalize this view of themselves as ‘marketable human resources, to be traded across organizations for varying periods of time’ (McGovern et al 2007: 60). In terms of the employment relationship this signals a move away from the traditional psychological contract to the ‘dreaded employability contract’ (Cappelli 1999a: 1), with the focus on creating employability within and outside the employing organization rather than sustaining the long-time employment covenant between the employer and the employee (Waterman et al 1994). Kunda and Ailan-Souday (2005) consider this employability principle, and the enhanced advantage in the external labour market, as the ‘new carrot’ in response to the ‘stick’ of market rationalism whereby employers ‘should offer employees their trust, but not their commitment’ (p. 206). This market-mediated relationship and the associated decline in internal labour markets (ILM) (Cappelli 1999a) suggest an increased sensitivity of employment relationships to ‘market forces’ such as ‘product market pressures’ and ‘pressures from the labour market’ (McGovern et al 2007).

However, many authors have argued that while ‘organizations are increasingly under strain to restructure the way they operate, giving rise to a more market-mediated form of employment relationship’ (Butler et al, 2006: 174) these new tensions continue to be played out within the confines of the ILM (Grimshaw et al, 2001). For instance, Storey et al’s (1997) comparative study of British and Japanese MNCs revealed that ‘the internal labour market seems to have been stronger than… suggested’ for British companies with average job tenures comparable to their Japanese counterparts, with organizations important for providing access to training and developmental opportunities for managers. Their research revealed that the existence of an ILM was not the issue but differences in the relative strength of the ILMs for Japanese and
British organizations was the primary finding, with greater ‘stability’ and ‘robustness’ characterizing the former and greater ‘vulnerability’ and ‘instability’ characterizing the latter (Storey et al, 1997).

Similarly, Butler et al’s (2006) cross-national study of American MNCs in Europe highlighted the continued existence of ILM-type practices like graduate recruitment and training schemes, evidence of functional (or job) rotation especially in British subsidiaries, and identification and development of high-potential employees through formalized, and centralized, succession planning. These findings are particularly interesting because American companies have often been identified as having a predominantly market-orientation. Therefore, even though strong marketization pressures could have been predicted in American subsidiaries (particularly those operating in another market-led economy like Britain), aspects of the ILM were still visible. On the other hand, the study highlighted several contemporary career issues such as the emergence of a more ‘meritocratic model’, and evidence of restructuring leading to increased turnover and career frustration, more flexible organizational structures and ‘truncated career ladders’. However, there was also evidence of continued commitment to elements of a traditional ILM, albeit an ILM typified by constant change and new tensions (Butler et al, 2006).

These dual pressures of change and continuity signifying a marketized employment relationship on the one hand and a stable ILM on the other hand are underlined in existing literature. Grimshaw and Rubery’s (1998) exploration of the British labour market highlighted that the employment relationship was becoming increasingly market-driven. However, they also argued that there were limits on this process of re-institutionalization of the traditional ILMs because ‘internal and external competitive pressures mutually interact to shape employer strategy and the labour market positions of employees’ (Grimshaw and Rubery, 1998: 217). Many authors have championed the continued resilience of the employment relationship, citing relative stability in job tenures, job security, job quality, and job losses and job creation (McGovern et al 2007; Jacoby 1999). Therefore, the overall response to the claims of marketized employment relationships has underlined the
moderate rather than dramatic indications of job changes as a result of restructuring. However, greater issues accompanying this shift from internal to external labour markets are ‘more subtle aspects of job instability such as vulnerability and changes in the quality of the employment relationship’ (Sparrow and Cooper, 2003: p. 78), and increasing inequality in employment with low-wage, less-skilled workers suffering the consequences of these changes to a greater extent (Jacoby 1999). Therefore, the changed employment relationship has not rendered the ILM and the organization as completely irrelevant. Instead, it might have increased segmentation in the labour market whereby the experience of employment is more unequal for different employee groups. Thus, this shift from traditional rules governing employment and careers to the predominance of market principles in the workplace may have a limited impact on the managerial workgroup in particular. For instance, Harrison (2000) argues that managerial jobs remain dependent on organization-specific skills and, more importantly, mutuality of trust, commitment, interests and needs. Rubery and Grimshaw’s (2003) consideration of the market-led, weak ILM system in the US revealed that young managers, professionals and technical employees (i.e. employee cohorts most likely to already have a university qualification) were most often destined to qualify for organizational training. Moreover, Storey et al’s (1997) research highlights how Japanese MNCs specifically recruited graduates from prestigious universities to constitute its elite managerial cadre and how the small cohort of graduate recruits in Tesco were the ones deployed to headquarter functions. Therefore, the original claims of middle-managers and professionals suffering the most at the hands of restructuring pressures and becoming ‘masters of their own fates’ by embracing the ‘new ethos of market individualism’ may be exaggerated (Jacoby 1999: 124-25).

Based on the literature cited above it can be argued that from the organizational point of view provision of certain HR policies and practices remains a relevant requirement and while the internal labour market has undoubtedly undergone significant changes it is still far from its purported ‘death’. Therefore, there is a need to consider claims regarding the changed and changing nature of the employment relationship and of the employing
organizations with a certain degree of skepticism and realism. For instance, ‘employability’ is considered a cornerstone of the new relationship – organizations will undertake efforts to enhance it in return for reduced employment security and the increasingly entrepreneurial employees seek to maintain it in order to ensure long term career survival (Waterman et al 1994). However, Baruch (2004) counters with the argument that organizational preoccupation with ‘investment in employability has always been present’ rather than a recent reaction to the changed psychological contract. Moreover, the current provision of training to supposedly increase this employability is in many cases quite company-specific, short-term oriented and ad hoc resulting in decreased employability (ibid). Secondly, adopting a stance of ‘historical relativity’ also reveals that the traditional understanding of careers as denoting stable vertical movement, firm-specific skills, long-term commitment and a strong psychological contract was embraced by large organizations only after the second world war (Sparrow and Cooper, 2003). Thus, the more contemporary concepts such as self-development, increased employability, lateral movements and self-managing, entrepreneurial career attitudes may represent a sea change only because these ‘major changes have occurred within one generation time… with insufficient time to adapt easily’ (Baruch, 2004: 14).

Taking a historical perspective on the employment relationship highlights that it has in fact always been in flux and organizational ability or desire to shoulder or eschew career responsibility and employee welfare has always been reactive to the stability or dynamism of the business environment. Jacoby (1999) drew parallels between the American labour markets of the 90’s and the 20’s to argue that the employment relationship is constantly subject to structural, secular and cyclical factors that repeatedly swing the pendulum between the organization-centered and market-centered careers. It is worth noting that Cappelli (1999b) has criticized these notions of a reversion to the traditional employment relationship when for example, economic conditions become favourable or labour markets are tight because of employer and employee adjustments to the new, marketized model of employment. This leads to the conclusion that the marketization, externalization and
transformation of the employment relationship needs to be constantly balanced with the continued notions of loyalty and commitment in the workplace (McGovern et al 2007) rather than a return to old arrangements (Cappelli 1999b).

Considering changes in the employment relationship and the psychological contract from the organizational perspective offers several interesting conclusions. On the one hand, employee attitudes and employer reactions have undoubtedly changed with increased reliance on the ELM (external labour market). However, based on historical data this process of change is not an entirely new phenomenon. More importantly, changes in the employment relationship are not as drastic, uncontested and unchecked as some claims that have been made; and an organizational ILM remains relevant, albeit in a considerably altered and battered state, in its provision of HR policies and practices. However, the indirect effects of these changes in the employment relationship are undeniable. Jacoby (1999) argues that the ‘reallocation of risk’, as a result of employers shifting more risk burdens onto their employees, rather than the death of career jobs is the ‘central dynamic driving today’s internal labour markets’ (p. 135). Employers’ and employees’ adaptation and response to these risk reallocations have highlighted variations inherent in employment relationships based on social class considerations (McGovern et al 2007) and organizational differences in size, structure and success (Jacoby 1999). Given this increased variation in employment outcomes for different employee groups and more importantly across different organizations it is important to consider the structurally distinctive multinationals’ approach to staffing and the state of their ILMs.

2.5 Multinationals – strategy, structure and staffing

Employment relations in multinationals, especially pertaining to the management and development of managerial careers, dictate a consideration of their international internal labour market (ILM) in order to delineate differences in career opportunities, pace and scale of progression and resultant career expectations of home, host and third country managers. This section
begins with a deliberation of the different business strategies, structural frameworks and staffing orientations that influence this internal labour market across different multinationals. Secondly, the specific HR practice of career development is explored within the context of multinationals. Finally, since this particular project studied foreign MNCs in Pakistan, the host country perspective (particularly developing/emerging host economies) is considered in greater detail.

Existing literature that deals with all these MNC-specific organizational considerations has developed along several different trajectories. Sparrow et al (2004) maintain that comparative and international management research has developed along three main trajectories: studies that juxtapose management of multinational firms with domestic firms, cross-national and cross-cultural comparisons of management policies and practices, and studies focusing on specific (single) countries within the international management sphere (p. 2). Domestic and multinational firms can be differentiated on the basis of multiculturalism (i.e. employees from more than two cultures) and geographic dispersion (i.e. organizational subunits in different countries) (Adler 1983). Harzing (2004) has argued that most international business research focuses on geographic dispersion alone while most comparative work in the area focuses predominantly on multiculturalism - often to the exclusion of the other factor (p. 34). These research trends in the area of international and comparative human resource management are particularly pertinent for this project because they highlight several theoretical limitations that my research seeks to redress. For instance, Harzing (2004) follows up the previous argument of exclusive application of geographic dispersion or multiculturalism by suggesting that in order ‘to get a complete picture of multinational firms, both perspectives are equally important’ (p. 34). Similarly Sparrow et al (2004) have argued that international HRM theory fails to establish a distinction between the cross-national and the cross-cultural, even though it is critical to view cross-national studies as operating at the macro level and ‘taking a gestalt view of an unrelated set of factors’, while cross-cultural studies have a relatively more constrained focus in applying the notion of culture to organizational and individual processes (p. 6).
Existing work in the areas of international, comparative and strategic human resource management has also been criticized on account of treating ‘the political, social, economic, cultural and institutional contexts … as simple contingency factors instead of seeing them as part of a complex context’ (ibid). These contextual factors are all the more important keeping in mind the significantly greater complexity of multinational organizations. This organizational complexity of MNCs derives from the need for greater sensitivity to different host governments, labour markets, public opinion, and local regulations; the inapplicability of home country policies and practices in certain host environments, and the impossibility of achieving uniform HR practices in all subsidiaries (Adler 1983: 15). International HRM literature has tended to treat these host versus home-country effects as two sets of rather static institutional structures even though recent institutional research has focused on the process and type of institutional change (Streeck and Thelen 2009; 2005). Therefore, the convergence-divergence debate often tends to assume that either the HRM system will converge as a whole or it will remain divergent, excluding the possibility that some aspects might converge while other parts might be diverging (Sparrow et al 2004: 7). A multi-level analysis that takes into account individual, organizational and institutional/societal factors would make it possible to address at least some of these concerns in international and comparative HRM literature.

Moreover, international and comparative human resource management often treats the country or the region as the most important level of analysis. However, it is equally important to emphasize the strategy and structure of multinational organizations (Harzing, 2004: 35-36). Some of the most significant influences on MNCs HRM in general and career management in particular are the specific strategic orientations and structural characteristics of a multinational. Bartlett and Ghoshal’s (1998) conceptualization of a multinational comprising of independent national subsidiaries with minimal interference from the HQ is akin to Perlmutter’s (1969) polycentric firm and Porter’s (1986) multi-domestic approach. In such a decentralized operation, with its focus on local adaptation, host country managers would be developed for key positions within the national subsidiaries. Therefore, while ‘there is
unlikely to be a significant number of expatriate managers as decisions will be left to local managers’ (Edward and Rees, 2011: 83), these local managers’ careers will have limited scope beyond the host country subsidiary.

On the other hand, the global centralized hub (Ghoshal and Bartlett 1998) corresponding to an ethnocentric orientation (Perlmutter, 1969) would entail a high degree of coordination and control from the HQ and greater attention on achieving global integration and standardization. In career development terms home country managers would have international careers and be deployed as expatriate managers across the organization’s worldwide operations as ‘enforcers of HQ policy’ (Edward and Rees, 2011: 84). Bartlett and Ghoshal’s (1998) international, coordinated federation, corresponding to Porter (1986) and Adler and Ghadar’s (1990) global phase of worldwide integration and local responsiveness, would not only confer upon expatriate managers the role of ‘facilitators’ (Edwards and Rees, 2011) but also devolve some responsibility to local managers to implement centrally developed policies. This approach offers relatively greater focus on host country managers’ career development, for instance, by increasing the likelihood of international exposure in order to facilitate acculturation and alignment with HQ orientations and home country values since ‘MNCs with a global strategy are more likely to staff their subsidiaries with a focus on PCNs or HCNs/TCNs that have been socialized at the HQ’ (Reiche and Harzing, 2011: 193). Finally, the transnational firm (Bartlett and Ghoshal, 1998) exhibiting a geocentric orientation (Perlmutter, 1969) would be focused on developing a cadre of international managers from everywhere in the world for key positions across its international operations. As a result ‘international assignees will not only originate in the parent company’ (Edwards and Rees, 2011: 86) but there would also be greater career opportunities for host country managers across the organization’s worldwide subsidiaries.

Therefore, where MNCs lie in terms of strategic orientation across these different typologies and how they negotiate the competing demands of global integration and local responsiveness (Ferner and Quintanilla 1998; Rosenweig and Nohria 1994) will influence the scope of career development for home and
host country managers. Scullion and Collings (2006) argued that ‘the nature of the international human resource management policies introduced within the firm… will in turn impact on the final configuration of the management teams in subsidiary operations’ (p. 17). However, there are many other considerations that can change the dynamics of the international internal labour market for multinationals and create career opportunities for home country managers over host country managers and vice versa. Smale (2011) distinguishes between greenfield and brownfield sites where the former offers the corporate centre greater freedom and facilitates the implementation of HQ practices, often through the increased presence of expatriates (Harzing, 1999). On the other hand, multinational activity through cross-border mergers and acquisitions (M&As) and international joint ventures (IJVs) is sometimes predicated on the rationale of acquiring and retaining key local ‘talented management’ at all levels of the hierarchy (Pucik et al, 2011). Moreover, in order to achieve M&As primary objective of internal integration, standardization of training, pay scales and benefits is affected to specifically facilitate the mobility of managerial and professional staff across the organization (Edwards and Rees, 2011). Therefore, the sustained success of these international collaborations sometimes hinges on the recruitment, retention and deployment of host country managers, forcing their careers onto the centre stage of the internal organizational labour market.

Finally, Reiche and Harzing’s (2011) comprehensive assessment of MNCs’ staffing options and the choice between parent and host country managers considered a range of variables such as subsidiary age (established subsidiaries are more likely to have developed local managers and established high trust relations with them), overall size of the multinational (larger MNCs will have more managerial resources to transfer both home and host country managers across the globe), industry (financial service multinationals are more likely to use parent country expatriates) and home and host country characteristics (which will be discussed in greater detail in the section on societal and institutional contexts). Therefore, multinationals have very distinct internal labour markets that span geographical boundaries and are dependent on human resource availability across a range of national external labour markets.
Precisely which of these different sources of managerial talent MNCs rely on, and to what extent, depends on their business strategy, organizational structure and international staffing policy. However, this equation rarely remains constant and is continually subject to changing business contexts brought about either by the organization itself or by factors extraneous to the multinational.

**Multinationals and career development**

The importance of these organizational characteristics and their impact on the internal labour markets of different multinationals has led to a greater representation of the employer point of view in existing research. Nicholson and Arnold (1989) identify three main themes: literature on graduates, literature dealing with psychological adjustment and work role transitions, and finally the management of career development (p. 3). The first two areas explore managers’ careers in large multinationals by building on the well-established premise that an integral link exists between career and behaviour, that ‘work experience is a central part of … personal development’, and that careers influence behaviours because ‘firms have cultures with distinctive managerial rationalities’ (Gunz, 1989: 13-14). Thus, the focus is on individual experiences along different phases of working life within multinationals from an organizational psychology/behavioural perspective. The third literature theme is even more specific in considering different elements of the intra-organizational career system (such as promotion systems, placement decisions, career tracks and so on) from a distinctly management point of view (Nicholson & Arnold, 1989: 3).

A vast body of literature attests to this employer orientation of the career development literature within multinationals, where the focus is on which employment strategies and principles are implemented by large organizations and the underlying rationale for these policies. For instance, Torbiorn’s (2005) discussion of staffing policies and practices in European MNCs specifies that the discussion pertains not to the staff itself, rather ‘staffing will be used, and discussed, as a criterion indicative of IHRM strategies, as well as company
concern about cultural contexts, organizational needs or situational options’ (p. 47). Similarly, Caligiuri et al (2005) discuss different training and development initiatives, their fit with different business strategies, and their responsiveness in training and developing ‘a variety of employees from different countries, from diverse cultural backgrounds, and with unique performance goals’ (p. 71-72). Therefore, international human resource management literature tends to consider career development within the realm of increasing competitiveness, achieving business objectives, and aligning personnel strategies with organizational structures.

However, this focus on the employer perspective does highlight that key organizational goals combined with a highly competitive global business environment mean that the nurturing and development of human resources in general, and ‘global leaders’ in particular, is becoming a ‘competitive necessity’ (Caligiuri et al, 2005: 71). Multinationals can be differentiated from other businesses, simply global in a geographical sense, on the basis of four business principles: co-ordinated integration, flow of resources across the organization, leverage (including a degree of standardization) and optimization (by balancing local responsiveness with global responsibility) (Brake, 1999). The creation of a cadre of international managers, developed specifically to deal with global assignments, is increasingly seen as the key to achieving these principles. For instance, the three key motives identified by Edstrom and Galbraith (1977) and Sparrow et al (2004) for utilizing international transfers and global leaders were management development, lack of qualified host country nationals, and increased degree of organizational development and control.

Suutari (2003) also refers to a vast amount of literature that explicitly underlines the development of globally competent managers capable of handling ‘the necessary global integration and co-ordination activities within companies’ as a top development priority and HR goal for multinationals (p. 186). Issues pertaining to international human resource management and career development are seen as critical with respect to multinationals in particular because HR problems facing international firms are a lot more
complex than in domestic firms and MNCs have to constantly anticipate impending shortages of international managers (Scullion, 1992: 58). Moreover, global leader development has become an integral element in the globalization of business and multinationals are forced to think about their strategies, structures and managerial competencies in conjunction with each other (Suutari, 2002: 218).

With the focus firmly on global leaders and international managers, IHRM literature has tended to consider different components of career development (such as recruitment and selection, training, career progression etc.) primarily for the expatriate managers. In line with the traditional model adopted by many Anglo-Saxon multinationals, these expatriates were typically ‘male and Caucasian’, ‘senior level corporate employee(s)’ from the parent country, offered international assignment(s) in the later stages of their long careers as an organizational reward (Woodall, 2011: 164-65). These expatriate employees may be classified as an elite group because of the wide range of strategic responsibilities these senior executives are entrusted with on a global scale (Debrah and Rees, 2011) while being subject to very few external constraints (Vernon, 2011). Moreover, they enjoy highly competitive international compensation packages apart from the additional foreign service financial inducements offered by their employing MNCs (Burnett and Glinow, 2011). Furthermore, these expatriate managers are provided with tailored (and therefore expensive) expatriate training and development programmes (Debrah and Rees, 2011). Such advantageous employment conditions mean that these ‘elite’ workers can peddle their highly valuable (and often scarce) set of competencies in a fairly stable and favourable international internal labour market.

Even though different multinationals have very different staffing orientations (Perlmutter, 1969; Heenan & Perlmutter, 1979) and very different views on how to reconcile the competing organizational demands of achieving global integration and local responsiveness (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1998; Rosenzweig & Nohria, 1994; and Ferner & Quintanilla, 1998), international and comparative HRM research instead of considering the relative use of home versus host
country managers (and the associated impact on their respective careers) has tended to treat career development from a distinctly expatriate point of view. For instance, Dowling and Welch (2004) consider a wide range of career issues but largely with respect to expatriates, such as selection criteria and selection error for expatriates, the ratio of expatriates to host country or third country nationals, the suitability of female expatriates, pre-departure training for increased expatriate effectiveness and success abroad, re-entry and career issues, and the process of repatriation. Similarly, Collings and Scullion (2006) explore issues such as expatriates and knowledge transfer, the return on investment when using expatriates on international assignments and expatriate failure (i.e. the premature return of expatriates to home country).

However, this expatriate approach to careers in extant international human resource management literature is problematic for several reasons. Firstly, by focusing exclusively on ‘identifying high-potential employees for expatriate assignments and devising executive development programmes for them’, it encourages a very narrow perspective on international management development (Woodall, 2006: 172). In view of the fact that multinationals have diverse structures and the geographical scale of operations grants host and third country nationals a fairly significant role, perhaps it would make more sense to not only expand the confines of international management development study and consider ‘managers at all levels, in different roles and at different stages of their careers’ but to also take into account host country and third country nationals’ management development (Woodall, 2006: 173). In fact, Woodall (2006) argues that no matter what the stage of production and operational structure, a multinational’s managerial career development policies are also important for host and third country nationals - for example, in a ‘mature regional business, succession planning becomes important in order to prepare potential expatriate managers as well as host and third country nationals’ (p. 175). Therefore, there is a clear research gap to consider the career development of managers from host country operations (like Pakistan) for these organizations’ international internal labour markets.

Secondly, a rapidly changing global business environment has weakened the
previously untouchable position of expatriate managers. Woodall argues that the picture of a relatively strong internal labour market for expatriate managers has, in the past few decades, suffered at the hands of downsizing, outsourcing, growing ascendancy of technical and professional staff, expansion through mergers, acquisitions, alliances and joint ventures, and multinationals’ foray into emergent (and in terms of relocation often unattractive) markets and therefore, ‘the “job-for-life” culture of many organizations has ended’ (2011: 166). These developments have had far reaching implications not only for MNCs’ internal labour markets but specifically also for managerial career development patterns and trends. Employees are reacting to these changed times by altering their personal conceptualization of careers (Cappelli 1999b). Therefore, perhaps in response to these changes in multinationals’ ILMs, expatriate managers’ career orientations have also undergone a shift from pursuing career advancement alone to focusing on greater personal development (through generic and transferable management skills and cross-cultural competencies) that increases their overall marketability in the external labour market (Collings et al, 2007).

This employee reaction highlights another significant shortcoming of careers literature within the confines of IHRM. There is a lack of acknowledgement that management development is inherently situated within the context of management learning and that individual learning styles, organizational cultures, formal and informal lessons learned from work-related activities and individual employees’ positive and negative work experiences (Woodall, 2006:173) all collectively influence career development and progression. There is a distinct sense of change in individual employees’ reactions to organizational stimuli in very different ways which might be a testimony to the increasing fluidity of boundaries (as encapsulated by boundaryless careers) within and between organizations. For instance, Miller and Cheung’s (1978) earlier work on overseas assignments revealed that the possibility of promotion and advancement within the employing organization was the primary motivation for moving abroad for work-related reasons. However, the more recent work on managers in large multinational corporations by Stahl et al (2002) showed that employees are willing to accept international
assignments because of the opportunities for ‘skill acquisition, personal
development, and career enhancement, even though it may not help them
advance within their company’ (p. 217).

Thus, while international assignments within multinationals were viewed as a
career advancement mechanism within an organization, the focus now is on
personal development, enhanced general management skills and cross-cultural
competencies that are seen as increasing individual employability. Tung
(1998) supports this argument that increasingly for the employees of MNCs
their personal conceptualization of careers takes precedence over the
organizational management of their careers, along with a greater willingness
of these employees to look for alternative employment opportunities after
repatriation (Moore, 2006). This development is worth considering in a
culturally and institutionally distant context like Pakistan where societal
arrangements continue to reflect collectivism and stability (as explored in the
next section). Therefore, in contrast to managers from more Western,
developed societies, Pakistani managers’ expectations from the ILM might be
very different and still include job security and traditional advancement along
well delineated hierarchical levels.

However, when the organizational level of analysis is considered more closely
several contradictions can be highlighted in these developments. Employees
may have undergone a change in their personal conceptualization of careers.
Moreover, in response to this fracturing of traditional career structures, and
erstwhile high levels of job security, organizations may feel more constrained
to facilitate \textit{intransitive} development\footnote{Evans et al (2002) define \textit{intransitive} development as the freedom granted by organizations to their employees to ‘make zigzag transitions that may build their portfolio of competencies’ (p. 382-83).} for their employees. However, this
approach to careers within MNCs is not without its problems, for despite the
breakdown of traditional career precepts, certain remnants of organizational
careers still seem to survive. For instance, Stahl et al’s (2002) argument that
employees perceived a discrepancy between IHRM policies and practices and
career advancement could be taken as an indication that employees of
multinationals find career planning in organizations insufficient because they
still desire a modicum of job security and advancement within organizational
ranks. Similarly, Torbijn’s (1982) revealed that managers in multinationals
accepted international assignments not only because they were personally
motivated but also because they felt that refusal to go abroad would negatively
impact their subsequent career advancement within the employing
organization. Thus, several interesting hypotheses can be generated. On the
one hand, it is possible that while individuals are pursuing self-directed careers
across different organizations, this boundarylessness could either be forced
because of organizational insufficiencies with respect to career development or
it could result in a hybrid combination of the traditional/ILM model with the
boundaryless/protean career. It could also be a positive sum game for both
employing organizations and employees - the former able to hire outside talent
as per demand and reduce costs, while the latter could use their company’s
internal labour market to improve individual career prospects in the external
labour market without having to fulfill traditional notions of organizational
loyalty and job commitment.

What existing IHRM literature does highlight in more definitive terms is that
employers have reacted to these changing labour market conditions by
significantly altering the terrain of international assignments from long-term
transfers alone to relatively greater use of medium- to short-term alternatives
(such as inpatriation, short-term assignments, self-initiated assignments,
business trips, virtual assignments, cross-border swaps, multicultural project
teams etc.) (Reiche and Harzing, 2011; Collings et al, 2007 and Forster, 2000).
This shift in the nature of international assignments combined with consistent
concerns regarding the failure of expatriation (i.e. under-performance,
premature return, repatriation failure, and high direct and indirect costs -
Reiche and Harzing, 2011) and the constant danger of ‘shortages in the supply
of international executives’ (Woodall, 2011) means that international
assignments are no longer the sole preserve of the traditional home country
expatriate managers. Instead, Reiche and Harzing posit that ‘the group of what
constitutes international assignees is in fact very diverse and includes different
transfer directions, different assignment lengths and different levels at which
the assignment is initiated’ (2011: 213). The predominant organizational
Recent literature on global talent management (GTM) has highlighted several demand and supply side variables that encourage a more flexible approach to global staffing selection procedures. Multinationals’ foray into emerging markets like India and China with significant talent shortages (Beechler and Woodward 2009; Hartmann et al 2010) has increased the strategic need to reduce silo mentalities in subsidiaries (McDonnell et al 2010) and overcome HQ dismissal of isolated subsidiary talent (Mellahi and Collings 2010) so that MNCs can source highly mobile elite, access short-term specialist talent and facilitate knowledge-based innovation (Farndale et al 2010). Given these GTM considerations, long-term career management in multinationals now means that ‘the development of global leadership skills should not stop with home country nationals. Global HR should also be involved in developing a global orientation amongst host country nationals’ (Stroh and Caligiuri, 1998: 10).

Multinationals, host country nationals and ILMs

With host country nationals (HCNs) increasingly being considered as suitable alternatives for undertaking international assignments there needs to be some consideration of the internal labour market conditions offered by multinationals to this particular managerial cohort and the impact of these conditions on their career aspirations and career paths. Grimshaw et al (2011) argue that most MNCs engage in an ‘internal employment relationship’ with their employees and this contract can be viewed as a ‘social institution’ (because it encompasses legal obligations and social traditions of the host country) that results in considerable ‘variation in employment arrangements between national environments’ (p. 230). Therefore, it can be hypothesized that the ILM arrangements for HCNs would vary significantly between a developed versus a developing/emerging economy. However, as Vo (2009)
and Tarique and Schuler (2008) have highlighted there is little research currently available that attempts an empirical investigation of HRM from the host country perspective, and even less that focuses specifically on developing countries.

From the relatively little research available, it can be argued that since MNCs often tend to pay higher than average wages in most labour markets (Grimshaw et al, 2011), in the developing country context the result is the creation of positive wage differentials between MNCs and local firms (Matsouka, 2011) because multinationals in emerging economies prefer to pay premium wages in order to attract the best employees (Jain et al, 1998; Ratnam, 1998). This can have wide ranging consequences on employees’ career trajectories. A study of MNCs in Kenya revealed that higher salary was a significant variable responsible for inter-firm mobility from local and public enterprises to multinationals and also for job hopping between different MNCs (Gershenberg, 1987). The practice of job hopping was also an issue in Gamble’s (2008) research on Japanese multinationals in China where large numbers of middle managers employed in Japanese multinationals left for competitors like Wal-Mart because Japanese expatriate managers’ moral and emotional persuasions, emphasizing long-term rewards (such as promotion prospects and job security), did not stem labour turnover rates. Similarly, Demirbag et al’s (2011) consideration of a U.S. multinational in India highlighted the increasing practice of abrupt, short-term job hopping because ‘in the current employment context, employees exchange loyalty and performance for higher salaries, marketability and continuous learning’ (p. 7).

This increasing propensity for inter-organizational mobility is of particular concern in developing countries because local managers with the appropriate skills and education level are likely to be part of a ‘small social elite’ severely limiting the scope of indigenous recruitment (Buckley and Casson, 2010). Moreover, long-term planning, ‘early identification of potential incumbents’ and succession planning become problematic because high employee mobility forces MNCs to focus on retention rather than strategic succession planning (Hartmann et al, 2010: 174). Demirbag et al argue that macro concerns such as
‘skills shortage, weak enforcement of work contracts and changes in work values and culture’ (2011: 7) further encourage employees to constantly seek more favourable internal labour markets. And multinationals in their quest to recruit the best management talent are per force caught in this pervasive cycle of job abandonment and job hopping; often resulting in a ‘war for talent’ (Vo, 2009) in the external labour markets of these developing economies. Therefore, with respect to developing/emerging host countries’ managerial population in particular, skilled labour supply constraints force multinationals to offer a relatively strong internal labour market in order to hire and retain the best talent, supplemented by the host managers’ increasing propensity to take advantage of their scarce skills and pursue individual career commitment (as heralded by the ‘new’ careers literature) rather than organizational commitment.

This section on MNCs started off with a consideration of the different business strategies, structures and staffing orientations of different types of MNCs and the impact of these organizational features on the relative employment of different employee groups (i.e. parent, host and third country nationals) across their worldwide operations. Given the differences in the availability of career opportunities and trajectories for these different employee groups, the process of career management and changes in MNCs’ internal labour markets were explored in greater detail. Finally, given this project’s consideration of foreign MNCs’ Pakistani subsidiaries the literature on the host country perspective was also considered. The key conclusion was that staffing in MNC subsidiaries impinges on employee perceptions of available career opportunities for host country managers, the employing multinationals’ approach to international staffing, and the extent to which home country expatriates are deployed across subsidiaries (Reiche 2006). Moreover, Reiche (2006) also recommended taking a more pluralistic approach to career management in MNCs because the influence of culture and context creates ‘subsidiary-specific conditions’ which ultimately determine career paths and career perceptions. Thus, it is vital that the institutional context, incorporating both home and host country influences, is considered in order to understand individual employees’ career orientations at the subsidiary level.
2.6 Institutional and societal influences on Pakistan’s managerial labour market

The overall study of managerial careers and career development has been grounded in the theoretical framework of institutionalism. The previous sections explored individual employees’ perceptions and career orientations within the distinct internal labour markets of foreign multinationals. However, both individual perception and organizational implementation of employment policies and practices are ultimately subject to external labour market conditions. Institutionalists regard this ELM as ‘the clearest example of an institutionally and socially constructed market’ (Rubery & Grimshaw, 2003: 37). Therefore, managerial career orientations, the skills level of this work group and their competitive bargaining power vis-à-vis their employing multinationals in the ELM are all influenced by the dominant social and institutional arrangements in Pakistan (such as the role accorded to the family, national education and training provision, the size and status of the managerial labour market etc). Since this project is specifically focused on managerial career development, the following discussion on Pakistan’s institutional/societal context will highlight the key institutional/societal influences on the managerial labour market in particular. Firstly, the broad methodological and theoretical frameworks that underpin this research project will be discussed. In the next sections those aspects of the key ‘business systems’, such as Pakistan’s industrial relations and educational system, that are relevant with regards to the managerial employees will be considered. Finally, Pakistan’s managerial labour market, the differences in national and foreign organizations’ management cultures, the key cultural and societal influences discernable in the workplace and the potential for hybridization of identities and values of Pakistani managers in response to foreign, globalizing pressures are explored in greater detail.

Ferner and Tempel’s (2006) approach of incorporating two main strands of institutional theory, that is, comparative institutionalism and ‘new’ institutionalism is adopted. Firstly, comparative institutionalism is used to highlight the key macro level institutional influences that directly impact
Pakistan’s managerial labour market. Whitley’s (1999) comparative analysis of South Korea versus Taiwan and Hungary versus Slovenia highlighted nationally distinct economic and political arrangements, their differential impact on enterprises and organizations, and the subsequent generation of different outcomes in different societies. This theme of institutional distinctiveness was also propagated in Hall and Soskice’s (2001) varieties of capitalism approach and their delineation between liberal market economies and coordinated market economies whereby different national institutional settings created variable comparative advantages in different economic sectors. Extension of the varieties of capitalism approach can be found in Coates’ (2005) study of why advanced capitalist societies vary in their institutional forms, and hence competitive performance, and how this economic performance can be measured and explained. This comparative institutionalist literature highlights institutional variety and thereby offers methodological underpinning for studying foreign MNCs, from institutionally very different parent countries, operating in the nationally distinctive context of Pakistan. Therefore, key inter-linked Pakistani institutions such as the labour system (i.e. education system and industrial relations), the political system (the role of the state) and the cultural system (encompassing trust, authority relations and collective identities) (Whitley, 1999) need to be considered.

However, Allen’s (2006) application of the varieties of capitalism paradigm in Germany highlights an important limitation of this theoretical approach i.e. imposing ‘too rigid a view of institutions on companies and managers’ and granting ‘actors too small an influence in shaping their institutional settings and, hence, outcomes’ (Allen, 2006: x). Therefore, ‘new’ institutionalism is also applied in order to highlight the key regulatory, cognitive and normative structures (Kostova 1999; Kostova and Zaheer 1999; Kostova and Roth 2002) that influence Pakistani managers and their employing organizations. The regulatory component refers to rules and laws prevalent in the country, cognitive structures embody ‘widely shared social knowledge’ and the normative component reflects national ‘values, beliefs, norms, and assumptions about human nature and human behavior’ (Kostova and Roth,
2002: 217). It is important to incorporate these additional components because ‘employees’ judgments about a new practice will be influenced by their cognitions and beliefs which in turn have been shaped by the external institutional environment’ (Kostova and Roth 2002: 218). Therefore, Pakistan managers’ perception, and subsequent uptake, of protean, boundaryless and international career concepts depends not only on an accurate social and cognitive understanding of these concepts but also whether these concepts complement, and are supported by, dominant values and beliefs of Pakistani civil society. If there is a discord with any of the three institutional components (regulatory, cognitive and normative) then rejection, adaptation, or true internalization of foreign policies and practices are all possible outcomes.

Moreover, the methodological approach of ‘new institutionalism’ is particularly important within the context of multinationals for two main reasons. Firstly, MNCs face the singular situation of ‘institutional duality’ (Kostova and Roth, 2002) – that is, they have to reconcile ‘host institutional environments’ with ‘internal institutional environments’ in order to maintain external legitimacy in the host country and internal legitimacy in the organization’s international operations (Kostova and Zaheer, 1999: 67). Secondly, multinationals seek to transfer policies and practices across their subsidiaries worldwide. However, the ‘adoption response’ of different subsidiaries varies from the formal implementation of a corporate practice to the ‘internalized belief in the value of the practice’ (Kostova and Roth, 2002: 216). These issues of legitimacy and adoption of home country mandated policies and practices highlight an interesting research gap. As the literature reviewed in previous section showed the debate between ‘new’ and traditional, organizational careers, and the subsequent marketization of the employment relationship, has been primarily investigated within the Anglo-Saxon context. Therefore, the relevance of these singularly ‘Western’ concepts, how they are negotiated by Pakistani employers and employees, and any subsequent transmutations of managerial career development practices during the transfer process need to be explored within the previously unconsidered, and culturally and institutionally distinct and distant context of Pakistan. Therefore, an
‘institutional profile’ of Pakistan needs to be developed against which organizational career development policies and practices and employees’ career perceptions can be explored. To this end the following sections consider some of the key national institutions highlighted by comparative institutionalism and how these macro-level theoretical debates are consistently underpinned by the cognitive and normative components of ‘new institutionalism’.

Tayeb (1995) argued that Pakistan’s social, political and economic institutional arrangements have ‘their origins in national culture…’ (p. 590). Khilji’s (2001, 2003a) understanding of this national culture highlighted the co-existence of several key influences – i) the religious influence of Islam (and its symbolic and/or political use in socio-economic systems), ii) the lasting impact of Indian origins (and associated customs and traditions such as a family-centered set-up and tacit acceptance of authority), iii) the colonial legacy of the British Raj (credited with the creation of elite classes, disproportionate distribution of power, wealth and status and importance of guanxi i.e. connections); and finally iv) American influences (as a result of foreign policy intervention, influx of American capital, movement of human resources between Pakistan and the U.S., and the increasing popularity of American educational and managerial styles). All these influences impact on both cognitive and normative institutional components and will therefore be evident either implicitly or explicitly in the proceeding discussion on key Pakistani institutions that directly impact the country’s managerial labour market.

**Education system in Pakistan**

For this particular project, where the prime concern is with the specific employee group of managers, the key argument with regards to the country’s education system is that it generates only a restricted labour supply for the managerial labour market. This small but highly qualified elite emerges out of the contradictions and inequalities in Pakistan’s educational system that is reflective of the country’s class-based differentials in opportunities. These
differentials are found between regions (provinces), between urban versus rural areas and between public versus private educational institutions (Saeed 2007; Khan et al 2005; Shah 2003; Andrabi et al 2002). This latter differentiation is confirmed by studies of pay premiums for private school graduates (Abdullah 2009) and is associated with the higher language skills of private school graduates as most private schools in Pakistan adopt English as the medium of instruction. These advantages are corroborated by Nasir’s (2005) national survey whereby ‘… education from private schools or from high-quality English medium schools is very rewarding as the odds of having high-paying jobs are high for those who graduated from private schools or studied from English medium schools’ (p. 71).

This highlights the continued influence of the colonial legacy in the structuring of educational values and the stratification of Pakistani society. Thus, ‘education in the colonial era had been geared to staffing the civil services and producing educated elite that shared the values of, and was loyal to, the British. It was unabashedly elitist, and contemporary education… has retained the same quality’ (http://countrystudies.us/pakistan/42.htm). This elitism, and its pervasive influence on the country’s educational system, is manifest first of all in the focus on private education but is further reinforced by the distinct differences among private educational institutions. Within the private education sector as a whole there exists a cohort of private schools that cater exclusively to the upper echelons of urban societies. This not only increases the gap between the public and the private schools but also distinguishes between different kinds of private schools which through the quality of educational provision and the fees charged ‘capture the social status of the family’ they seek to cater to (Nasir, 2005: 65). A small group of educational institutions strive to reflect British or American educational standards, offer international examinations by the universities of Cambridge and London, and coach their students for internationals tests like SATs, TOEFL, GREs and GMAT. Thus, in terms of their ‘… infrastructure… some good private schools in Pakistan can be considered at par with the UK’ (Saeed, 2007: 46). This trend of emulating Western educational institutions, and maintaining extensive links with foreign universities, is also evident in some of the largest and most
sought after private universities of the country. Moreover, individuals’ cumulative experiences in these elite private educational institutions are instrumental in turning the children of the country’s middle and upper classes into future managers and highly skilled professionals.

As a result of these institutionalized differences in the provision and quality of education, private educational institutions have experienced rapid growth primarily because they are able to capitalize on the pervasive class considerations attendant upon education in Pakistan. Thus, even the less affluent segments of the country’s population (both urban and rural) ‘put their children in the private schools as much from a vague sense of doing the best (for) their child as for the status symbol this has come to represent. Parents took great pride in Oxford University Press books on the syllabus… more disturbingly, poor parents sometimes judged quality by the fee they were paying’ (Khan et al 2005: 210). This second tier of private sector institutions is not, however, able to bridge these class divides and add significantly to the size of the potential managerial labour supply. It is therefore still only a small group of expensive but high quality private institutions that are catering to the urban elite by offering high standards of education, facilities and results that explicitly mirror Western educational models and curricula. These institutions equip these candidates to take advantage of the best higher educational and employment opportunities both within and outside the country - automatically conferring this group with membership of the domestic managerial labour market and making them the frontline contenders for the coveted jobs in foreign multinationals’ Pakistani subsidiaries in particular.

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3Institute of Business Administration (IBA), Karachi was set up in the 1970’s with financial and academic assistance from Wharton Business School. Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS), Lahore was established in the late 80’s (with the help of U.S. aid) and strongly influenced by McGill University and Harvard Business School and University College Lahore (UCL) is a foreign affiliate centre for the University of London’s international programmes.
**Industrial relations**

Pakistan’s colonial legacy has also had an impact on the role of trade unions in the labour market for while labour representatives were afforded advisory roles in colonial India, the provinces comprising the Pakistan of today were denied this right and as Candland (2007) has argued, ‘just as the seeds of social democratic India were sown by British rule, so too the roots of authoritarianism in areas that were to become Pakistan’ (p. 21). In the past few decades this already weak system of industrial relations has been further debilitated as a result of privatization (Joshi, 1999). Union activity was never a feature of the managerial labour market which is why the Industrial Relations Ordinance of 2002 does not extend the right to organize and join trade unions to employees in managerial and administrative posts (Ghayur, 2009). The limited regulatory role of the state and external bodies such as trade unions in the functioning of the managerial labour market can be compared to Whitley’s (2001) *particularist* business environment exemplified by a ‘weak and/or predatory state’, ‘paternalistic authority relationships’ and unreliable institutions (p. 39). However, even though there is no legal provision or precedence for industrial action by managers, these employees can still exert considerable influence because of their strong position in the ELM and influential family connections.

**Managerial labour market of Pakistan**

The managerial labour market in Pakistan is quite small even if the remaining large public sector enterprises are considered in conjunction with private firms (both national and foreign). Since Pakistan remains a predominantly agrarian economy, distribution of employment reflects this sectoral bias - 45 per cent of the total employed population is based within the agriculture sector and 55 per cent in the non-agricultural sector out of which only 15 per cent are based in the formal sector⁴ (Labour Force Survey, 2009-10) - i.e. engaging in full-time employment in the informal non-agricultural sector amounts to 40.35 per cent (Labour Force Survey 2009-10). The informal sector is defined using the U.N. definition - ‘a group of production units which… form part of the household sector as… incorporated enterprises’ and include the self-employed (even those engaging in the provision of technical and professional services) (Gennari, 2004)

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⁴Employment in the informal non-agricultural sector amounts to 40.35 per cent (Labour Force Survey 2009-10). The informal sector is defined using the U.N. definition - ‘a group of production units which… form part of the household sector as… incorporated enterprises’ and include the self-employed (even those engaging in the provision of technical and professional services) (Gennari, 2004)
wage employment. These figures pertaining to Pakistan’s formal sector corroborate the claim that ‘wage employment… is typically a small, and often shrinking, part of the labour market in developing countries’ (Kingdon & Soderbom, 2008: 1). Out of the 15 per cent of employees engaging in full-time, wage employment 57 per cent are employed in either craft and related trades (24 per cent) or unskilled occupations (33 per cent). Referring specifically to the managerial segment of the labour market (of interest for this particular study), legislators, senior officials and managers account for only 4 per cent of total formal employment and professionals account for a further 4 per cent. (Labour Force Survey, 2009-10)

Unfortunately, there is no statistical data available to delineate the employment figures for public and private sector managers and professionals specifically. The only additional information available is Nasir’s research (2000) which highlighted that ‘…professional, associate professional and clerical workers have higher representation in the public sector whereas a higher percentage of managerial workers are located in the private formal sector’ (p.117). More interestingly, Dutt (2003) in his consideration of the Indian labour market and its ‘organized sector (which) employs only a small proportion of the labour force of the country’ classifies those employed in this sector as ‘elite white-collar workers’ who are more skilled, have had access to higher formal education, and hold down “good jobs” (p. 9-13). It can be argued that this categorization of employees within the Indian formal sector as elite white-collar workers would be equally applicable within the Pakistani context because of the significant competitive advantage Pakistani managers enjoy in the external labour market as a result of a low supply of their particular occupational group.

Bashir and Ramay’s (2008) research on professionals working across public and private sectors highlighted that these respondents’ chances of promotion and career growth were particularly strong because they were ‘amongst the category of professionals who are in much demand in Pakistan (p. 233). Moreover, these supply-side labour advantages accruing to managers and professionals are intensified by the fact that they have access to ‘long-tenure,
high wage… jobs’ in ‘the formal sector where the entry is relatively difficult and requires not only a high content of human capital but also strong links’ (Nasir, 2000: p.113). Rahman et al’s (2008) research highlights this link between labour demand and supply for the professional and managerial classes who not only have more job opportunities but furthermore, benefit from the fact that ‘organizations are competing for the best talent and are offering better working environment, higher salaries and other incentives’ (p. 53). The coveted and high prestige status of managers and professionals within the formal private sector in particular can be highlighted by an interesting organizational example. Khan’s (2003) research revealed that privatization of the cement industry (which was a state monopoly up until 1994) resulted in a significant decline in the employment and wages of workers but,

… a comparison between workers and managers shows that, while workers steadily lost their jobs, this has not been the case for managers… … this means that white-collar workers or those in higher income brackets are not only less likely to lose their jobs… but will also continue to get a consistently better pay package. This puts managers in a far better position than the workers… (p. 525)

Therefore, without the degree of industrialization undergone by the more developed economies (not just in the West but also in the newly industrialized East Asian economies) but instead a continuing dependence on the agricultural, primary sectors means that formal, full-time, wage employment in the non-agricultural sector of Pakistan is very small. And within this already small segment of the labour market, managers (and highly skilled professionals) in particular are in a very advantageous position. This occupational group is not only able to capitalize on its higher (and as discussed in the previous section on education - better quality) human capital upon entry into the managerial labour market by immediately qualifying for, and securing, high paying, high status jobs; but they are also able to capitalize on this advantage fairly consistently across their employment lifetime because of a relatively restricted supply of managerial labour.
Rieger and Wong-Rieger (1990) argued that corporate culture and organizational behaviours were determined ‘in part, by the culture of the surrounding society… (i.e.)… elements such as the societal norms regarding the legitimacy of power and status differentials, orientation to time, decision-making style, and preferred work relationships’ (p. 101). These elements of corporate culture, embedded in and reflections of national culture and societal arrangements, were highlighted by Hofstede’s (1980, 1991) comparative work on employee values and organizational behaviours whereby Pakistan was identified as a predominantly collectivist society, scoring a large power distance and strong uncertainty avoidance. On the masculinity/femininity index the country scored on the mean and there was evidence of masculine values (such as assertiveness, control of financial resources, and competition) alongside more feminine qualities (like sensitivity, concern for others and importance of quality of life) (Hofstede, 1991: 84).

Due to the lack of Pakistan specific research, particularly within the area of human resource management, points of comparisons can be drawn from research on other South Asian economies. This would be a valid approach given the similarities in South Asian cultures (particularly between Pakistan, India and Bangladesh) as a result of shared historical roots, similar religious backgrounds and comparable societal structures. For instance, Tayeb (1988) conducted a comparative analysis of national cultures and their impact on organizations in India and England and the results revealed that Indian employees were significantly more likely to be dependent on their parents, both respect and fear people in power, prefer to work in a group and under close supervision and believe in fate. Abdullah et al’s (2011) more recent consideration of the impact of cultural factors on HRM in multinationals operating in Bangladesh was specifically predicated on Hofstede’s cultural dimensions. The authors hypothesized that the existence of a large power distance could be attributed to ‘colonial legacy of hierarchical power structures’, continued social and economic class-based disparities and distinct differences in family status. Strong uncertainty avoidance could be a result of
pervasive poverty, unemployment, economic uncertainty, high competition for existing jobs and a strong sense of fatalism because of enduring religious influences. Finally, the collectivist nature of society was attributed to a social structure that gave primary precedence to the family unit, and instilled a strong sense of responsibility, social accountability and affiliation. (Abdullah et al, 2011: 202)

The theoretical inferences drawn from Tayeb’s (1988) and Abdullah et al’s (2011) work are not only comparative affirmations of Hofstede’s classification of dominant Pakistani employee values but also offer additional insights and potential explanations for the existence and continued relevance of these values and corporate cultures. Khilji (2003b) took the debate on national employee attitudes further by not only attesting that managerial values in Pakistan signified ‘a general unquestioning respect for authority, people are integrated as cohesive groups, and they have an external locus of control’ (p. 142) but more importantly by also highlighting the problems attendant upon applying the existing culturalist perspectives of international HRM on Pakistan specifically. With regards to the work of Hofstede (1991) and Trompenaars (1993) in particular she made two key criticisms. Firstly, she argued that there was no consideration of ‘variations in employees’ values across ages and types of organizations’ and secondly that the data was outdated and hence inapplicable following ‘a decade of deregulation, increased globalization, and economic hardship’ that increased the likelihood of a change in employee values (Khilji, 2003b: 142). Therefore, in line with these valid criticisms, it is vital to consider corporate cultures and employee behaviours not only in different kinds of organizations, but also across different employee groups.

Eldridge and Mahmood’s (1993) study of organizational cultures and management practices in two large public sector organizations in Pakistan highlighted not only a distinct preference for an authoritative style of management but also the value attached to ‘communal belonging’ which ‘reflected the social concerns of managers’ (p. 26-28). The authors attributed both these managerial values to the cultural significance of the extended family and the symbolic and critical role designated to the head of the family -
whereby these societal arrangements were geared to increase mutual
dependence and ‘the societal basis of creating this element of dependence is to
courage long-term moral obligations’ (p. 29). The organizational structure in
particular was very bureaucratic, with several, well-delineated, hierarchical
layers which meant that the corporate culture incorporated clearly identifiable
lines of authority, restricted communication channels and restrained ‘self-
expression’ in favour of maintaining diplomatic order within the organization
(ibid: 34). This was in line with Rieger and Wong-Rieger’s (1990)
understanding of the relationship between organizational configurations and
cultural variables which led them to identify the government owned airline
(Pakistan International Airline) as a traditional bureaucracy. Their
understanding of this particular organizational configuration was predicated on
factors such as extensive external control by the state, ‘management’s
expressed need for rigidity and control… induced by the perception of a
chaotic local environment’ and pervasive employee ‘subservience and
deferece to superiors… at all but the highest administrative levels’ (ibid. pp.
117-8). The importance and power ascribed to senior managers was predicated
primarily on their advanced age and years of work experience - which could
be linked to the strong cultural norm of unquestioning respect for the elders
(Eldridge & Mahmood, 1993: 32). This perceived ‘superiority’ of senior
managers had a profound impact on overall organizational values as well
because junior managers in these workplaces rated job security, ability to
exercise power and the importance of commanding ‘respect from other
fellows’ as stronger motivational forces than financial rewards and other
organizational benefits (ibid: 33).

Therefore, it can be argued that the management cultures of the state-owned
enterprises studied by the authors quoted above were to an extent reflecting
the general social relationships prevalent in the country; as well as upholding
many of the employee values highlighted by Hofstede’s work almost three
decades earlier. Within the public organizational domain there was the
continued existence of clearly demarcated chains of command, a sense of
community within the organization and a distinct preference for an
authoritative style of management whereby these authoritative, paternalistic
figures comprising the senior management were offered unqualified, and often unchallenged, respect and obedience. It was these distinct features of the predominant management culture in Pakistan’s public enterprises that led Shirley (1989) to make the observation that while managers were sufficiently skilled and competent, ‘these managers and their staff have been accustomed to operate in a protected environment without the pressures for efficiency’ (p. 40).

In terms of the country’s private sector and its corporate culture, Iqbal’s (2008) research on prevalent leadership styles in Pakistan’s knitwear industry revealed significant differences in the attitudes and expectations of three cohorts of employees—managers, supervisors and workers. Their research revealed that the predominant ‘style of leadership in the Pakistani private sector’ also tended to favour a large power distance and highly directive, paternalistic behaviours by senior management. On the one hand this meant that managers were more likely to be involved in decision making and ‘discussions’ as compared to the other two employee groups primarily because a ‘hierarchical society amplified the inability of the employees to question the seniors’ (Iqbal, 2008: 75-76). On the other hand, even the managers’ input was limited to operational and tactical decision making and did not extend to the strategic level primarily because of a strict hierarchical structure (ibid, 75).

Bashir and Ramay’s (2008) research on IT professionals also revealed that public and private enterprises differed primarily in terms of the working week and organizational structure while the propensity for a centralized authority, low employee autonomy and initiative, and limited communication remained consistent for the entire sample. The authors went so far as to hypothesize that ‘employees who follow organizationally designed job patterns are appreciated and rewarded while innovation and creativity is generally discouraged. Hence employees… in Pakistani organizations prefer jobs with high formalization’ (p. 234). This finding corresponds with Gill’s (1998) comparative study on managers’ leadership behaviours where Asian managers were more

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5Despite the respect accorded to the older members of the organization, age only confers power within a specific employee group. Therefore, hierarchical ordering within the organizational context supersedes the socially sanctioned respect for elders - so seniority would be automatically conferred to managers over supervisors and the latter would be considered senior to workers; irrespective of age.
controlling, engaged in less delegation, and were more task oriented as compared to American and British managers. Therefore, it can be hypothesized that many private sector enterprises also tend to reflect organizational behaviours, leadership styles, and employee attitudes that are quite similar to the public sector organizations of Pakistan.

However, organizational reality in Pakistan is far from homogenous with an observable trend towards change, particularly as a result of American influences. Employer-employee relationships and employee career objectives are more individualistic (and materialistic), while the more collectivist, socially sanctioned, traditional values learned through early socialization are increasingly confined to social and personal spheres (Khilji, 2001). Interestingly, Khilji’s (2004) comparative analysis of three foreign multinationals and three national organizations revealed that the former, under intense global competitive pressures, had introduced more progressive corporate cultures that might in turn have initiated a process of transformation within certain national organizations as well. Khilji’s extensive research on Pakistan (2002, 2003a, b) has highlighted this change in managerial values based on the convergence principle – i.e. elements of social and cultural traditions are incorporated alongside more modern, Western notions of management. She argues that the most notable changes in corporate cultures of private sector organizations (both large national and foreign enterprises) have been an increase in autonomy and employee discretion, a much smaller power distance, and a lower degree of uncertainty avoidance (Khilji, 2003b: 142-3). However, she herself acknowledges that this change in managerial values and corporate culture is not symptomatic of the entire workforce and instead has relevance primarily for the younger, highly skilled employees, exposed to Western education and management ideals and predominantly concentrated in private sector organizations whom she christened ‘the elite workforce of Pakistan’ (ibid, 143).

This section of her research on the key institutional and societal arrangements that have an impact on the Pakistani managerial labour market specifically highlighted several contradictions. Firstly, a comparative organizational
analysis revealed that national public sector organizations, and many private sector corporations, continue to have highly centralized, bureaucratic structures, authoritative (or paternalistic) leadership styles, limited employee discretion and initiative, and restrictive communication channels. However, foreign multinationals in Pakistan have sought to transfer Western corporate values and management styles that are culturally quite distant and distinct from the traditional societal arrangements. These distinctions in corporate cultures and organizational behaviours between foreign and national enterprises may have initiated a wider process of change, particularly in certain pockets of the private formal sector. Moreover, this course of transformation has been furthered because of a gradual change in the work values of younger managers from the elite educational institutions of Pakistan (or with foreign degrees) keen to incorporate the more Western management precepts they have had early and sustained exposure to. Therefore, there are significant differences in the internal labour markets of national and foreign companies with regards to organizational cultures and structures, employee work values and managerial employees’ receptivity to change. However, it is important to highlight that these changes in the Pakistani managerial labour market are often piecemeal (and based on a dual strategy of marrying societal traditions with modern/Western principles) rather than holistic (i.e. the wholesale adoption of foreign management styles).

2.7 Conclusion

An overview of the key areas of literature pertinent to this study has highlighted several research gaps. One of the primary theoretical issues is the tendency to treat the organizational/employer and individual/employee points of view as mutually exclusive areas of research. Global staffing literature often tends to offer an organizational perspective while the ‘new’ careers literature predominantly represents an individualized employee perspective. Even in instances where the ‘other’ point of view is considered, rarely is there any attempt to reconcile individual expectations of work experiences and career advancements with employer-mandated career development initiatives. Literature on international careers does seek to incorporate both individual and
organizational approaches; however it suffers from the additional limitation of focusing on very specific employee groups, largely restricted to traditional expatriates deployed by their employing organizations, along with recent consideration of self-initiated foreign experiences by geographically mobile individuals who however, have already achieved international mobility.

These restrictions are important because, if multinationals are accepted as highly complex entities, then the complexity of different career trajectories for different employees also need to be considered. It is highly likely that expatriates and their main concerns of repatriation are not representative of the position of host country and third country nationals. Moreover, organizational responses towards these completely different employee groups are also likely to be very different. Furthermore, the existing careers literature, as well as work done in the areas of international, comparative and strategic human resource management, has been criticized on account of treating ‘the political, social, economic, cultural and institutional contexts … as simple contingency factors instead of seeing them as part of a complex context’ (Sparrow et al, 2004: 6). These contextual factors are all the more important given the significantly greater structural and strategic complexity of multinational organizations and the concomitant need for greater sensitivity to host governments, labour markets, public opinion, and local regulations, the inapplicability of home country policies and practices in certain host environments, and the impossibility of achieving uniform HR practices in all subsidiaries (Adler, 1983: 15).

Given this need to highlight the societal and institutional arrangements of specific host country contexts even the combination of the culturalist and the institutionalist/business systems approach to the study of national employment arrangements does not provide an entirely adequate framework. They are useful in highlighting macro-level structures and systems and identifying the cultural and institutional distances between different countries. However, they both fail to account for differences within societies and more importantly they tend to present a rather static view of employment arrangements (Rubery and Grimshaw 2003). Even though recent institutional change literature considers
the processes of change at the national level of analysis (Streeck and Thelen 2005) this theoretical debate has not permeated the IHRM literature and the static consideration of home and host country influences on the diffusion process. Consideration of the Pakistani managerial labour market, and the forces of changes introduced by foreign influences in general and Western MNCs in particular, highlighted evidence of both legacy and change. It is important to highlight that this change may be specifically relevant for the small but socially and economically elite managerial employee group. However, these changes do offer a useful critique of the continuing relevance, but methodological inadequacy of the culturalist and institutionalist perspective in capturing societal transitions and changes in individual employees’ attitudes and work identities.

Therefore, it is important to not only explore the link between strategy and structure of multinationals within Pakistan’s nationally distinctive societal and institutional arrangements but also to study the organizational and the individual aspects in a more interlinked form within a changing and changeable societal context. This is particularly relevant from research and practitioner points of view because both individuals’ and organizations’ perceptions of careers are evolving in response to changes in the external, and increasingly globalized, business environment. In light of this fluidity, it is important to understand which elements of internal labour markets have been meshed with the ‘new’ careers, which organizational boundaries have been crossed, changed or shifted with respect to multinationals, and the extent to which individual, organizational or institutional particularities and variations may lead to very different career perceptions and development paths in specific host contexts.
Chapter 3 – Research Strategy

3.1 Introduction

Based on the literature review and the subsequent research gaps identified in the previous chapters the broad research aim was to understand how managerial careers are played out in foreign multinationals subsidiaries in Pakistan. However, far more important was the need to address the more specific issues as to how managerial careers develop on intra-organizational and inter-organizational levels and whether organizational career structures and individual careers perceptions reflect the shift from traditional, organizational careers to a more boundaryless and protean approach. A final research objective was to explore the extent to which these perceptions, policies and practices were contingent upon the specific host environment of Pakistan.

In order to achieve these multiple research objectives a multi-level approach was adopted for the overall research strategy. At the macro-level the focus was on highlighting the interplay between multinationals’ HR policies and their implementation within the societal and institutional context of Pakistan. To this end the research instruments sought to incorporate and reflect implicit national sensibilities within the workplace. At the meso-level, an investigation of the workplace was carried out by considering the organizational structures and strategic orientations of the four chosen MNCs. Finally, the micro-level involved a company level exploration by conducting individual interviews across different departments, hierarchical positions, and different locations (where applicable) within each of the four multinationals being studied.

3.2 Research Strategy and its rationale

The overall research strategy of the project had a qualitative orientation for manifold reasons. Firstly, the multi-level approach described above was instrumental in bringing together and exploring the interplay between the
societal/institutional, the organizational and the individual perspectives; which have often been treated separately in existing literature. Moreover, the preceding literature critique also revealed that very little research is currently available on multinational operations in the South Asian context generally, and with respect to Pakistan specifically. Therefore, this study was positioned to fill these existing research gaps thereby necessitating a bottom-up, inductive approach where ‘theory is the outcome of research’, enabling the researcher to draw ‘generalizable inferences out of observations’ (Bryman and Bell 2003: 12).

Secondly, non-qualitative cross-case comparability across the four organizations was potentially problematic because very different multinationals were being considered, increasing the unlikelihood that ‘samples of respondents or organizations are equivalent’ (Bryman 2004: 53) to a significant extent. These multinationals were subject to a range of differing factors such as size, industry/sector, disparate labour and product markets, and very different competitive pressures. Rather than controlling for these differences, the four MNCs had been strategically chosen to highlight these contrasts, represent a range of organizational behaviours and contexts in order to have a richer analytical focus, and as a result complement the qualitative credentials of the study, by emphasizing ‘variables and issues… which are difficult to quantify’ (Strauss and Whitfield 1998: 15).

Moreover, it has been effectively argued by Whipp (1998) that the qualitative approach is ‘particularly appropriate for studies of culture (and) power’ (p. 58). This was an important consideration because the research sought to explore individual managerial careers within the societal/institutional and organizational confines. This research impetus was likely to be influenced by a range of implicit and explicit social, cultural, political and economic factors that permeate any research on multinationals operating in economies other than their parent countries. Research has highlighted that employment practices are influenced by home and host country cultures which are often very different from each other (Almond and Ferner 2006). Moreover, multinationals’ large size, international expertise, and the significant economic
advantages they are believed to offer to host countries (even more so in the
case of a developing economy like Pakistan) enable them to exert much more
political clout than many other organizations.

3.3 Research design: a multi-case approach

This qualitative research was based on a multiple case study research design,
with cases being chosen from four different industries - namely the oil,
banking, agro-chemical and beverage industries. The case study design was
chosen first because it complemented the overall qualitative nature of this
research allowing ‘an intensive examination of the setting’ (Bryman and Bell
2003: 54) and facilitating the inductive exploration of ‘rich data collected in context’ (Hartley, 2004: 323) by answering the how and why questions (Yin
1993, 2003; Kitay and Callus 1998). This deliberation of the organizational
and environmental ‘context’ was essential because the recent literature on
careers has conceptualized and focused on the individual employee’s perspective. Even though extensive research on career development in
organizations in general, and multinationals in particular, exists there has been
no attempt at synchronous development of the protean and boundaryless
career concepts within a range of organizational and institutional contexts. In
order to achieve the research aims, the use of the case study approach was seen
as appropriate because of its purported usefulness in ‘exploring new and emerging processes’ (Hartley 2004: 325) (such as the contemporary career values under consideration), understanding implicit, informal organizational behaviour (for instance, when increased mobility might be perceived negatively by organizations), and facilitating comparative research by ‘illuminating contrasts and similarities across… contexts’ (ibid, p. 326); namely the different types of multinationals specifically chosen to make these comparisons interesting, meaningful and generalizable.

While the choice of the four case study organizations was tempered by
practical access concerns, there was also conscious decision-making during
fieldwork to ensure a broad range of multinationals with differing
organizational structures and strategic orientations. This approach
complements Yin’s (2003) recommendation that ‘every case should serve a specific purpose within the overall scope of the inquiry’ and thereby enables the pursuit of different patterns of theoretical replication (p. 47). Three of the MNCs are American and one is French. However, because of confidentiality reasons their parent-country nationality is not explicitly highlighted in this thesis. A brief introduction of the four multinationals is given in this chapter and a more detailed comparative analysis of their HRM policies and strategic orientations is discussed in Chapter 4.

**Bank Co:** The bank’s Pakistani operations offered financial business services to the national market through two main channels: 1) the global consumer bank (which within the organization was referred to as branch banking) and 2) global corporate and investment bank (which was referred to as corporate banking). The bank had set up operations in Pakistan in 1990 and over the past two decades had been instrumental in introducing several innovations in the financial services sector (such as electronic and tele-banking, personalized and preferential banking services, commercial banking specifically geared towards small/medium enterprises and so on). While the country head office is in Karachi, the corporate banking head office is based on Lahore.

**Chemical Co:** The Company is based within the agro-chemicals industry and supplies products primarily to the agricultural sector of the country (it also caters for industrial and specialty markets to a certain extent). Chemical Co Pakistan started its function in 1978 and was formally registered in 1991. The multinational has a manufacturing location just outside the city of Lahore and this plant falls within the agricultural products group of Chemical Co’s international operations. There is also a sales office in Lahore which serves as the head office for the country, while smaller offices are located across the country’s four provinces (their size and number depending on the agricultural output and hence the market size of each province).

**Beverage Co:** The Pakistani subsidiary has been in operation since 1953 and is one of the oldest foreign MNCs in the country. The country’s head office in Lahore is divided into two parts – Beverage International Export Corporation
and Beverage Pakistan Ltd. (referred to as the ‘export side’ and ‘bottlers’ respectively within the organization). The export side is a much smaller concern in terms of employee headcount; however, it is responsible for the Pakistan and Afghanistan region and has direct functional reporting links with the regional and corporate headquarters. The bottlers comprise of a head office unit in Lahore which in turn is responsible for several manufacturing plants and territory offices (set up across Pakistan). The export side deals with more international Beverage Co issues like branding, marketing, quality control, new product development etc and the bottlers are in charge of the actual manufacturing and dissemination of the product itself.

**Energy Co:** The multinational launched its commercial operations in Pakistan in 1999 and started establishing a retail network in 2001 – that is, setting up fueling stations in partnership with local franchisees/dealers. The country head office is located in Lahore. Additionally there are four different territories within the company: the south region, the mid-country region, the central region and the north region. The regions have been demarcated on the basis of population and hence the demand for oil. In terms of size, significance and product demand the central region (of which Lahore is a part) is the largest in the country and therefore, has the largest number of oil service stations compared to the other territories.

**3.4 The data collection process**

Since the parameters of the research encompassed the individual employee, the organization and the institutional/environmental perspectives, the data collection process also adopted a multi-method and multi-perspective approach. The research relies primarily on data from interviews with individual managerial employees, augmented by interviews with employers/senior managers, in the four chosen organizations. Secondly, a questionnaire was also administered across most of the sample of individual employees considered.

This primary data gleaned through interviews was also supplemented with
relevant documentary sources. With respect to secondary data at the organizational level, access to primary data such as company policy documents was limited due to confidentiality concerns. Therefore, secondary data (such as company websites, newsletters, marketing materials and relevant information from local publications) was also used in order to create a better understanding of the different subsidiaries’ profile, history, and organizational culture/values. Secondary data sources at the national level were also deployed in order to achieve the research objective of interpreting the influence of the external labour market and the main institutional forces in Pakistan, on the multinationals’ HR policies and practices in general and managerial career development in particular. Relevant materials include official labour statistics, educational and training institutions and polices, relevant sections of employment law, data on economic growth and FDI patterns, and a cultural, historical, and political understanding of Pakistan from the available literature.

**Semi-structured Interviews**

The primary tool for data collection was in-depth, semi-structured individual interviews with both managerial employees and employers/senior managers. Semi-structured interviews were considered the most appropriate research collection method because they not only help maintain flexibility, but also help in developing and expanding theoretical frameworks (Black and Champion 1976; Whipp 1998) so that broadly defined central themes of the research can be explored in natural settings. For instance, setting out with broadly defined research themes allowed documentation of individual employees’ realized career aspirations as well as exploration of their planned short-term and long-term expectations and desired career outcomes.

This flexibility in data collection also allows detailed exploration of complex questions, making clarifications and ensuring anonymity to the respondents particularly with regard to sensitive questions (Rubin and Rubin 1995). Considering the specific theme of international career opportunities I had the flexibility to question respondents in detail on why, when, where and for how long they would want an international career opportunity; and whether they
hoped to achieve this goal within their current place of employment or a different organization.

It was also an appropriate method for discussing sensitive issues such as when and why employees would leave their employing organization, how they would rate their organization’s compensation policy with other comparable organizations, or their opinion on peer training and support; without compromising their anonymity. Finally, Bryman and Bell’s (2003) argument that semi-structured interviews are more appropriate for multiple case study research since a certain degree of structure is required ‘in order to ensure cross-case comparability’ (p. 346) also supports my overall research design.

i. Interviews with employers/senior management

In the first instance, semi-structured interviews were conducted with senior management in all four organizations in order to understand which HR policies and practices were in place in the chosen multinationals’ Pakistani subsidiaries; as well as exploring the overall international managerial orientations within these companies’ worldwide operations (see appendix 1 for interview schedule). The primary purpose of considering the employer perspective was to provide an organizational context against which individual career aspirations could be measured - i.e. whether it was possible or valid for individual managerial employees to have protean values and boundaryless attitudes within their particular organizations and also to what extent in practice they could exercise flexibility in their career choices. An added reason for exploring the organizational perspective was to understand the structural and strategic commonalities and differences between the four organizations. This highlights the importance of treating the chosen multinationals as a heterogeneous group, and underlining how elements of diversity within large international organizations can lead to very different career development policies and practices.

The semi-structured interviews at the employer level comprised of two main thematic elements. The first part of the interview focused on broad HR themes
ranging from recruitment and selection, job tenures and mobility, job quality (including pay, promotion, training and international career opportunities) to job security. The purpose of exploring these broad HR themes was to thoroughly understand each case study organization and then explore how managerial careers specifically played out within these ILMs. The second part of this interview was based on Perlmutter (1969) and Lorentz et al’s (1993) concepts and sought to explore the overall managerial orientations of each multinational.

Lorentz et al’s (1993) small-scale attitudinal survey, administered to a group of students enrolled on an international marketing course, showed that exposure to cross-cultural debates and concepts changed participants’ attitudes and made them more inclined towards geocentricism. This expanded on Perlmutter’s (1969) original theoretical work that different multinationals operated in very different ways based on their managers predominant attitudes towards a range of organizational design features which he specifically identified as: complexity of organization, authority and decision-making, evaluation and control; rewards, punishments and incentives; communication and information flow, identification, and perpetuation (recruiting, staffing and development). Therefore, the second part of the employers’ interview questioned senior managers on all seven of these organizational design elements (as identified by Perlmutter 1969) and asked them to compare the Pakistani subsidiary with their multinational’s worldwide operations. This was important in order to understand the international orientation and structure of each multinational as a whole and to see whether host, home and international factors led to any changes in senior management’s attitudes (based on the idea of attitudinal change explored in Lorentz et al’s 1993 survey). The idea of conducting the employer level interviews along two sets of interview themes was based on the desire to understand to what extent each multinational’s home country antecedents, international operations, and structural make-up had an influence on its Pakistani subsidiaries’ HR strategies. And how these HR strategies in Pakistan, in reaction either to international and/or national influences, specifically informed the policies and practices determining their managerial employees careers.
ii. Interviews with employees

In-depth semi-structured interviews were also conducted with a range of managerial employees at different levels of the organizational career ladders (ranging from senior managers to graduate trainee recruits) as well as across different departments within each organization (such as sales and marketing, HR, finance, IT, manufacturing and so on) (see appendix 2 for interview schedule). The overall premise of the research was to highlight several broad thematic concerns surrounding corporate management development and contemporary career attitudes in foreign multinationals’ Pakistani subsidiaries by trying to explore the work histories of individual managerial employees. This conceptualization of oral work histories is loosely based on the life-story approach; however, with *significant* differences in the scope and breath of information being gleaned from the respondents. For while ‘a life story is the essence of what has happened to a person. It can cover the time from birth to the present or before and beyond… … an oral history most often focuses on a specific aspect of a person’s life, such as work life’ (Atkinson 1998: 8). Therefore, the key objectives of these employee interviews were to paint a detailed picture of the managerial employees’ work-related history (ranging from relevant biographical details like educational qualifications to previous work experience, tenure times, future career expectations and so on), highlight any links between these individualized, experiential accounts and their career attitudes and expectations, and specifically explore whether protean and boundaryless career constructs (as conceptualized in existing literature - see table I.1.i) were evident in these employees’ career histories and strategies.

Based on the overall research aims, the individual employee’s understanding and experience of his/her career was key to exploring whether career attitudes have indeed evolved from traditional, organizational careers (as argued in recent literature) and semi-structured interviews allowed enough flexibility to not only explore these individual aspirations in depth but also to document the commonalities and differences in the conceptualization of careers within the considered managerial cohort. Therefore, Bryman and Bell’s (2003) argument that ‘what the interviewee views as important in explaining and understanding
events, patterns, and forms of behaviour’ (p. 343) was of particular relevance and importance with respect to employees’ interviews. In line with the themes investigated in the interviews for employers/senior managers, employee level interviews also explored the recruitment and selection process (including educational qualifications, prior work experience and personal characteristics), mobility (involving functional, upward and geographical movement), job quality (explored in terms of compensation and benefits, organizational career ladders, training and career opportunities and career advantages in the long term) and finally job security (measured from the psychological and financial points of view). Moreover, since this research was carried out during the financial crisis, economic conditions and their impact on individual career aspirations were also considered.

**Questionnaire for Individual Employees**

Finally, a questionnaire was also administered to most of the individual managerial employees interviewed (with the exception of a few employees in Chemical Co whose interviews were conducted on the telephone). The questionnaire was divided into three main sections (see appendix 3). The first section asked for general information following Adler’s (1986) approach of asking for biographical characteristics in her survey of MBA students - such as their age, sex, educational qualification(s), academic specializations, academic institutions attended, previous work experience and so on. Tarique and Schuler’s (2008) work on expatriates discovered that ‘an important bio-data predictor is prior international experience’ (p. 1402). Since the managerial employees considered in this research project could qualify as prime candidates for expatriate assignments and secondments within their own, and other, multinationals (as argued in the literature review), an additional category of international experience (as a result of work and non-work reasons) was also incorporated within this section.

The second section of the questionnaire was based on the four scales

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6 Results from a total sample of 58 useable questionnaires were tabulated to give a broad overview of employees’ career orientations along the three scales (for results see appendix 4).
developed by Briscoe et al (2006) to measure boundaryless and protean career attitudes - where the former construct sought to measure ‘boundaryless mindset’ and ‘organizational mobility preference’ and the protean construct measured ‘self-directed management’ and ‘values-driven predispositions’ (p. 32-33). After initial factor and reliability analysis the questionnaire produced by Briscoe et al (2006) had fourteen items representing protean career attitudes and 13 items for the boundaryless career attitudes scale. The reliability and stability for both boundaryless and protean attitude scales were proven by Briscoe et al’s (2006) surveys and ‘all of the subscale factors show(ed) significant relationships’ (p. 39), but because of time and space constraints the final questionnaire could not incorporate all twenty-seven items. Eventually, eight items were selected for each of the protean and boundaryless attitude scales (i.e. a total of 16 items).

Since reliability issues were not the predominant concern because of these constructs already having been tested in previous research (i.e. Briscoe et al, 2006), the decision to include which particular items was primarily based on a more subjective interpretation. Those scale items were chosen that would provide more thought-provoking responses in the specific cultural and institutional environment of Pakistan; while also making apparent boundaryless and protean career attitudes. For instance, items like ‘Ultimately, I depend upon myself to move my career forward’ and ‘I am responsible for the success or failure of my career’ were chosen because it would be interesting to see whether individual managerial employees did indeed have a self-directed approach to their careers or whether they took advantage of personal and professional networks and the culturally accepted norm of using personal and family contacts to further one’s career. Similarly, the items ‘What’s most important to me is how I feel about my career success, not how other people feel’ and ‘It doesn’t matter to me how other people evaluate the choices I make in my career’ were chosen because it would be interesting to see how this individualistic, values-driven approach worked in a collectivist, family-oriented society like Pakistan.

Finally, in the third section of the questionnaire a further nine items were
included to measure the international career orientations of individual employees by exploring their desire for international assignments and international careers (with the former representing a more short term career move and the latter signifying a medium- to long-term career decision). This was considered an essential element of the research process because it attempted to bring together the careers literature (with its focus on the ‘new’ protean and boundaryless careers) and the IHRM literature by trying to understand to what extent (and why) managerial employees regarded short-term international assignments and/or long term international careers as integral to their overall career development. Some of the items for this section were created using Adler’s (1986) list of common reasons for desiring or rejecting international experience (such as a poor/politically unstable/hostile to expatriates country of relocation, ‘inadequate medical or educational facilities’, need to learn a new language or adapt to a new culture etc) (p. 290). Once again, Adler’s (1986) survey was quite extensive and included several items.\(^7\)

However, due to space constraints, only six of these were included to measure the impact international experience would have on managerial employees’ professional careers (one of these items also measured personal ramifications). The remaining twenty-four of Adler’s items measuring ‘reasons for rejecting a foreign assignment’ were excluded because their primary focus was on why MBA students would turn down potential international job offers whereas my questionnaire was trying to measure whether managerial employees would welcome international assignments and/or careers and why. Therefore, the focus was on incorporating the main reasons Adler had identified as leading to the acceptance of international assignments. This strategy made sense because many of the employees interviewed to date had sporadic international professional experience (mostly limited to international business meetings, trainings and workshops) and were therefore being asked to extrapolate their

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\(^7\) Adler’s (1986) research does not explicitly mention the number of items in the pilot or final questionnaire. Therefore, purely based on the in-text tables I estimated that approximately 30 items were measured - apart from the section on personal characteristics of MBAs (which was incorporated in the first part of my questionnaire) and the open ended questions.
reasons for wanting an international career. An additional two items were also included in this section based on Tarique and Schuler’s (2008) adaptation of some of Adler’s (1986) items in order to specifically measure the ‘receptivity to international careers’ (as opposed to short-term international assignments). A final item included in this last section was ‘I would eventually want to settle in one country at some point in my international career’. This item was created in order to investigate the extent to which protean and boundaryless career values and attitudes (as measured in the earlier sections of the questionnaire) were significant with regards to cross-country geographical movement.

**Purpose of the Questionnaire**

The questionnaire was only distributed amongst those managerial employees who were also interviewed. It was a conscious decision to not carry out a large scale survey because the primary purpose of incorporating a third element in the data collection process was not to produce statistical results that enhanced the overall reliability of the findings. Instead the key reason for administering the questionnaires, in conjunction with the interviews, was to enhance the richness and depth of the interview based data by augmenting the work history for each interviewee; specifically focusing on each employee’s career values and attitudes. The main purpose of these questionnaires was to enhance the internal consistency and validity of the research so that ‘what is said in one part of the narrative should not contradict what is said in another part’ (Atkinson, 1998: 60). This approach allowed me to compare the accounts provided in employees’ interviews with their choices made on the attitudinal scales in the questionnaires, and then further cross reference each individual employee’s interpretation of their career against their employers HR policies, practices and structural boundaries. Each employee interview and corresponding questionnaire was designated a specific code (see Appendix 5 for information on codes). Then these managerial employees’ interview statements were cross-referenced against their questionnaire responses (on the protean, boundaryless and international career scales) to see whether individual orientations matched across both research instruments. This exhaustive process highlighted two key discrepancies.
Firstly, employees under-reported their reliance on person and family contacts to gain a foothold in their employing organizations in both interviews and questionnaires. Since research access in some of these organizations was arranged through personal contacts I was aware that a small number of the employees interviewed had relied on personal connections to get interviews, placements on management trainee schemes or internships (that they then capitalized on to gain permanent employment). However, employees did not make any reference to these strategies. This highlights the implicit, intangible and often difficult-to-measure features of traditional societal values within foreign workplaces. This is not considered particularly problematic with respect to the overall research aims because these MNCs were primarily focused on meritocracy as opposed to the seniority-based development in the national organizations. Therefore, these employees were both aware and fully appreciative of the fact that their long-term career development in these multinationals was predicated on their own individual performance rather than personal connections. Deployment of social networks was therefore an infrequent and informal career strategy for entering the ELM but subsequent survival and success was the responsibility of the individual career agent. A second issue highlighted by this process of triangulation was with regards to the question ‘I would eventually want to settle in one country at some point in my international career’ (see Appendix 5, table 3.9). Employee interviews highlighted that different employee groups had very different long-term internationalization orientations (as will be discussed in later chapters) and this item did not adequately capture the career decision of settlement in Pakistan versus settlement in a foreign country. Therefore, while this questionnaire item achieved the primary objective of corroborating individual employees’ in-depth interview responses it did not capture the complexity and directionality of the issue itself.

This attempt to deploy a third method was to some extent based on the metaphor that different individual employees and different multinationals have ‘simultaneously occurring narrative similarity and narrative difference’ (Rhodes and Pullen 2009: 591). Therefore, in order to understand any similarities and differences in career aspirations, attitudes and decisions of
managerial employees (from four different organizations), individual employees subjective interpretation was needed to document the progression of career events, give meaning to individual and organizational decisions regarding careers, and bring to the foreground ‘unstated’ and ‘unconscious’ (Rhodes and Pullen 2009) approaches to career decision making. Thus, the multi-method approach allowed me to explore the contemporary perception of careers in Pakistan from the point of view of the individual (including projected career goals beyond the current employing organization). The questionnaire measured employees’ conceptualization of their careers while the semi-structured interviews enabled a deeper exploration of the extent to which this subjective, individual assessment was tempered by different organizational structures.

However, the most important reason for incorporating a third method was to achieve triangulation and thus produce ‘a more complete, holistic and contextual portrait’ of the phenomena under study (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2005: 222). Triangulation was of great significance with respect to this research as a whole since it was not only possible as a result of the case study method’s strength to cope with multiple sources of evidence (Yin, 2003), but also because it was essential for undertaking grounded theory analysis (Lansisalmi et al, 2004). And pertaining specifically to the combined use of qualitative and quantitative data collection methods (semi-structured interviews and the questionnaires respectively) triangulation facilitated the cross-checking of data and allowed ‘access to different levels of reality’ (Bryman and Bell, 2003: 291) enabling the process of confirmatory data collection and analysis.

The Interview Process

Since fieldwork involved travelling to Pakistan, data collection was carried out in three separate stages from October 2008 to May 2010. However, in order to fully understand the organizational culture, power dynamics, the built environment and employer and employee orientations at work, interviews in each organization were fully completed before proceeding to the next one.
projected target to conduct 18-20 interviews in each organization was met for all four case studies and an overall total of 80 interviews were conducted (including employers and employees).

19 interviews were carried out in Chemical Co, 5 were with senior management and 14 were with managerial level employees. In Bank Co, a total of 23 interviews were conducted, 3 with senior management and 20 with individual employees. For Beverage Co the target of 20 was achieved, 3 interviews with senior managers and 17 with managerial employees. And finally, in Energy Co a total of 18 interviews were conducted, 2 at senior management level and 16 at the employee level. The employer-level interviews lasted between 50-75 minutes and the employee-level interviews ran on average for approximately 25-30 minutes with an additional 5 minutes for filling out the questionnaire.

Selection of Interviewees - Criteria

The sample selection criterion at the employee level was the same in all organizations - each interviewee was at least qualified to degree level, a permanent employee, and occupying a managerial level position (except in the case of three interviews with management trainees who were expected to achieve a managerial level position soon). An effort was made to have representative interviews across lower, middle and senior management levels and within different functional areas (such as HR, sales and marketing, manufacturing, IT, accounting and finance and so on). Restricting the sample exclusively to permanent, managerial employees meant that a core group of professional, white-collar workers was being considered – a group that belonged to an elite social class and to a certain extent shared educational backgrounds and social networks. This restriction in sample characteristics made for a much more interesting individual-institutional level analysis because it allowed me to better highlight the extent to which managerial

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8 References to the employer-level interviews are always qualified with their full job title while quotations from the employee interviews are identified by their codes (full details of interviewees given in Appendix 5) throughout the thesis.
employees exhibited individualistically determined career attitudes (in contrast to traditional, organizational careers) and the extent to which they negotiated these self-directed and self-managed careers within a collectivist, traditional and family oriented society.

Secondly, existing careers research provides ample justification for studying managers because as middle level professional employees, they are seen to not only bear the greatest impact of changing organizational forms but also, in the light of changing careers, managers are having to shoulder the burden of serving as the informal organizational tool for ensuring employee commitment and meeting boundaryless and protean career expectations when the organization violates its traditional obligations (Granrose and Baccili 2005). Therefore, managers not only experience greater boundarylessness themselves but they also have to manage that experience for other employees. Finally, from a practical point of view it made sense to target permanent, managerial employees who had spent a certain degree of time within their employing organization for it to have had an impact on their career development; and who also had a certain level of overall work experience in order to exhibit boundaryless and protean career attitudes.

This group tended to be concentrated in the sales and marketing side of the business because it was the more coveted functional area (in Chemical Co, Bank Co and Energy Co) and offered quicker growth; forcing greater functional considerations such as accelerated career growth, specific skills set, specific recruitment and selection criteria and so on based on functional departments. However, this could also be construed as an advantage because it allowed me to highlight whether the change in conceptualization of individual careers was truly boundaryless or whether it was circumscribed by additional organizational boundaries such as functional chimneys, increased horizontal mobility, and differences in individuals’ career experiences dependent on factors such as age group, skills set, organizational departments etc.
Interviewees selected for the senior management, employer level interviews were chosen primarily on the basis of their seniority because this allowed them to be better acquainted with the international orientation and operations of the company as a worldwide entity. Secondly, these interviewees were chosen because of sufficient exposure to, and involvement in, the HR policies and practices of the Pakistani subsidiary. For example, in Beverage Co employer level interviews were done with the Country Head for Pakistan, the HR Director for Pakistan, and the Recruitment and Development Manager. In Chemical Co, the HR Director for the Asia-Pacific region was interviewed, along with the Marketing Director for the country, the head of the manufacturing plant in Pakistan and finally the Recruitment, Training and Development Manager for Pakistan.

Location

The data collection process was largely carried out in the city of Lahore. Even though there were obvious practical considerations of ease of access, there was also tactical forethought involved in restricting fieldwork to Lahore. For the country headquarters for three of the chosen organizations - Chemical Co, Beverage Co and Energy Co were all located in Lahore. This was a distinct advantage because the headquarters not only had a higher headcount (allowing greater flexibility to target ‘ideal’ individual employees that fulfilled all the sample criteria), but also the highest concentration of managerial employees which was the specific target sample for this research project. For the final case study, Bank Co, the regional corporate headquarters was also located in Lahore which ensured a certain degree of cross-case comparability with the other organizations.

The majority of the interviews were conducted face-to-face with the exception of Chemical Co, which as an agro-chemical company catered mainly to the rural, agricultural regions of the country. Therefore, the headcount at the head office was relatively low and was supplemented by a large network of regional territories dispersed across the country’s agricultural districts. In order to fully capture the whole gamut of managerial orientations in this particular
organization, it was deemed vital to conduct interviews for some of the regional managerial level employees as well, and due to the geographical distances involved these particular interviews were conducted via telephone and the conversations were digitally recorded (as per the fieldwork procedure for the other organizations).

**Point of contact in the organizations**

How the fieldwork progressed differed between the four organizations depending on the point of entry. For Chemical Co the contact was the head of the country so all interviews (at the HQ and the regional territories) were formally arranged by the HR office. While the interviews with some of the regional managers were conducted via telephone (and therefore, after the working day had finished), the rest of them took place either in the boardroom, on the premises of the headquarters, during work hours; or in the boardroom at the manufacturing site.

For Beverage Co the contact was an assistant HR manager and therefore, all interviews were conducted within the headquarters office buildings during the working week - in the office of each interviewee. For Bank Co data collection flowed along two different trajectories. The point of contact at the corporate headquarters arranged a meeting with the Vice President of Corporate Banking who then arranged for employee level interviews within the corporate banking building during office hours. However, since a significant proportion of Bank Co operations were conducted through branch banking, interviewing managerial employees at the different branches within Lahore was also very important. Gaining access to employees at the branch banking level proved to be a more complicated procedure and the entry point was a key informant (a previous employee at Bank Co) who arranged interviews with his former colleagues/friends, and through them initiated snowballing. This arrangement meant that interviews were conducted both at the office premises and in more informal settings (such as restaurants and cafes). Finally, access in Energy Co was through one of their key clients who put me in touch with a potential gatekeeper. This contact then obtained formal approval via the HR head and subsequently arranged interviews recommended by the HR office on the
headquarter premises (in the boardroom and various meeting cubicles) as well as with some of his own personal contacts in more informal settings (i.e. public eateries) outside of working hours.

**Ethical concerns**

At the beginning of each interview, the interviewees were provided with an information sheet and a consent form (pre-approved by the university’s ethics committee). The information sheet provided a summarized version of the research project and listed the key research goals and objectives. The interviewees were then invited to ask any further questions regarding the overall project (an opportunity that many interviewees availed). They were also given the option to provide contact details if they wished to be kept up-to-date with the research results and any relevant publications (although the majority of the interviewees did not express any interest in the research project beyond the one-off interview).

The consent form detailed their confidentiality rights, assured them that their name would not be used (they would be referred to in all research output by their designation title), apprised them that they could stop the interview at any stage or chose not to answer any question, and assured them that nothing they said would be passed on to any corporate third party. I also provided them with my background as a researcher, my independence from the senior management/employers, and specifically asked for their permission to digitally record their interviews. The interview schedule for both employers and employees focused primarily on all policies, procedures, decisions and aspirations that would ultimately impact managerial career development. Themes explored included the recruitment and selection process, mobility, job quality (including pay, promotion, training and international career opportunities) and finally job security. With respect to the employee level interviews there was also an attempt to gain certain biographical information that would help in creating their work histories (as explained previously). The nature of the research project, and the primary research goal of investigating
whether career attitudes of managerial employees exhibited a more traditional, organization-oriented approach or a more amorphous and individual perspective, meant that very few issues were raised during the interview that could be regarded as sensitive information (i.e. that went beyond the work domain or that required classified organizational information). One exception to this experience was the reluctance on the part of most employees to divulge the actual amount of pay and bonuses primarily because these respondents were aware that I was doing a number of interviews within their organizations and there was a distinct lack of organizational transparency pertaining specifically to reward and remuneration. In response to this I changed this research theme and asked more general questions about their satisfaction levels with their financial package, how they would rate remuneration compared to the industry average, and the system of bonuses and employee benefits. This slight modification was not detrimental to the overall research objectives because the project is concerned with career attitudes and expectations and the questions asked above captured managerial employees financial expectations and goals fairly adequately. In conclusion, it is important to qualify at this stage that this is purely with respect to ethical concerns pertaining specifically to the data collection phase and the overall limitations of the research will be discussed later in greater detail.

3.5 Analysis

The colonial heritage of Pakistan (and its long lasting and pervasive impact on education, the class system, and the organization of work) has established English as the primary language of instruction and professional and social communication - particularly for the elite group of managerial employees under consideration. The specific organizational context of large foreign multinationals also ensured that English was the official, professional language of communication - particularly when corresponding with foreign subsidiaries. Therefore, most of the interviews were conducted in English with a few insertions of Urdu (the national language); for example when the respondent wished to draw on a particular metaphor or idiom. The only exception was Chemical Co where some interviews were conducted in the
regional territories and it was deemed appropriate to conduct the interviews in Urdu. All interviews were digitally recorded and later transcribed, and translated to English as required. Since very few of the interviews were conducted in Urdu, and since it is common practice in Pakistan to intersperse English vocabulary even when speaking in Urdu, the danger of the original meaning being lost during the translation process was mitigated to quite an extent.

Analysis was conducted using Fereday and Muir-Cochrane’s (2006) ‘combined technique of inductive and deductive thematic analysis’ (p. 81) whereby a dual approach was adopted for coding and interpreting textual data. Deductive thematic analysis was applied on the employees interview transcripts using template analysis; while a more inductive approach was taken for identifying overarching themes, and ‘building theory’ by highlighting individual, organizational and institutional/societal influences. Therefore, it can be said that the meaningful organization of raw data was driven by a deductive approach deploying an a priori template based on the broad research questions and predominant themes of the semi-structured interview schedules for employees. And the process of thematic analysis and interpretation pursued a more inductive approach (broadly based on the principles of grounded theory) by identifying patterns in the coded data - resulting in the creation of concepts and categories within and between the four data groups (created for each case study organization).

One reason for adopting this hybrid approach was because the overall research strategy and the corresponding research questions, were attempting theory building across multiple levels by incorporating and linking the micro individual, meso organizational and macro institutional dynamics. Therefore, in order to make the data set more manageable and simultaneously allow all these levels of analysis to emerge and be captured meaningfully in tandem it was considered prudent to have a two-pronged plan - based on Silverman’s (1993) recommendation that ‘the main question… in case study research, is the quality of the analysis…’ (p.22 – emphasis added).
Lansisalmi et al (2004) have argued that grounded theory is the process of ‘constant comparative analysis’ through which conceptual categories and hypotheses are developed and ‘relations between these categories and their properties’ explored in greater detail (p. 242). However, Bryman and Bell (2003) make an interesting point when they argue that ‘grounded theory is honoured more in breach than in the observance’ (p.428). Therefore, for the purposes of this research project, and its overall research objectives and strategy, it is important to clarify that certain key elements of grounded theory were used. But the theoretical framework was not applied holistically. This can be considered a source of methodological weakness yet I feel this subjective application of some of grounded theory’s essential principles is justified. Firstly, based on the divergent development of grounded theory as a methodological approach there is considerable controversy regarding what it actually entails (Charmaz, 2000). Secondly, basic elements of grounded theory like coding, theoretical sampling and saturation, memo writing and constant comparison are guidelines and researchers have the flexibility, as advocated in the original statements of Glaser and Strauss (1967), to adopt and adapt these guidelines in line with their own methodological stance and strategy. Most importantly, Charmaz (2006) has argued that ‘grounded theory methods can complement other approaches to qualitative data analysis, rather than stand in opposition to them’ and instead of having to claim complete ‘grounded theory allegiance’ it is perfectly reasonable to reference only ‘specific aspects of the approach’ (p. 18).

Working from this position of interpretive flexibility, template analysis was deployed at the initial stages of analysis in order to reap certain benefits of this particular analytical approach. Firstly, the template technique augmented the broadly constructivist, phenomenological approach of this research. Secondly, it allowed the flexibility to tailor the process of organizing raw data according to my overall research requirements of identifying the relationships between themes predominantly pertaining to careers. Template analysis also acknowledges the importance of context which was a primary consideration since this research sought to investigate whether career orientations and managerial career development were sensitive to contextual factors such as
organizational and institutional/societal influences. Finally, template analysis was chosen for the initial organization of data because it is not only conducive to handling relatively large data sets of qualitative research, but also facilitates ‘within and across analysis’ (King, 2004: 257).

**Template Analysis**

In line with the template approach a hierarchical coding structure, with three levels of codes, was created to organize employees interviews for subsequent interpretation (see figure 2 for final template). The initial template was developed a priori based on the assumption that ‘the best starting point for constructing an initial template is the interview topic guide - the set of question areas, probes and prompts used by the interviewer’ (King, 2004: 259). The semi-structured interview schedule in turn as discussed previously was based primarily on a review of the existing academic literature pertaining to the current conceptualization of careers and career development in organizations and foreign multinationals specifically. The final template incorporated very few changes within the initial template. For instance, during the process of transcription, and continuous engagement with the interview data, two additional level-three codes (2iib and 2ivb) were added to the final version because they featured in a number of interviews.

The main themes of the employees interview schedule served as the higher order codes (i.e. level-one codes), while subsidiary, probing questions and sub-themes were the lower order codes (that is, level-two and level-three codes). The final template comprised of four higher order codes (i.e. ‘Employee specifications’, ‘Mobility’, ‘Job quality’ and ‘External factors’). The number of level-two (and in some cases level-three) codes within these higher order codes underlines that the most important codes with respect to the central research issues were the second and third level-one codes of ‘Mobility’ and ‘Job quality’.

As seen in the figure the first level-one code is ‘Employee specifications’ which had three level-two codes. This code was created to investigate whether
individual particulars had any impact on managerial employees’ subsequent career attitudes and career development.

**Figure 2: Final Template for Managerial Career Development**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Employee Specifications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i. Educational background</td>
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<tr>
<td>ii. Work experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii. Reason for joining current employing organization</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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<tr>
<th>2. Mobility</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i. Functional/departmental/sectoral mobility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. Geographical mobility within the employing organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Short term mobility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Long term mobility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Within Pakistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Outside Pakistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii. Geographical mobility outside the employing organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) In previous job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Personal/non-work international movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv. Projected/future mobility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) International career expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Cross-sector and/or industry movements</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. Job Quality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i. Pay and employee benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. Promotion &amp; career development within the employing organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Horizontal/functional movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Vertical/upward movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Average time per promotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii. Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Formal training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Informal training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Desired training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv. Job security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Financial security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Psychological security</td>
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</table>

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<tr>
<th>4. External Factors</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i. Political conditions</td>
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<tr>
<td>ii. Economic conditions</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The second level-one code of ‘Mobility’ comprised four level-two codes (1. Functional mobility, 2. Geographical mobility within the employing organization, 3. Geographical mobility outside the employing organization and 4. Projected/future mobility) that in turn had quite a few level-three codes. This research theme was of particular importance because boundaryless careers are purported to reduce boundaries within and between organizations, while protean career values are supposed to increase individual volition regarding career choices in the present and the future. In line with the research aims it was important to understand whether these career concepts were reflected in increased intra- and inter-organizational mobility and whether there was a difference between actual and intended career mobility. Therefore, this particular code had to be developed more extensively and fine tuned because it ‘required a more finely-grained analysis’ (King, 2004: 261). Similarly, the third level-one code of ‘Job Quality’ also contained four level-two codes (1. Pay & financial benefits, 2. Promotion & career development, 3. Training and 4. Job security) with several corresponding level-three codes. This particular level-one code was also of increased significance with respect to the overall research project because it not only highlighted the experiences of individual managerial employees within their employing organizations but also the organizational factors that seemed to have an impact on their boundaryless, protean and international career attitudes and expectations.

Finally, the fourth level-one code of ‘External factors’ sought to understand whether the political conditions of the country (and the sporadic inflammation of anti-foreign sentiments) and the economic conditions (specifically the world-wide recession) had any influence on career expectations and decisions. While this had been hypothesized as an important issue prior to fieldwork, the responses from interviewees suggested otherwise. The majority of the respondents considered both issues as short-term denominators with little
lasting impact on their careers and hence, this particular code was only subdivided to include two level-two codes. Once these codes had been identified and developed, the transcribed text was then inserted into the pre-existing template/codebook with the primary intention of identifying the more meaningful and directly relevant sections of the raw data. Four codebooks were created so that data from each organization could be organized systematically and thoroughly.

**Application of grounded theory’s methodological precepts**

The next stages involved identifying patterns in the coded data using an inductive approach - resulting in the creation of themes and sub-themes within and between the four data groups (representing the four organizations). For example, the process involved identifying segments of the transcribed text which were directly relevant to aspects of contemporary, boundaryless careers and/or reflecting elements of traditional, organizational careers. These features of careers were further sorted and coded to identify those specific themes and sub-themes that highlighted the interplay of the individual, organizational and institutional forces respectively.

Following Charmaz’s (2006) recommendation of adopting ‘flexible guidelines, not methodological rules, recipes and requirements’ (p. 17) certain key principles of grounded theory were applied during this stage of the analytical process. To this end the grounded theory tool of theoretical sampling had already been applied iteratively in choosing the case study organizations in order to consider multinationals exhibiting a range of organizational characteristics (based on Perlmutter’s 1969 classification) so that data analysis could be rich, dense and varied. Secondly, once data was organized into a pre-formulated template, interpretive coding based on grounded theory principles was conducted on these data sets to not only explore categories like protean values, boundaryless careers and international career expectations (pre-defined through the literature review); but also to highlight any tension between traditional and contemporary careers and most importantly to understand and establish links between individual careers and
organizational and institutional structures that are under-developed in existing literature.

The feature of constant comparative analysis was also used to develop conceptual similarities and differences within and between the four case-study organizations. For instance, this part of the analytical process helped highlight the extent to which protean and boundaryless career attitudes differed for employees in different departments, how international career expectations varied across different types of multinationals and so on. Links between employees and employers interviews, supplemented with secondary data (such as company websites, field notes, media reports etc.) were also made at this stage of the analytical process in order to construct an overall picture of careers and career development in the chosen multinationals.

3.6 Limitations

Since the majority of the interviews in all four organizations were conducted with the explicit or implicit knowledge and approval of senior management (augmented by the fact that employees knew their senior managers were also interviewed), one limitation could be that the respondents might have been cautious in sharing information with me. This problem was mitigated to an extent because my interview themes did not probe them on any sensitive organizational information and focused primarily on their individual attitudes and experiences (as discussed previously). Secondly, in three of the case study organizations (i.e. excluding Chemical Co) interviews were arranged through gatekeepers and my identity as a researcher was therefore primarily seen as socially aligned with these key informants (who in turn were their own colleagues and friends) rather than as a formal representative of senior management. Much more importantly, there was less danger of respondents withholding key information from me (perhaps because of my contact with senior management) because of their elite status within their employing organizations (based on their education, organizational performance, social stature and extensive personal and professional networks). These characteristics made the employees less fearful of repercussions and
underlined their sense of entitlement in freely highlighting organizational shortcomings pertaining to their own careers – such as insufficient provision of on-the-job training, lack of international career opportunities, lower financial rewards as compared to the industry average, etc. In fact, in several cases interviewees explicitly told me that they had already highlighted the same issues they discussed with me in their annual performance appraisals and development plans. The only exception was the data collection in Chemical Co. Since I was conducting interviews on the direct endorsement of the country manager (and all interviewees had been informed of this fact prior to their interviews) this might have been a potential problem. However, interestingly Chemical Co was also the most meritocratic of all four case study organizations and almost all employees cited performance as the only criteria for career growth and development – indicating a relatively high degree of confidence and security as high performing employees. Moreover, interviews were conducted at the head office, the manufacturing plant and the regional sales office in an attempt to allow differing opinions and attitudes to emerge irrespective of my perceived relationship with senior management.

Since this research aimed to consider careers within the specific organizational context of foreign multinationals, a more vital methodological limitation could be that the home country perspective was not incorporated into the research. This was primarily impossible because of practical concerns like access issues and time, financial and travelling limitations. Moreover, the nature of the research objectives entailed deliberately selecting case study organizations representing a mix of different career types and structures at the cost of controlling for the home country variable. This approach could be justified to some extent on the grounds that interviews with senior management revealed the important role regional headquarters played in terms of strategic alignment, orientation and communication. Therefore, any discussion incorporating home countries institutional structures would have also required a commensurate discussion at the regional level (in order to delineate between home, host and regional influences and values) and such an approach was outside the purview of this research project.
Chapter 4 Organizational case studies - business strategies and staffing orientations

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a descriptive, comparative overview of the four case-study organizations to set the context for the analysis chapters. Firstly, the key similarities and differences between the practice and implementation of different HR policies are highlighted (see table II.1.i). Secondly, a cross-case comparative analysis of these foreign subsidiaries’ organizational structures (broadly based on Perlmutter’s 1969 international staffing orientations) will be considered. The key objective of this chapter is to explore any structural distinctions between these MNCs and the subsequent impact on the HRM systems implemented.

Recruitment and selection

Subtle differences were evident across the four organizations with regards to the kind of candidates hired during the recruitment and selection stage. Bank Co appeared to have the youngest cohort out of all four organizations. This could be attributed to the pyramid-like organizational structure and the nature of the job distribution that predominantly favoured sales jobs – resulting in the availability of a large number of entry-level positions for fresh, young business graduates who would not need a lot of specific training to execute the sales function of their job. However, a predominantly larger sales force also meant that the nature of the job, the associated stress, higher performance targets and greater competitiveness resulted in fairly high movement of younger managers in and out of the organization. This was implicitly condoned by the senior management because new recruits could be counted on to constantly bolster the high energy, high performance and high motivation organizational culture.
### Table II.1.i Comparative Overview of Case Study Organizations HR Policies & Practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bank Co</th>
<th>Chemical Co</th>
<th>Beverage Co</th>
<th>Energy Co</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recruitment &amp; Selection</strong></td>
<td><strong>Demographics</strong></td>
<td><strong>Educational Qualifications</strong></td>
<td><strong>Prior Work Experience</strong></td>
<td><strong>Mobility</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Majority males (but with a better representation of females) – v between the ages of 25-50 years.</td>
<td>Strong focus on diversity – actively seek employees with different degrees (from bachelors to PhD’s) from different educational institutions.</td>
<td>Varies for different positions. Overall company preference to hire fresh graduates for entry level jobs.</td>
<td>Set career ladder. 4 years average stay in each position. Relatively slower career progression. Promotion linked to performance in current job role &amp; potential for future job role.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Majority males (but with a better representation of females) – between the ages of 21-40 years.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mobility</strong></td>
<td><strong>Upward Mobility</strong></td>
<td><strong>Modality</strong></td>
<td><strong>Modality</strong></td>
<td><strong>Modality</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Well-defined policies.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Pyramid-like career structure.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Promotion dependent upon individual performance.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Formal, but flexible, career ladder.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Accelerated career paths for high-performers. Promotion dependent upon individual performance.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Export Side: well defined, individualized career ladders. Promotion based on personality, performance &amp; position availability. Bottlers Pakistan: an</td>
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⁹ Fmcg – ‘fast moving consumer goods’
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. Functional Mobility</th>
<th>Movement from low profile departments (i.e. IT, services, HR etc) to high profile ones (for e.g.: sales/liabilities function).</th>
<th>Very limited functional mobility.</th>
<th>Export side: very open to functional mobility (formally listed in career development plans). Bottlers Pak.: some possibility of functional moves.</th>
<th>Strong corporate focus on parallel, functional movements. Functional moves tied to vertical movement.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. Geographical Mobility</td>
<td>Limited geographical mobility in back-end, support functions. Greater cross-country movement for other functional units. Very limited international moves for Pakistani employees in current climate.</td>
<td>Extensive movement within and outside country (largely on a short-term basis). Also some examples of long-term expatriation of Pakistani employees.</td>
<td>Export side: rare within Pakistan, mostly international moves (long-term &amp; short-term). Bottlers Pak.: very rare international moves, mobility mostly within Pakistan (for certain functions, e.g. finance).</td>
<td>Geo. mobility within Pakistan necessary for career progression (particularly for functions like sales, development, etc.) International moves possible but limited and highly competitive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay &amp; Employee Benefits</td>
<td>Pay at industry average(^\text{10}), lower compared to local banks. Employee benefits better than industry average.</td>
<td>Overall compensation package rated higher than industry average. Senior managers paid in foreign currency.</td>
<td>Export side &amp; Bottlers Pakistan both offer competitive wages (in the 60(^\text{th}) percentile of overall market). Extensive provision of employee benefits. Status markers also awarded at higher positions.</td>
<td>Pay at industry average. Extensive provision &amp; coverage of employee benefits.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{\text{10}}\) Most of the MNCs studied calculated the industry average based on what other MNCs offered and tended to exclude large public sector organizations in their industry/sector.
| Training | 1. Formal Training | Regular formal training courses. Training for branch employees largely organization-specific. Formal training organized along 2 tiers – a) in accordance with home country standards/policies, b) general training (organized by Pakistani HR). Focus on formal training more than competitors in financial sector. | Minimal – not seen as a source of value addition. Very senior management offered limited international training opportunities. Export side: Extensive & frequent formal training through own international university involving international travel. Bottlers Pakistan: International training programs adapted for Pakistani context & held in the country. Employees at key or senior positions sent on training abroad. Dual training system: 1) training required for specific job roles, 2) training required for individual career paths. Training courses both delivered in-house and outsourced. Trainings mostly offered within country, senior managers/HIPOs\(^{11}\) offered rare international training opportunities. |
| 2. Informal Training | Organizational culture of extensive on-the-job training. | Extensive on-the-job, informal, individualised training. Seen as more appropriate than standardized, formal training within the overall organizational culture. Export side: Limited informal training only in specific functions. Bottlers Pakistan: Provision of informal training only after geographical or functional moves. | Well-established and extensive orientation programme but limited subsequent on-the-job support systems. |
| Job Security | Formal policy links job security to individual & organizational performance. However, social & cultural factors inhibit firing & encourage retention. | Job security linked to individual performance. Psychological security & retention high – because very lean structure makes employees valuable resources. High job security despite recession and organizational restructuring. Active initiatives undertaken by HR to address any employee security concerns. Focus on long-term strategic thinking, organizational stability & consolidation encourages job security. |
In Chemical Co a slightly different picture emerged. The demographic make-up of the organization tended to be skewed towards the two age extremes as there was a large group of fairly young employees and another group of fairly older employees. This could be because senior management had introduced radical changes within the organization in recent years which, with respect to the older cohort, meant that only those previous employees were retained that showed consistently high performance and more importantly were willing and capable of adapting to organizational change. The younger employees could be justified because, as in Bank Co, Chemical Co also had a relatively large sales force and there was an explicit organizational strategy to hire ‘young blood’ who were ambitious (for both themselves and the organization), could achieve the new performance objectives the senior management had outlined in their long-term strategic agenda, and finally, who could be specifically moulded and trained from the very beginning to follow specific organizational standards and procedures (the hazardous nature of the industry and the products meant that both national and international safety regulations had to be followed). More importantly, across both demographic cohorts there was explicit preference for matching educational qualifications (and work experience for more senior positions) as closely as possible with job roles and functional specializations. The HR head for the Asia-Pacific region argued for this specialist background because,

…if you don’t understand the hard core business I think it becomes a little bit tough for the person… more from a customer-based standpoint because mostly your customers are your farmers and… so in order to build that kind of rapport and relationship you kind of need a little bit of that background…

With respect to Beverage Co several distinctions were visible between the export side and the bottlers limited. On the export side, older employees were brought in at relatively higher management positions with considerable work experience in other foreign multinationals, specifically in the fast moving consumer goods (fmcg) sector. This was a business necessity because the export side followed functional reporting whereby a very lean headcount comprising of senior managers only was directly reporting to functional heads in the regional headquarters (in Turkey) and/or the corporate headquarters.
This frequent cross-border exchange at such senior management levels within the international Beverage Co structure meant these managers on the export side needed to have the pre-requisite experience and skills to execute their job roles and associated job demands. However, on the bottlers’ side there was a more traditional organizational hierarchy with managers at junior, middle and senior positions. This organizational order had undergone recent changes because a management trainee (MT) programme had been launched the year before resulting in the influx of younger candidates. The MT programme was specifically launched as part of the recent organizational restructuring initiated by the Turkish headquarters in order to increase focus on succession planning and long-term strategic goals. However, the similarity across the export corporation and the Pakistani bottlers was that while there was a preference for candidates with business degrees (graduate or entry positions and MBA’s for senior management levels), there was also a focus on the potential or demonstrated ‘skills’ set and whether the employee would ‘fit’ in the organization.

Finally, Energy Co had a relatively more consistent distribution of employees across different functions and different hierarchical levels attributable to several organizational idiosyncrasies. Energy Co had set up business in Pakistan only a few years ago (1999) and initially the very top management levels had been foreign expatriates. Over time these expatriates had been replaced with national managers who had originally been recruited at middle management levels (apart from the CEO and heads of the two strategically important departments of sales and development who were foreign expatriates). This natural and considered progression of management across the organizational hierarchy meant that Energy Co was able to observe its international preference of recruiting younger candidates at entry level positions and favouring internal promotion for mid-tier and senior level positions. This not only fulfilled the organizational objective of increased retention in the long term but also contributed to a more stable employee make-up (in terms of age, educational qualifications and work experience). The HR country manager for Pakistan explicitly stated that,
Mostly… we hire fresh graduates. We give first priority to internal candidates for any positions that are above the initial managerial level. Which means that we keep on recruiting primarily at the initial level and that is the basis for growth up the ladder…

One additional factor that was interesting with regards to an organizational overview of the recruitment and selection phase was the gender composition in all four multinationals. Female labour participation across the country is very low, particularly when compared to similar developing economies in general and countries within the South Asian region in particular. Coleman (2004) cited United Nations Population Fund statistics to argue that the country’s ‘female formal labour force participation rate hovers around 15 per cent’ and therefore, is very low ‘in an absolute sense and relative to other countries with similar per capita GDP’ (n.p.). This unequal participation of women in the workforce is also evident in the managerial labour market and the overall number of female managers in all the organizations was very low. Nevertheless, there were slight variations in female employment across the four multinationals. Chemical Co had the lowest female headcount with only a handful of females at the head office and next to none in the regional offices across the country. This was primarily attributed to the male-dominated agricultural/chemical industry and the nature of the predominantly higher sales jobs which required extensive travel within the country, and extensive contact with a rural (and once again predominantly male) customer base. The lack of female managers particularly in the sales/marketing and manufacturing divisions was symptomatic of cultural attitudes and inhibitors rather than an organizational policy per se.

Female employment was relatively higher in Bank Co but once again with functional restrictions. Female employees were unlikely to hold sales positions at branch banking (which was the principal job role at the branch level), primarily because of the nature of the job (long hours and extensive contact with mostly male clients). However, female managers were a relatively more significant force at the corporate, commercial and administrative levels. It was a similar story in Energy Co where females were visible across all departments from marketing, HR, finance, I.T. to administration apart from the commercial/retail side of the business which dealt with service stations and
sites, required extensive travelling to regional territories, extensive contacts with dealers, engineers, site employees and customers (majority of whom were males) and entailed considerable geographical relocation as part of their career progression. The difference between Bank Co and Energy Co was that the latter, despite job role constraints, acknowledged and actively responded to this inequality in gender composition by trying to implement a diversity and equality policy. Finally, Beverage Co had the best female employment figures (although there was still significant variance between head office where the interviews were conducted and regional offices – called ‘territories’ across the country). Once again this was because the multinational actively tried to implement international corporate diversity and equality initiatives in the Pakistani subsidiary with regular mandatory ‘awareness sessions’ around issues like gender sensitivization. Secondly, there were fewer sales jobs that might have precluded the possibility of female employees and, finally, even for sales and marketing positions the job requirements were very different. Travel, site visits, and customer interaction was often team based (and therefore included male colleagues) but more importantly dealt with a very different segment of society where female presence was neither problematic nor surprising.

**Mobility**

Mobility in Bank Co was based primarily on individual performance – evaluated through employee performance appraisals twice a year. However, despite this pervasive meritocratic culture, the time taken to move between different hierarchical levels varied across different business areas and functions. Managerial employees based on the sales side of branch banking had the fastest career progression across the organization and high performers in this cohort were also able to enjoy further accelerated career growth - by either skipping levels or spending less time than the organizational average within each position. For instance, a sales executive within branch banking had enjoyed accelerated promotions and stated, ‘I moved along the (set) ladder… (but) I took less time… I got promoted after 4 months… mostly people don’t… they take around a year, two years…’. The picture was very
different for other business and functional areas. The corporate/commercial jobs were classified as second-best in terms of career progression (with each step taking a year or 2 longer than for the branch based sales managers) with steady progression across levels without any precedent of skipping levels (high performers were rewarded only in terms of financial benefits and bonuses). Finally, career progression for back-end functions like HR, IT, internal auditing, coordination of services etc was the slowest and each position entailed at least 3-5 years.

This upward mobility across functions and business areas also had an impact on the functional and geographical mobility. Sales managers within branch banking saw the highest geographical movements because quick progression meant they were moved whenever a new branch/position opened (across Pakistan). However, this particular group had the lowest incidence of functional movement, primarily because they were seen as occupying coveted positions and movement to another functional area might entail promotion in formal organizational terms but was regarded as a downward movement informally based on the underlying hierarchy. The corporate (and even commercial) banking managerial employees had relatively more circumscribed, and infrequent, geographical movements predominantly between the two regional headquarters within the country (in Lahore and Islamabad respectively) and the head office for Pakistan (which was based in Karachi). However, their chances of international movement were the highest across the organization because of the higher commensurability of their job roles with Bank Co operations abroad. Their functional movement was also higher and more diversified because there were a lot of business areas to move between within corporate and commercial banking (such as treasury, trade, global corporate banking, securities etc). In fact a diversified portfolio across these business areas was seen as a pre-requisite for sustained upward mobility. Finally, managerial employees based within the administrative and support functions had the least amount of geographical mobility, with almost no expectation of international moves. However, if specific candidates exhibited exceptional talent for another role, there were possibilities of being moved to the more high-profile areas like sales, liabilities or commercial banking.
Initially these moves entailed starting at an entry level position (despite being at a higher grade in their previous function). However, a successful transition was implicitly regarded as upward mobility because of movement to a more high-profile department with better long-term career opportunities.

Chemical Co had a formal, well-defined career path for its managerial employees. However, there was also considerable room for flexibility – for instance, HIPOs (high-performing employees) were formally identified and rewarded with faster career progression. Since promotion was entirely based on on-the-job performance (employer and employee interviews unanimously underlined performance as the only variable determining promotion) all employees at different hierarchical positions and in different functional areas were given the same promise of opportunities for promotion. But as Chemical Co was a very lean organization, structural issues constrained the organization’s ability to fulfil this promise equally for all employees. For instance, the HR and administration department had only two employees and therefore not enough levels for extensive career progression. Similarly, the manufacturing plant had very few managerial positions, and these plant-based managers were further circumscribed by their specialist educational qualifications and skills set to progress upwards at the same rate as the sales and marketing managers. Moreover, because of the nature of the industry (and the associated strict health and safety standards) and the well-structured recruitment and selection process as well as specific targets tied to different functional areas there was very little movement across different departments. Finally, managerial employees in Chemical Co were offered extensive short term international movements (mostly in the form of regional corporate conferences, workshops, cross-subsidiary visits, and trainings along with a few cases of international assignments) and there were several examples of Pakistani employees that had been relocated permanently to other international subsidiaries. Therefore, both short-term and long term international career opportunities were available for Chemical Co managerial employees.

Upward mobility in Beverage Co, for both the export and bottling partners, was along a well-established career ladder and while performance was a key
determinant, other factors such as personality and ambition, relationship with senior management, time spent within each position, etc were also cited as important by both employers and employees. Moreover, Beverage Co had a well established, well publicized HIPO programme and these particular employees had accelerated career paths in relation to the managerial cohort as a whole. In terms of functional mobility the Pakistani bottling side of the company was open to moves across departments only where there was a clearly demonstrated potential. However, on the export side functional moves were a pre-requisite for further upward mobility. As a result 2-3 potential functional moves were discussed in each managerial employee’s annual PDP (personal development plan) and depending on the availability of positions, and the preferred career direction, employees were often given short- to medium-term opportunities to work in other functional areas in order to diversify their skills set and gain experience in all the key business functions. The country HR manager for Beverage Co’s export corporation considered these movements ‘a joint venture between the employee and the employer’ and after citing several examples of functional mobility argued that ‘we strongly believe that if somebody can do something better in another department we normally provide them with that opportunity’.

As the management on the export side was at very senior positions, directly reporting to the regional and corporate headquarters, there was no scope for upward mobility within the country and any geographical moves were bound to be international – with several examples cited from recent years, primarily because of the recent within-company takeover by the Turkish operations. Moreover, even for the Pakistani bottling concern, since the Lahore office was the country headquarters, movement to ‘territories’ within Pakistan was implicitly seen as a disadvantage and additionally denoted a reduction in job role and responsibilities. Therefore, while there was movement from territories to the Lahore head office, there was very little movement vice versa. The only exception was specific functional areas such as finance and engineering where upward movement required some degree of geographical movement within the country. Moreover, for both partner organizations short-term international movements (primarily for strategy meetings, functional conferences, trainings,
workshops, seminars and on-site learning visits) were quite frequent for middle to senior management, with the strong possibility of permanent relocation (particularly at the regional HQ level in Turkey) for the more outstanding candidates.

Compared to the other three case study organizations, Energy Co had the most well-structured career ladder, with well-defined hierarchical positions, a set time for progression across each level, and a much slower overall rate of progression. The recruitment and selection manager described the process of upward movement as a fairly regulated procedure,

… 3-5 years is the standard time that is required to stay in each role… that is the basic that is required… to pass through that stress and strain because you don’t get experience overnight… 365 days is needed… and then 600 days are needed on top of that… until you have been in it for 3-5 years… we have a set career ladder and this is one thing we discuss explicitly in interviews as well… we tell our candidates upfront that this is how it works here…

The focus in this organization was on maintaining a stable internal labour market which meant far greater emphasis on internal promotions and retention. One way of achieving these organizational goals was by offering extensive and regular functional mobility (on average every 3-4 years) for all managerial employees irrespective of their current functional department. In fact, functional mobility and geographical movement within the country were explicitly tied to upward career progression. The country HR manager argued that ‘this is a big big challenge in career… they (employees) don’t have a mobile mindset and at the same time they want to grow…’

**Pay and employee benefits**

The anomaly with regards to pay and overall financial package was Chemical Co which paid far higher than the industry average. The organizational rationale for this was that as a lean organization it had a very low headcount and therefore, required its employees to not only work more but take on additional responsibilities outside the scope of their formal job descriptions. Secondly, the organization made concerted efforts to maintain high retention rates in order to sustain its ambitious expansion and growth plans. For both
these reasons there was strong organizational justification to provide higher than average financial compensation for its employees. Informal discussions with some of the respondents also revealed that the company policy to pay in foreign currency across all international subsidiaries also had a very positive impact on the overall pay in Pakistan specifically because of a favourable exchange rate. The other three organizations were ranked at the industry average by both employees and senior management/employers. It was interesting to note that Bank Co, Beverage Co and Energy Co in calculating the industry average for pay only considered multinational counterparts. This was not problematic for Beverage Co because the only other dominant market player was also a multinational but for the other two organizations this was an important consideration because national banks and the national oil and gas company were too large (in terms of size, labour force, market share and financial compensation of managerial staff) to serve as comparative counterparts.

All four organizations offered extensive employee benefits that were rated as far higher than the industry average by both employers and employees. The focus on benefits provision was seen to partly cover the gap in compensation with other competitor organizations (particularly large national concerns). Secondly, it was seen as a feature of the multinationals’ international organizational culture that was particularly appropriate for replication in the Pakistani business environment in general, and the managerial elite in particular, with societal appreciation of status markers and class symbols. Finally, an interesting insight with regards to the compensation strategy of these multinationals was the organizational and employee appreciation of more intrinsic, less quantifiable rewards (such as working environments/organizational cultures, learning opportunities, meritocracy, increased employability/marketability in the external labour market because of work experience in a foreign MNC etc.) that offered symbolic advantages not available to the same extent to their counterparts in higher paying national organizations.
Training

Bank Co had a strong focus on formal training (both general and firm-specific). There was also extensive on-the-job development as part of the organizational culture and senior managers engaged in extensive informal mentoring of managers working under them. This held true for all the organizational layers and it was formalized by creating a two-pronged performance evaluation system where employees were assessed on the basis of their individual performance, and if they were senior enough also on the basis of their team’s performance. This meant that both middle and senior management had vested interests in investing in the on-the-job training of their employees. This focus on informal learning and coaching applied across almost all functions and business areas of the organization and was seen as an integral part of the organization’s overall culture. Moreover, as compared to competitor banks, particularly local banks, there was also a lot more emphasis on formal training which included specialized training courses on the bank’s products, financial regulations, liabilities, service trainings, etc. Apart from these specialist courses, regular trainings on ‘soft skills’ were provided in areas like time and stress management, communication, customer interaction and so on (see Appendix 6).

The situation in Chemical Co was very different and the provision of formal training was substantially less than in the other multinationals. This was the approach taken by Chemical Co subsidiaries world-wide because training was not seen as an area of value addition for the multinational as a whole. The only exception was extensive training on health and safety protocols (because of the dangerous nature of the products) and both home country and Pakistani product and industry rules and regulations were formally disseminated on a regular basis. However, the overall relatively lower focus on formalized training was off-set by extensive on-the-job, informal training and learning. All senior managers routinely held one-on-one and team-based sessions with employees from their specific functions to provide any requisite training or support. Similarly, many team-based activities were in place where chosen managerial staff engaged with very senior management in brainstorming and
strategy-building sessions. The organization seemed to make a conscious effort to nurture an informal, open culture where support, learning and training was an ongoing process across all levels of the organizational hierarchy.

The picture in Beverage Co was almost exactly opposite to the approach taken in Chemical Co. There was little to no on-the-job training and apart from the formal orientation programme individual employees were largely left to their own devices. A senior HR manager within bottlers Pakistan said that ‘informal training generally happens when people switch from different locations … so anytime a person is selected internally that’s the first thing we do… we have on-the-job training…’ There were some exceptions to this rule where some employees’ senior managers had taken the initiative on their own to provide mentorship for their junior team members. However, this was an individual prerogative predicated entirely on the personality type of the senior manager in question. This lack of on-the-job, informal training was an issue HR departments across both the export side and the bottlers considered a distinct organizational weakness. However, this approach was defended to some extent on the basis of extensive provision of online training courses via the Beverage Co worldwide web forum.

The employees could not only take online web-based courses but there was also fairly extensive provision of formal training for all managerial employees. For the export side formal trainings were arranged by Beverage Co’s ‘international university’ at different, international locations for employees from across the world – an approach that ensured consistency and transparency across the multinational’s world-wide operations. The country HR manager for the export side of Beverage Co. described the process of training as follows:

… we have a proper university and it… arranges courses for all the candidates in different locations according to their requirements. These courses are basically tailor-made and designed according to (organizational) requirements and it’s a huge circle of people who are working on the development of the courses… and once these courses are developed they are published on the university website… everybody has no limit for training in Beverage Co. We spend and focus a lot on training.
Training for senior and middle management on the Pakistani bottlers’ side were also arranged by the international university. However, for the remaining organizational layers relevant international training courses were adapted and provided within Pakistan – either in-house by HR, by Pakistani training specialists or by foreigners flown in specifically to deliver short workshops and training courses. It is important to highlight that while lower level managers and other employees’ training was mostly based in Pakistan, the frequency and range of this training was quite extensive.

Finally, Energy Co had a dual approach for formal training. Firstly, trainings were provided that specifically targeted the employees’ current job roles so that they could achieve their performance targets and yearly objectives. Secondly, because of the greater incidence of functional moves, and the formal career development plans that charted all possible departmental switches for each individual manager, employees were also provided with training that would better equip them for their next job role in a different department. Interestingly, employer interviews claimed that there was extensive organizational focus on on-the-job training and senior managers for each function had developed informal training programmes that they arranged ad hoc for the employees within and outside their departments. For instance, the HR head had asked his legal manager to develop a training specifically designed for the sales staff since they had extensive interaction with dealers and customers. Similar informal sessions were also said to be arranged by other department heads like engineering, finance etc. However, employee accounts reported variable satisfaction levels with mixed claims of high or low on-the-job support from their immediate line managers. Lastly, additional individualized trainings were also arranged (either in-house or external) for those candidates that needed improvement in their general skills set such as using Excel, writing reports, giving presentations and so on.
Job Security

Formally job security was directly linked to individual (and to some extent organizational) performance across all four case study organizations. Bank Co employees’ reported comparatively higher rates of uncertainty because of worldwide recession and the large number of layoffs that had been initiated in the multinational’s international subsidiaries. However, despite employees’ low psychological security, Bank Co Pakistan had not actively initiated any rationalization schemes. Job security in Chemical Co was also linked to individual performance but retention rates at the time of interviews were quite high and the number of layoffs very low as it already had a very lean organizational structure. More importantly, the Pakistani subsidiary had been enjoying exceptional growth rates. On the other hand, employees in Beverage Co expressed job security concerns because of the recession (and its impact on overall sales compared to previous years) and organizational restructuring after acquisition by the Turkish HQ. However, management had made concerted efforts to assure employees that their jobs were safe and rather than layoffs, the restructuring had actually led to a recruitment drive. Finally, Energy Co’s entire HR ethos was predicated on the notion of long-term retention and a stable internal labour market. Therefore, the organization very rarely initiated layoffs and instead pursued a much more cautious and considered approach during the recruitment phase. This meant that the existing managerial employees were relatively sheltered from labour or product market exigencies.

4.2 A cross-case comparison of subsidiary-level structures and staffing orientations

Perlmutter (1969) and Heenan and Perlmutter (1979) have argued that organizational structures and the degree of ‘multinationality’ of different MNCs can be determined by examining senior managements’ ‘orientation towards “foreign people, ideas, resources,” in headquarters and subsidiaries’ (Bartlett and Beamish 2011: 87). To this end they identified four dominant types of HQ orientations, that is polycentrism, ethnocentrism, geocentrism and
regio-centrism that co-determined the ‘attitudinal mix’ in different MNCs. Analyzing the four case-study MNCs within the broad framework of these well known theoretical approaches on multinationals’ organizational structures and staffing practices will help set up the organizational context against which the key research questions can be investigated. Employer-level interviews across all four subsidiaries questioned senior management on key aspects of organizational design derived from Perlmutter’s (1969) original classification. During the analysis stage the authority and decision-making, evaluation and control, and communication and information flow items were combined into one key category (see Table II.1.ii) because respondents did not differentiate between these variables. The rewards and punishments item is not included in the following discussion because subsidiary managers did not have enough information to make cross-subsidiary comparisons. Finally, the identification item will also not be discussed because in light of popular anti-American sentiments in the country these multinationals explicitly sought to identify themselves with the host country. In fact, some of the senior managers highlighted corporate mandates to reduce apparent ‘foreign-ness’ of the operations, keep a ‘low profile’, reflect ‘national standards’ and actively engage in community projects.

Bank Co Pakistan displayed several characteristics expected of a polycentric organization. Firstly, it was staffed by host country nationals and senior management’s career development was largely restricted to the national operations. Secondly, it operated as a quasi-independent subsidiary, with very little inter-subsidiary communication and centralized headquarter control exerted through strict financial monitoring and procedures (Collings and Scullion, 2006: 20). Both the senior management and the employees interviewed were very clear that Bank Co had strict financial policies and procedures that were far more stringent that other banks and had to be followed to the letter without any exceptions.

12 Perlmutter (1969) identified seven key aspects of organizational design – i.e. complexity of organization, authority and decision making, evaluation and control, rewards and punishments, communication and information flow, identification, and perpetuation (i.e. recruitment & development)
### Table II.1.ii Cross-case comparison of subsidiary structures and staffing orientations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizational Design</th>
<th>Bank Co</th>
<th>Energy Co</th>
<th>Chemical Co</th>
<th>Beverage Co</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recruitment &amp; selection</strong></td>
<td>Host country nationals (HCNs).</td>
<td>Limited number of expatriates as CEO &amp; for strategic departments, majority HCNs.</td>
<td>HCNs.</td>
<td>HCNs (plus recent appointment of TCN as managing director of bottlers).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communication</strong></td>
<td>Almost no communication between subsidiaries. Most communication with regional HQ.</td>
<td>Well-defined communication channels – subsidiary contacts regional HQ which then contacts corporate HQ. No cross-subsidiary communication.</td>
<td>Extensive cross-subsidiary communication. Direct communication with regional &amp; corporate HQs.</td>
<td>Extensive inter-subsidiary communication (particularly across the business region). Direct communication with regional &amp; corporate HQs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control</strong></td>
<td>Branch banking controlled by subsidiary. Decentralization of control seen as ‘window-dressing’ by subsidiary management. Strict financial control by corporate HQ.</td>
<td>Direct, personal control through expatriates. Standardized work procedures &amp; policies. Strict control of safety and CSR.</td>
<td>Operational aspects devolved to subsidiary. HR (i.e. headcount, pay, training etc) controlled by regional HQ. Manufacturing, industrial safety &amp; financial regulation by corporate HQ.</td>
<td>HR (i.e. headcount, pay, training, global talent management etc) controlled by regional HQ. Manufacturing, public affairs and corporate branding controlled by corporate HQ.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Complexity of Pakistani subsidiary operations</strong></td>
<td>Greater operational complexity in home country and other larger subsidiaries. Limited provision of financial services and products offered due to nature of local market.</td>
<td>Varied, complex and independent. Large lube blending facility set up in Pakistan.</td>
<td>Increasingly complex and inter-dependent. Key concentrates/dilutes supplied by parent country manufacturing plant.</td>
<td>Similar and increasingly inter-dependent. Secret formula concentrate directly supplied by parent country.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Moreover, the Pakistani subsidiary’s operations were classified as a lot less complex than the parent country operations or other larger subsidiaries. An employer interview with a branch manager revealed that,

… the range of products we are offering here to customers are very limited… and the target market we are looking at in Pakistan is very different. For example… we can make comparison with India or Asian countries… (like) Bangladesh… but we just can’t compare customer base in Pakistan with (for example) the U.S.

The key implication was that the financials products and services themselves were similar across the global operations and any adaptation to Pakistani consumer tastes and market needs was limited to the number of products introduced rather than adaptations in the products themselves. For instance, the corporate banking head for Lahore explained that ‘we have global products, global services… degree of variation is always there… but I guess that’s to do more with geography than with the individual country’. However, there was also evidence of deviation from the theoretical features ascribed to the polycentric category. Even though polycentric organizations devolve and decentralize decision-making to subsidiary level this process of decentralization was increasingly subject to internal political pressures as a result of the global recession. The head of corporate banking, Lahore categorically stated that after the financial crisis,

I don’t think there is much autonomy… it is mostly all communicated from (parent country)… the decentralizing of decision making… while on paper it might be there but it’s not really decentralized… there is little leeway that you have… even the senior management in Pakistan…you are ultimately communicated what is required of you.

Therefore, the earlier polycentric approach in Bank Co’s Pakistani subsidiary was counteracted by the increasing centralized control in response to the global recession and subsidiary independence was seen as mere ‘window-dressing’ by senior management.

Chemical Co on the other hand can be broadly categorized as fulfilling several characteristics expected of geocentric organizations with their ‘high levels of communication and integration across borders… (and) … an integrating
corporate culture’ (Collings and Scullion, 2006: 21). This open and integrated approach with the different HQs and between the different subsidiaries was underlined by both employers and employees. For example, the HR manager for the Asia Pacific region said,

… it’s a very open system… I mean I could just pick up the phone and call up the international manager … I don’t have to go through the regional headquarters or anything… that’s what Chemical Co is about… we don’t believe in bureaucracy… we don’t believe in holding stuff back… there’s a lot of openness… a lot of flexibility…

High organizational integration and interdependence involved extensive cross-subsidiary communication and cooperation. An employee highlighted that,

I have visited Hong Kong… Vietnam… very closely… people from Indonesia come here a lot… I’ve met people from India… so I think everywhere else as well the structure is the same… there is a lot of interaction… particularly through emails… as far as the regional office is concerned they are very interactive and very supportive. (FC2B5)

Along the lines of geocentric organizations Chemical Co Pakistan was classified as one of several sub-units that was neither centralized nor completely decentralized. For instance, the senior HR manager for the region argued that,

... there are certain I think company driven corporate policies and philosophies… irrespective of where you are (they) trump… then there’s another slew of policies which is more driven by the country laws and the country requirements… so they both run kind of in parallel.

This interdependence of organizational sub-units may in part be attributed to the MNC’s global supply chain. The large manufacturing plant in Pakistan was provided with the concentrates by the parent country manufacturing unit. Additional formulation and packaging was done locally and then the Pakistani subsidiary exported products to nine different regions. However, while the global value chain increased inter-dependence it also increased differences in the level of complexity across different subsidiary operations. For instance, the country marketing manager revealed that Chemical Co Pakistan had become a far more complex entity compared to other national subsidiaries because,
… Chemical Co Pakistan has now become the company with the largest portfolio in the industry… we’ve got more than 42 products compared to other Chemical Co subsidiaries… because apart from Chemical Co’s own products we have ventures with some other companies… some generic products… so we’ve made quite a big portfolio…

Beverage Co Pakistan, after the recent corporate acquisition by the Turkish HQ had moved to a more regiocentric structure. There was extensive inter-subsidiary communication across the business region alongside open communication channels with the regional and corporate HQs. The organizational development and training manager revealed that,

... what really makes Beverage Co different (is that)... it doesn’t matter what’s the seniority level or age or position or time spent with the company… people feel free to approach anyone and discuss openly and the respect and openness is the main thing...

(CC20C8)

Analysis highlighted two key features of this regionally-oriented organizational structure. On the one hand, subsidiaries within the business region (controlled by the Turkish office) were quite similar; perhaps because of the homogeneity of the product, corporate HQ’s centralized dissemination of the concentrate used to produce the beverage as well as explicit coordination across the regional group offices. The HR manager on the bottlers’ side claimed that there were not many differences across subsidiaries within the region apart from ‘differences related to the market size and structure’ and the country HR manager on the export side also argued that,

I would say that it is more or less the same everywhere. We are reporting to the Eurasia and Middle East group so more than 25 countries come under that and within one group the structures and the systems and the policies will be the same.

(CC19C19)

On the other hand, the application of these regional coordination and control mechanisms differed across the different functions. This corroborates Perlmutter’s (1969) assertion that the ‘degree of ethnocentrism, polycentrism and geocentrism’ varies by product, function and geography (Bartlett and Beamish 2011: 91). The marketing, public affairs, and legal departments had relatively greater direct communication with the corporate HQ because of strong corporate control over product branding and standardization of the
‘business code of conduct’. However, HR systems were controlled primarily by the Turkish regional HQ while the operational and distribution aspects were devolved to the subsidiary level. The HR manager on the bottlers’ side highlighted this relationship in her interview,

... it was a Turkish recommended initiative... we prepared a question and answer book in which anything related not just to HR matters but more generally in terms of alignment with policies, restructuring was addressed...

Finally, Energy Co exhibited a few features of the ethnocentric orientation including strong parent country influences on performance criteria, the use of home country expatriates and the centralized flow of information and directives from the corporate HQ to the subsidiaries (Perlmutter 1969). Employer-level interviews highlighted how HR policies such as job evaluation, career progression and equal opportunities were based on the ‘methodology’ of, and validated by, the head office. The key distinction was that the ‘general guidelines’ were supplied by the parent country but implemented by the Pakistani subsidiary. An employer interview highlighted that,

... every consolidated subsidiary submits the budget for the coming year... and the budget is approved by Singapore first... and then it is approved by head office in (parent country)... chapter closed... everything is in that budget. Trust me if I have to buy stationery, work products even it’s there in the budget. We are in charge of preparing the budget, we are in charge of justifying it and then we are in charge of spending it and achieving it... (but) they evaluate (it).

This centralized control of the corporate HQ was also evident in the highly standardized communication channels across the global operations of the MNC. For instance, the HR vice president revealed that,

I have a strong regular link with the HR head sitting in Singapore (regional HQ). So in the head office nobody is going to ask me that what I am doing, they will ask Singapore and Singapore will ask me... this is how it works...

On the other hand, the operational independence of the Pakistani subsidiary had grown because the head office had invested in the set up of a very large local ‘lube blending facility’ in 2009 which represented the largest FDI inflow from the parent country in Pakistan’s history. Moreover, the complexity of the
Pakistani operations was expected to increase further with continued growth because the relatively young subsidiary was still in the process of building an infrastructure for the distribution of a larger range of petroleum products across the country.

4.3 Conclusion

While a broad overview of these four subsidiaries’ structures and staffing orientations in Pakistan provides a useful organizational backdrop it is important to highlight the limitations of this approach. Firstly, none of the subsidiaries studied completely fit the ideal profiles suggested by Perlmutter (1969). While Energy Co exhibited certain ethnocentric attributes such as relatively higher centralized control, it was also experiencing increased subsidiary autonomy because of investments in fairly complex infrastructure and production facilities within Pakistan. This was far removed from Perlmutter’s (1969) conceptualization of complex production processes and manufacturing concentrated primarily in the home country. This corroborates Rubery and Grimshaw’s (2003) argument that the ‘neat classifications of companies’ as ‘unified monolithic enterprises, with single goals, policies, orientations or cultures’ fail to capture the highly differentiated and complex nature of many international organizations (p. 203).

Secondly, Perlmutter (1969) argued that MNCs’ staffing orientations and attitudes were likely to change over time, ideally moving towards genuine geocentrism. However, the summarized analysis above highlights that subsidiary-level change in structures and staffing orientations was not necessarily towards geocentrism. For example, Beverage Co had moved from a geocentric to a more regiocentric orientation because of intra-organizational changes. Similarly, Bank Co had moved away from certain features of geocentrism such as previous provision of international career development for its subsidiary managers. Therefore, it can be argued that MNCs moved between these different positions in response to environmental and intra-organizational pressures. Significantly, this movement was more focused on pragmatic, realistic compromises rather than achieving the idealistic goal of
geocentrism. This underlines a key criticism of this approach, that is ‘the HQ-centric nature of these orientations’ (Reiche and Harzing 2011: 187). Crucially, the staffing orientations of MNCs and the subsequent diffusion of HR across their global operations need to be seen as a ‘bi-directional’ process that ‘integrates an analysis of the structural and environmental aspects of MNCs with the political processes within them’ (Edwards et al 1999: 302). The following chapters will build on this description of the structural factors and attempt to highlight the internal political processes (and the role of individual actors) in the diffusion and implementation of managerial career development in the foreign subsidiaries studied.
Chapter 5 – Individual career orientations: Protean and boundaryless career concepts

5.1 Introduction

Protean careers involve self-directed career management and a values-driven approach focused on individual career attitudes (Briscoe et al, 2006; Hall 2002), whereby ‘the criterion of success is internal (psychological success), not external’, and crucially determined by the individual rather than the organization (Hall, 1976: 201). Arthur and Rousseau’s (1996) conceptualization of boundaryless careers envisioned careers as work experiences over time and across different employer boundaries, including physical and psychological mobility (Sullivan and Arthur 2006). On the other hand, in traditional organizational careers employees’ career development was the responsibility of the employer and included job security and upward mobility along a well-defined career ladder (Granrose & Baccili, 2005: 164-165) in return for employee performance and organizational commitment (Waterman et al 1994). One of the key thematic debates in the careers literature is that these ‘new ‘careers are often presented as the opposites of, and in some ways the alternatives to, traditional, hierarchical careers (Pringle and Mallon 2003). However, it has been argued that that in reality the work environment and organizational structures have not changed to the degree supposed in the ‘new’ careers research (Jacoby 1999; Guest and MacKenzie Davey 1996; Granrose and Bacilli 2005).

Another significant limitation of contemporary careers research is the restricted application and empirical operationalization of the boundaryless and protean careers (Currie et al 2006; Pringle and Mallon 2003; Valcour and Tolbert 2003). There is a need to consider different factors such as gender, culture, and differences in individual opportunities (because of varied educational backgrounds, skill, competencies etc) (Sullivan and Arthur 2006; Arthur 2008) in more non-Western/non-Anglo cultures (Briscoe and Hall 2006). Therefore, protean and boundaryless career concepts were investigated in the specific context of Pakistan where these career metaphors, and associated notions of individualism, opportunity and agency, were
hypothesized to have very different cultural value because of the continuing bureaucratic structures and seniority-based control and promotion in national organizations (Eldridge and Mahmood 1993; Rieger and Wong-Rieger 1990). The focus in this chapter is specifically on the individual employee perspective (the organizational and institutional variables are discussed in the next chapter) and the dominant career aspirations, behaviours and strategies highlighted across the employee sample. This chapter is organized in two main parts: the first section considers the three key protean values highlighted inductively during the analysis (i.e. self-evaluation, career commitment and adaptability/employability) and the second section considers the psychological and physical boundarylessness of Pakistani managers. In light of the existing concerns in and with the contemporary careers literature, the key research objectives were to investigate i) the extent to which Pakistani managers’ careers exhibited protean values and boundarylessness, ii) whether there was any evidence of differentiation in career behaviours and mobility patterns across the different employee groups studied and iii) the extent to which these internal, subjective career perceptions were independent of organizational/structural constraints.

5.2 Protean careers

Hall (1976) differentiated between the protean career and the traditional career by arguing that the former focused on intrinsic, subjective evaluation and psychological success while the latter focused on the more extrinsic, organizationally-defined criteria (e.g.: financial compensation and promotion along the organizational career ladder). My analysis revealed that managerial employees actively engaged in career self-evaluation (focusing on intrinsic benefits like learning and professional pride), exhibited high career commitment (in comparison to organizational commitment and job involvement) and prioritized increasing their overall employability and adaptability. The results of this thesis highlighted that while the employees studied did not focus exclusively on organizationally-defined performance measurement standards, subjective evaluations continued to respond to, or were in reaction to, extrinsic, organizational factors.
Self-evaluation

The majority of the respondents interviewed across all four multinationals actively evaluated their careers in subjective terms and negotiated conscious trade-offs between intrinsic and extrinsic benefits. Personal measures of career success were deployed, often involving compromises on traditional organizational criteria such as financial benefits, or faster upward progression. Data analysis revealed that the most important subjective measure of success was the quality and extent of learning offered by their employing organizations. As a result, enhanced job roles and responsibilities sometimes seemed to act as a defrayal for lower financial rewards (especially when compared to the industry standards) (see Box I.1.i). Even though some employees candidly admitted that compensation was a primary career (and personal) concern, significantly many interviewees claimed to have specifically sought jobs in their current organization (or chose to remain with their employing organization) despite lower financial rewards because of the extensive learning opportunities offered.

Box I.1.i Self-evaluation: learning versus financial rewards

Definitely compared to the industry I can get more… … but the exposure and experiences I am getting over here is way beyond what I would get in another organization. And that’s what I want… it’s not just the salary. Till the time I am being challenged, given interesting projects, till the time I am getting more and more knowledge and exposure then I would say this is the place to work in. So it’s not just about the financials and just money wouldn’t make me shift elsewhere… (CC6C16)

… as compared to other multinationals the wages are a bit slim here. But working in Chemical Co we have international exposure… I have been given the opportunity to visit other countries and for my career these visits were very beneficial. I learnt a lot… I got a better awareness of Chemical Co rules and other safety practices which helped me introduce different safety processes and equipment in this plant. So I developed a lot and implemented new ideas and got a very positive response from all the other employees… (FC3)

I wouldn’t leave because at this stage in my career… pay scale and all the monetary benefits don’t matter as much because this is a beautiful opportunity… (CB12)

…I had an offer from (a British bank) with 30-40 per cent pay increase… but I refused… because it’s (Bank Co) a good working environment… a lot of learning opportunities… I will definitely learn a lot… because of the flexibility of this organization… (CB8)

I filtered about 4-5 different companies… one was an educational institution… one was… an engineering firm, one was… Energy Co and one was a telecom company… the reason why I joined here is… (because) there was a lot more chance of learning and growing here and those were really the deciding factors… (TP4S7)

These learning opportunities were specifically seen as improving their overall skills set and future career prospects (financial and non-financial) and were
often directly compared to the kind of advantages and career success they would have reaped in other organizations and other job roles. This delayed financial gratification may be explained by Valcour and Tolbert’s (2003) argument that jobs confer considerable bargaining power onto individuals which can be realized when ‘inter-organizational job changes… result in higher earnings’ (p. 772). There were many examples of employees who had engaged in a subjective cost-benefit analysis of working in different organizations and different industries and specifically chosen their current employers/industry because of a more challenging work environment (see last quote in Box I.1.i). For example, a middle manager argued that he had left his previous job at a large national cement/construction company for Beverage Co because,

… (the) cement sector is … not a very progressive sector. It’s a single dimension product… and therefore a fairly static industry. So anyone who gets an opportunity in an fmcg … fast moving consumer goods… with multi product dimension (would take it)… so that was one of the reasons behind joining Beverage Co… industry switch for the better really! (CC4C18)

Data analysis also revealed that as long as they were experiencing diversified learning and expanded job responsibilities, employees often accepted professional, knowledge-based growth as a viable substitute to organizational, progression growth in the short to medium term (see Box I.1.ii). For

### Box I.1.ii Self-evaluation: Learning versus upward career progression

**a.** Since it’s a multinational I will be expecting my next move to be somewhere with a bigger market than Pakistan and having added responsibilities. That’s why I prefer working in multinationals because sometimes even if you can’t move vertically but you move laterally into different territories. So the next step on the ladder will be a bigger market where I can gain valuable work experience, polish my communication skills, my cultural skills. (CC10C13)

**b.** … personally… I would love any further position in maybe one year’s time but I think if I was working in the HR department I would not consider another promotion (for me) for the next 1-2 years time… What could be the next level? … may be moving up in the same department that is in the retail sales area… I personally believe that I’ll not be given that position and maybe I will not be willing to take that responsibility because that is a very big responsibility and I personally believe that I need some more exposure… I would want to and love to work in some other department now… like marketing maybe or logistics… or maybe development… so that I will get more exposure and make myself a better candidate for the (upward promotion)… in the long run… (TP1S3)
instance, the operations manager at Beverage Co stated that,

I joined as a planning and treasury manager which is a grade 10 position. And if you look in terms of grade now I am grade 11... so not much of a jump in those terms. But... going from planning to operations and then supply chain and then marketing to operations I think I have grown up the ladder. I feel that although you cannot associate a position with this growth but I am in a more responsible and accountable job now (CC8C11).

However, of greater interest is the ‘why’ question – why was knowledge-based growth rather than traditional upward progression a satisfactory short-term career outcome? Perhaps the individualized conception of careers, and the attendant compromise on extrinsic benefits like upward promotion was acceptable because these employees were aware of alternative career movements possible within their employing organizations (for instance see Box I.1.ii quote a). However, these alternate horizontal, international moves were not available consistently for employees across all four organizations because of structural and strategic constraints (as will be discussed in Chapter 6) – and yet the subjective assessment of career progression remained largely intact. Energy Co ameliorated this gap in horizontal international movement by offering and encouraging extensive functional moves at lateral levels within its Pakistani operations. There was evidence from employee accounts to suggest that these lateral moves were also subjectively interpreted as promotions despite no significant difference in grades and wages. The regional sales manager in Energy Co considered his move from the South region to the Central region as a promotion ‘even though it was a transfer of the same HAY grade and same designation’ primarily because of expanded job responsibilities. He himself was aware that an impending promotion was unlikely (in line with Energy Co’s tradition of slower career progression) and therefore when asked about career progression mainly discussed potential functional moves (see Box I.1.ii quote b). This was an interesting take on career progression because it clearly showed that the subjective understanding of his career’s success was predicated on intrinsic measures such as learning and exposure (through functional moves) and these factors were considered significant not only in terms of personal career evaluation but also in order to achieve eventual upward promotion within the employing organization.
Even though many respondents admitted undertaking these cost-benefit analyses, what was even more interesting were instances where some of the employees had either been approached by other organizations or they themselves had gone for interviews in other organizations while employed at their current company. This active engagement with the external labour market (ELM), despite relatively high job satisfaction within their current jobs (and no immediate intention of leaving), was seen as a ‘learning experience’, in order to ‘experience different working environments... experience the interview process again’, thereby enabling a comparative analysis of their jobs against corresponding positions in other organizations ‘just to see one’s worth’.

**Box I.1.iii Individually-driven denominators of professional pride:**

I made my own portfolio because I have been in this branch from day 1... So I did not inherit a portfolio I had to make it for myself… (CB13)

So I developed a lot and implemented new ideas and got a very positive response from all the other employees such as very comprehensive work permit system. Also all the safety procedures and literatures are in English so I translated all the procedures, permits etc and printed them in our local languages which has really enhanced employee awareness and responsibility… (FC3)

Look at employee relations and employee contracts… inspite of the fact they have been here for years but I am doing the contracts for them despite having no formal training for it… 16-17 pages of legal jargon… (CC9C12)

CA (Chartered Accountancy) is a top level, senior management, finance degree or education particularly in Pakistan… (CC1C23)

… the good thing about (being) an engineer is that your mentality is very analytical. You are welcoming everything… every challenge… everything that comes your way… (TP10S18)

Individual employees’ self-evaluation of subjective, internal careers (as opposed to external, organizational careers) was also evident in their professional pride, self-esteem and self-awareness at work and professional identities. However, analysis revealed that this professional pride seemed to be driven by both individual *and* organizational factors. Managers’ responses from across all four organizations (see Box I.1.iii) summarize employee expressions of strong personal gratification with professional achievements (derived both from within and outside their current employing organization).
Several managerial employees evinced considerable pride in taking responsibility for individual initiatives in the workplace that were specifically beyond the purview of their organizationally-defined job roles and responsibilities. For instance, the public affairs and communications (PAC) manager officially based within the export side of Beverage Co stated that, ‘the bottlers don’t have a PAC person on their side… so I work voluntarily for them as well… and technically it’s outside the official job responsibilities’ (CC16B17). Moreover, professional pride was often also related to individual managers’ occupational backgrounds, both in terms of education and previous work experience. Several examples ranging from accountants and engineers to bankers expressed pride in their professional qualifications and those managers who had worked in large, well-known corporations or specifically had work experience abroad often viewed these previous jobs as a source of professional pride as well.

**Box I.1.iv Organizationally-driven denominators of professional pride:**

I moved along the ladder… (but) I took less time… I got promoted after 4 months… mostly people don’t… they take around a year, two years…. Yeah you can say (that it was accelerated) I over achieved the targets they set … (CB5)

I joined as the accounts executive… on average I got a grade jump every 2 and a half years… in Beverage Co generally employees get a grade jump every 3-4 years but I was lucky enough to get it in 2, or 2 and a half years… (CC17B18)

I joined as Deputy Manager Finance… at that time a… finance manager was there… he left last year and then I was given 3 months to prove myself as a financial controller and now I’m the director and the board member of the country… (FC2)

… in 2007 I was promoted to regional manager South because my boss just resigned from the company so I was given the opportunity… I was quite new and in this industry you will not see anybody having an experience of just 4, 4 and a half years being offered such an important position. The VP said that we are taking a risk and we have decided to give you this position temporarily for the next 4-6 months time and we will be evaluating you… this is not standard practice in the company… (TP1S3)

However, individual employees’ self-perception of professional pride was also based on the traditional organizational markers of acknowledgement (see Box I.1.iv). Self-esteem at work continued to be associated with organizationally-sanctioned rewards and recognition such as a quicker progression up the career ladder (especially when this growth was at odds with standard organizational
policy and faster than the upward mobility of their colleagues) and expanded job roles conferring increased responsibility, autonomy, and greater opportunities for contribution to organizational projects and goals.

A large number of managers in Bank Co and Chemical Co specifically appreciated increased autonomy in their work tasks because successful achievement of organizationally-set challenges was a significant source of professional pride. For instance, the brand manager at Chemical Co elaborated that, ‘... from the very first day they give you the autonomy to do anything. They throw you in the water and let you swim around. They always give me the advice that you would rather say sorry… than wait for permission’ (FC1).

This co-determination of professional pride both in terms of individual pursuit of professional challenges and individual dependence on organizational validation highlights an interesting dichotomy within the protean career concept as a whole. For on the one hand there seems to be a clear move towards greater personal freedom and ownership of career in the workplace whereby professional pride is predicated on personal achievements (before or during the current job) and on the other hand employer endorsement is still needed to provide validation and translate this professional pride into tangible career benefits.

This predominant focus on intrinsic benefits such as learning, challenging work environments and exposure had two significant implications. Firstly, employee-driven evaluation of current, and exploration of potential career possibilities was not predicated exclusively on traditional organizational features such as higher financial rewards and upward mobility but also underlined intrinsic factors such as learning and personal professional pride. Secondly, this subjective self-evaluation actively influenced employees’ perceptions of career success rather than focusing exclusively on quantitative organizational measures. Therefore, Hall’s (1976) definition of careers, whereby ‘career success or failure is best assessed by the person whose career is being considered rather than by other interested parties’ (p.3) seemed to be applicable for the managers considered because any dissatisfaction with wages and the time taken to achieve (upward) promotions was consciously off-set
against the provision of more qualitative factors (such as organizational culture, working environment, learning, exposure, enhanced job roles and responsibilities, work practices, alternative career paths and so on) in the short to medium term. However, a key finding was that despite exhibiting certain protean career values the managerial employees studied were not entirely independent of organizational constraints, traditional career markers and external support systems.

**Career commitment**

A significant finding with regards to protean careers was how these Pakistani managers’ commitment to their personal careers superseded commitment to their employing organization and even their current job. All the managers interviewed had well-developed career plans and irrespective of a fulfilling job and a highly rewarding organizational environment were ultimately open to career moves and decisions that would positively benefit their career. Given these high levels of career commitment across all four organizations a model was created to understand individual managerial employees dominant work attitudes on two additional criteria: organizational commitment\(^{13}\) and job involvement/commitment\(^{14}\). This analysis was undertaken primarily because some of the core values underpinning protean careers are ‘attitudes such as work satisfaction achievement and job involvement with low organizational commitment’ in direct opposition to traditional careers with a relatively greater focus on organizational commitment and loyalty (Hall 1976: 202). An analytical overview of the entire employee sample revealed that individual managerial employees fell in one of the four attitudinal combinations (as shown in Figure I.2.i).

\(^{13}\) Organizational commitment was viewed primarily in terms of exploration of (and engagement with) external opportunities, willingness to move to another organization and/or industry, vs. employee satisfaction with their current organization regarding compensation, promotion, training and job security.

\(^{14}\) Job involvement was conceptualized in terms of employee perception of performance, match between employee and his/her job, potential for learning in that job role, and degree of challenge in work tasks.
The ‘disengaged dressers’ exhibited high levels of involvement and satisfaction with their job, along with a relatively low level of organizational commitment. They were seen to ‘dress’ for the job whereby they could constantly explore external opportunities in other organizations by capitalizing on their high performance levels in their current job roles while maintaining a stance of disengagement with their employing organization (the degree of disengagement varied depending on the immediacy of plans to move out of the organization). Therefore, in many cases there was a high degree of identification with the job but unmet expectations in terms of their employer. One instance of these unmet expectations could be slow career progression within the organization. The area manager retail at Energy Co was a high performing employee within the high growth network sales department and yet explicitly stated that,

… personally I would give it a year and a half max. If I don’t get a promotion by then, then I will start looking elsewhere. That’s the maximum I am willing to wait it out. Your attitude has to be flexible… because job openings come up in and out of the country… … they don’t know how to retain (employees)... being a multinational it’s surprising they have a very high ratio of turnover and it shouldn’t be like that. It could be because either packages and bonuses comparatively speaking to the corporate sector (are not favourable)... Energy Co is still a very small player... we are a company of almost 175 employees… that’s a very small number. So obviously there isn’t the kind of growth people are expecting. Somebody has to leave for me to move up… so if nobody is leaving I need to leave and find myself another job. That’s what it is… (TP11S17)
Another reason for lower organizational commitment for this cohort was employee perception of lack of long-term and varied career opportunities within the organization. For example, the Assistant Safety and Administration manager at Chemical Co expressed pride in the changes he had personally initiated. However, he also stated that ‘in this plant there is no more chance to grow further’ and felt that even though ‘I did discuss (future career opportunities) with the higher management but at the moment they aren’t planning in the direction I’m thinking in…’ (FC3).

The second cohort of employees fell within the high job involvement and high organizational commitment category. These ‘engaged agents’ were engaged and committed to both their jobs and their employing organizations. Predominantly they were the very high performing employees who were highly satisfied with organizational rewards (in terms of financial compensation, progression up the career ladder, learning opportunities etc) which sometimes even outstripped their own expectations. For instance, the public affairs and communications (PAC) manager at Beverage Co exhibited highly committed attitudes towards both his job and his employer,

… the company gives a lot of value to PAC. … a lot of the work is done on the backdrop but still it’s quite important and I’m loving it so far and I definitely want to make a career in PAC…

... last year I got the opportunity to go to (the head office) for 3 months and then I also got to go to (regional headquarters) for 2 months so I had 5 months of additional training in terms of on-the-job experience...

This is a company where you are generally recognised for your work and that in itself gives you a lot of satisfaction and security… you do get daily reminders that the company is looking after you … in terms of financial benefits and generally as well … you do get to know that your job is going to be safe and that you are valued by the organization (CC16B17)

The ‘occupational abdicators’ displayed relatively low job involvement but at the same time were quite loyal to their organizations. Only a few respondents fell within this category and mostly comprised of managers who were trying to switch departments within their current organizations because of their perception of a mismatch between their skills set and their functional area,
under-utilization of their skills in their current job role, and perception of their current department as a low-prestige, back-end, and support function. For instance, one of Beverage Co’s management trainees in corporate HR showed commitment to the organization itself,

… Beverage Co… is not the preferred employer in terms of pay scale… so I think that maybe elsewhere I will probably be earning more. But because I enjoy working here… I think it’s not that bad … I have strong attachment to the brand itself…

However, she also expressed dissatisfaction with her current placement in HR and expressed a strong desire to move into either the marketing or the communications departments which would then offer a better alignment with her postgraduate degree in marketing and communications,

I actually wanted to work in communications because that is my area of expertise anyway but at the moment we don’t have anyone specifically handling internal communications… ideally I would want to be working in the communications area. No opportunity so far though… (CC13B22)

Similarly, an executive manager within the liabilities and sales department in Bank Co had made two functional shifts (from the IT department to services and from there to liabilities and sales) during his four years tenure because he felt his skills could be better utilized in a different department (eventually ending up in the high-prestige sales department) which in turn would provide him with more organizational benefits such as growth and learning. However, he did not have any immediate plans for moving out of the organization and had not only willingly relocated several times but also shifted the responsibility of lower bonuses and longer working hours from his employer to the financial crisis by saying, ‘…nowadays the financial sector is not performing well so obviously that will affect the numbers. But we can’t blame Bank Co for that… it’s the same in other banks as well’ (CB15).

The final category of employees, classified as ‘emotional divorcees’, exhibited a relatively high degree of disassociation from their job roles and their current employing organizations. Low organizational commitment would likely be predicated on lack of opportunities for further learning and growth and low job
involvement would be because of either low performance levels in their current jobs or a mismatch between their expectations from their jobs and the reality of their job descriptions. While some of the respondents have moved on to other organizations in the last 1-2 years the main reason for this move was either low organizational commitment or low job involvement but rarely ever both. However, there is one employee within the overall sample in this particular category. A personal banker at Bank Co had been moved from the high prestige sales department to a more services and coordination role, a move he described as ‘… it was really a senior colleague who did me a favour. I wasn’t doing so well in the sales department…’ He specifically acknowledged that ‘my job is more back end’ and fairly low organizational loyalty was also evident in his statement that ‘really the job was the stepping stone to another stepping stone. Get into the organization and work for a while and then if a better offer comes... move on’ (CB17) – which is exactly what he did when he moved from Bank Co to a more general managerial position in Beverage Co a few months after my interview with him.

This categorization of managerial employees according to their attitudes towards their organization and their job leads to several interesting conclusions. Firstly, a significant number of employees were either ‘disengaged dressers’ or ‘engaged agents’. This implies that very few interviewees exhibited low job involvement which from an organizational point of view indicates a good match between candidates and job roles and from an individual employee perspective suggests that most have very well-developed work identities. Secondly, because of high career commitment across the entire sample, respondents’ low organizational commitment was often predicated on their employing organization’s inability to meet their career expectations (or the possibility of their organization’s inability to continue to meet their expectations in the medium to long term). This corroborates Granrose and Baccili’s (2006) finding that organizational violation of the traditional psychological contract persuaded individuals to adopt certain aspects of boundaryless and protean careers. As a result they were constantly evaluating more advantageous career moves and relatively more open to inter-organizational moves. Interestingly, commitment to careers
was also very high for employees exhibiting high organizational commitment, denoting that loyalty to the company ultimately hinged on the employer’s ability to fulfil their career demands. With commitment to careers ousting all other considerations with regards to work attitudes the only observable difference between these different groups of employees was longevity at their employing organizations. Employees exhibiting higher organizational commitment were more likely to stay on with their current employing organization in the medium to long term because of the perceived and projected fulfilment of their career goals. On the other hand, managers exhibiting lower organizational commitment were more open to a move out of the company in the more immediate short term.

**Adaptability and self-direction**

The analysis of the interviews revealed that these managerial employees engaged in specific, subjectively defined, career strategies in an attempt to increase employability in the internal and external labour markets. This corroborates Hall’s (1976) ideals of individual reinvention and adaptability in response to threats of possible obsolescence and dips in employees’ long-term performance. However, a significant finding that extends Hall’s original conceptualization of protean careers was the *degree of* adaptability and career reinvention pursued by the employees studied. Within the sample studied very few employees sought to increase their adaptability through radical career reinventions of their job roles and career paths and the focus was more on incremental, job-specific learning. There were only two exceptions to this finding. Firstly, a manager from Bank Co had made a conscious personal decision to respond to organizational and sector-based pressures by radically realigning his career trajectory,

… when I completed my studies that was in computer sciences, but at that time the jobs weren’t that good in IT… initially I was in IT in Bank Co… I was on an internship. But what I saw was that people had been in that department for years without getting promoted and so I decided to get out of that and get in the service side of it. Because this is where you can grow… (CB15)
There was also an example from Beverage Co where the assistant manager of compensation had moved from finance to HR - an instance of reinvention specifically predicated on perceived career success (or lack of) based on personal qualifications. He explained that,

… I couldn’t qualify in my accounting degree… and… in a multinational if you are not (a) certified accountant then there are every limited chances of your growth (in finance). So by some miracle I could become the finance manager, but no way could I become the financial controller or the chief financial officer. But in other departments that finance degree is not necessary and then I did have an MBA… plus I got the opportunity to shift. And the reason why I took up the shift is because it has given me a lot of learning opportunities from day one till now… (CC5C17)

It is notable that there were no similar examples of reinvention and employee adaptability in Chemical Co. The explanation could lie in Chemical Co’s specific organizational policies (such as targeted hiring for different posts during the recruitment phase and restricted functional moves) which in turn might have discouraged individual desire to reinvent their careers. However, the lack of examples of individual reinvention in Energy Co, which had an active policy of job rotation that in turn was appreciated by employees, could be used to theorize that increasing adaptability through constant and radical reinvention, involving a complete change in career direction, was not a significant protean attitude for the majority of the managerial employees considered.

Analysis revealed that employees sought to measure their adaptability with regards to self-directed learning and subsequent personal development and career growth within and outside their employing organization (see Box I.2.i). In fact, several respondents moved beyond this purported link between learning and career growth in internal and external labour markets and often regarded learning more as a mindset and attitude. From this point of view learning was regarded as instrumental for personal growth and development, irrespective of any subsequent links between this personal development and career progression.
However, despite this predominant emphasis on learning, the process was circumscribed by these managerial employees’ long term career considerations. One important consideration was that employees often specifically wanted increased learning and skills acquisition in general managerial skills rather than more focused, technical skills (see Box I.2.ii).

This was a much more significant result for employees with more specialized educational backgrounds and job roles (such as IT, finance, engineering etc.) compared to employees with MBA/general business degrees, employed in more general management departments like marketing, sales, operations, and even HR. Managerial employees in more technical, specialist job roles specifically wanted to make this transition to more generalist roles primarily because of individual perceptions of limited durability and relevance of their technical/specialist skills in terms of their long-term career development. This is in line with Currie et al’s (2006) distinctions between specialist and generalist employee groups in the television industry specifically, whereby greater multi-skilling reduced technical demarcations between employee groups and increased individual employees’ ‘freedom in the skills they learn and the breadth of the job they can cover’ (p. 763).

**Box I.2.i Adaptability & self-directed learning**

… in terms of careers… it’s a learning institute… in Pakistan all the banks operating at the moment… people at higher and middle level are all former Bank Co employees… you can go to every bank and the higher ups will be from Bank Co. Because in Bank Co the learning curve is very steep… (CB9)

… if the employee is with Bank Co he is open to get any job in any industry. Bank Co is more like a learning institute for an employee… for getting into any other organization… (CB16)

… you always need to enhance your learning capabilities so that they can add to your competitive advantage. Learning and increasing knowledge always gives you better opportunities to grow… (TP9S19)

… learning is a never ending story. Even if you are 50 you have to learn a lot. Even if you have spent 30 odd years in the industry there is still always a gap… (CC1C23)

… for me the main motivation is learning… and my own personal development… that’s what I look for in each job… (CC12C15)
For managerial employees with a more specialist and technical background, exposure to different departments and increased opportunities to develop multiple skills, encompassing technical and generalist skills was not only seen to have a positive impact on career growth but also made their professional work lives more interesting. On the other hand, several employees based within the more general management functions like sales, marketing, HR etc were a lot less keen on increasing learning and exposure beyond their functional areas. Where managers in these positions did express an interest in
job rotation in order to diversify their skills portfolio, learning through potential functional moves was predicated on related areas of work. For instance, the brand manager based within Chemical Co’s marketing department explicitly stated that,

… I wouldn’t mind going from marketing to sales but I have no interest in HR or finance. I would rather stick to my area. (FC1)

The senior HRD manager at Beverage Co, was also unwilling to make a functional move,

Actually HR is the career of my choice and I am very proud of this decision of mine which I took 10 years ago to chose HR as a profession for myself… and since I am doing very well and I have a passion for this particular career for myself so I would prefer to continue in this area… (CC18B19)

One of Energy Co’s senior area manager ‘working in the retail sector of the business which is a limb of the commercial department in the organization’ wanted ‘to switch to another department… … probably communication or retail development’ (TP4S7) which was not symptomatic of a radical, functional transition. Finally, with respect to Bank Co, individual managers’ movement across functions was not just a function of skills diversification and learning but also tied to organizational culture and structure; whereby certain functions were seen as more high prestige than others (this theme will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 6).

Therefore, while learning was seen as directly correlated to personal and professional development, there were limitations on how the process of skills acquisitions (and its subsequent impact on enhanced adaptability) was negotiated in reality within the four organizations. An interesting finding was that managers with specialist backgrounds, working in technical departments were keen on branching out into more general management areas. However, employees already working in more general business functions were equally reluctant to move out of their existing functions. This one-way traffic in terms of skills development was predicated on a host of reasons associated with general managerial skills (explained above) such as diversification of skills
set, more interesting work, and increased potential for career growth and development in the long run. Therefore, based on these results it can be concluded that the protean attitude to learn and increase adaptability by diversifying skills was considered important by the entire sample. However, this desire of individual employees to expand their skill sets was rarely translated into a reinvention of their careers. This is an important distinction to make because it signifies that employee pursuit of Hall’s (1976, 1996) protean attitude of adaptability within this study was more in terms of *general, incremental learning* rather than *constant, radical reinvention*. Employee interviews revealed that while managers were concerned with improving overall adaptability in the internal and external labour markets, this was a fairly piecemeal and relatively constrained process that rarely led to a complete career overhaul.

5.3 Boundaryless careers

Arthur and Rousseau’s (1996) initial conceptualization of the boundaryless career model emphasized ‘… independence from, rather than dependence on, traditional organizational career arrangements’ (p.6) and sought to incorporate both physical and psychological mobility. Sullivan and Arthur (2006) defined physical mobility as ‘the transition across boundaries… … between jobs, employers or industries’ and psychological movement as ‘the perception of the capacity to make transitions… … as seen through the mind of the career actor’ (p. 21). However, existing contemporary careers literature has tended to over-emphasize physical mobility at the cost of psychological mobility (Sullivan and Arthur 2006; Arthur et al 2005). In order to redress this unbalanced approach to boundaryless careers the following section will specifically explore both actual physical mobility patterns and psychological mobility perceptions across different organizations and different industries/sectors. Mobility in contemporary careers literature has been conceptualized as movement across a range of ‘boundaries between organizations, between occupations, between industries and between work and family’ (Inkson 2006: 55; Arthur and Rousseau 1996). However, within the employee-oriented scope of this chapter, consideration of psychological and physical mobility will be
limited to inter-organizational and cross-industry movement (that is, moves driven primarily by the individual employee)\textsuperscript{15}.

**Inter-organizational mobility**

Data analysis highlighted the pervasiveness of inter-organizational movements across the employee sample studied. Excluding junior managers (many of whom were employed on their first jobs), middle and senior managers had averaged at least three organizational moves. The key factors influencing individual employees’ physical movements included the speed of upward progression, nature of work and the directionality of movement between national and multinational organizations. In terms of psychological mobility, employee characteristics such as age, gender and previous work experiences also had an impact on these managers’ perceptions of their ability to move between organizations.

One of the main reasons individual employees chose to make physical transitions across organizations was to speed up their rate of career progression (see Box I.3.i). Analysis suggested that respondents constantly evaluated and re-evaluated the opportunities for growth and promotion offered by their organizations. Exit from organizations was primarily based on employee appraisal of organizational hierarchies including the number of options available for them, the amount of time spent on each rung of the organizational career ladder, and their employing organization’s overall health and projected growth (whereby a growing organization was considered to offer faster promotions). If any of these factors led to the perception of insufficient opportunities in the long run and crucially delayed upward movement, employees chose to move out fairly quickly.

\textsuperscript{15} Boundary-crossing behaviour with regards to functional, cross-country and international transitions will be discussed in the next two chapters because these movements are relatively more influenced by organizational/structural/institutional factors.
This links to the protean career attitude of self-evaluation (discussed in section 5.2) whereby employees accepted slower career progression in the short-term if the employing organization redressed slow upward movement by offering learning opportunities and/or learning-based progressions. However, this acceptance of slower upward mobility was ultimately subject to self-imposed time limits. To this end employees sometimes engaged in conscious trade-offs – for instance, there was willingness to sacrifice financial rewards for quicker progression. A middle level manager at Bank Co argued that ‘money’s not everything… the other factors… career growth and career development… these are the main factors’ (CB8).

Interestingly there was a widespread conception across the entire employee cohort that MNCs in particular offered accelerated promotion rates as compared to local organizations. These employee perceptions of more favourable employment conditions in foreign enterprises reflects Gamble’s (2003) findings based on a comparative analysis of state-owned enterprises and MNCs in China. As a result several managers had specifically targeted

**Box I.3.i Inter-organizational mobility & the speed of career progression**

… (previous employer) is a very big institution and so the chances of growth was very slow. Plus the hierarchical structure there is such that you are offered very few opportunities to go up and it would have taken a bit longer. The biggest advantage I saw in Chemical Co when I joined and even now is that there isn’t a similar hierarchical structure here that you have to go step by step… through a lengthy procedure to progress. (FC2B5)

(Energy Co was the 4th organization he was working for) … in terms of career prospects here I see myself growing, I see myself getting up the career ladder day by day… (TP4S7)

… for a brief period… I was working at (telecommunication services provider) … but on a probationary basis and before that period was complete I shifted to Bank Co… that was my first choice. At that time yes (I did see advantages of working for an MNC)… I (had) the impression of greater career mobility… (CB11)

… when I joined Beverage Co… in HR I was the junior most person at that time in terms of number of years worked… 5 years ago when I joined I (had) 5 years of prior industry experience so with 10 years total work experience now I have been operating at the country level for 4 and a half years… and this just shows how (many) personal advancement opportunities… were offered to me… over here I would say the pace and career enhancement is 4 times faster… (CC18B19)
their current employing organizations because, as large multinationals, they had the reputation of offering more ‘career growth opportunities’ and the focus was firmly on ‘development of their employees’. The degree of analysis employees engaged in when deciding on organizations offering them the fastest route up the career ladder was evident in the statement of a brand manager from one of the American MNCs when explaining his reasons for joining the organization,

… the fact that it was a multinational, plus specifically because it was an American one. Because I have fairly good knowledge that American multinationals are better for growth and advancement purposes16…

Another predominant factor that influenced managerial employees’ engagement with, and justification of, inter-organizational movement was the degree of professional development offered by the organization (see Box I.3.ii). Employees favoured those organizations that prioritised expansion of job roles and responsibilities, constantly provided ‘challenging’ and ‘exciting’ opportunities, encouraged ‘multi-tasking’, offered autonomy and flexibility (to take decisions and risks), and allowed employees to develop diversified skills sets and functional expertise (even if incremental rather than radical in nature). This supported these managers’ emphasis on the protean values of professional development and continuous learning because of higher commitment to their personal careers. There were several examples of employees who had moved across organizations in search of new job roles that offered ‘richer’ work experience in hitherto unexplored work territories. For instance, a middle manager at Energy Co stated that,

Being a credit controller I think in Pakistan there was no segregation… one department used to handle everything from finance, accounting, credit. But here they have the different segregations... and then they have this policy where you can move to other departments… so it’s like you gain knowledge of one area and then you move to another department and then you can start learning there and so you get to broaden your skills base (TP2S4)

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16 Interviewee code hidden to ensure organizational anonymity.
Managerial employees’ mobility decisions based on the nature of the work offered by their current and potential employing organizations was in certain cases also predicated on the nature and strategic importance of their specific department within the organization as a whole\textsuperscript{17}. For instance, the public affairs and communications (PAC) manager at Beverage Co had previously worked for a media company and a university and had specifically joined Beverage Co because it is one of the few organizations in Pakistan that has a well-developed public affairs and communications department – an area he wanted to specialize in,

... for the next 3 to 5 years I want to focus on PAC and I want to make my career in PAC and this is one of the companies (where)... it’s really important and the

\textsuperscript{17}Differences between departments/functions on the basis of organizational structures and institutional/societal factors will be considered in greater detail in Chapter 6.
company gives a lot of value to PAC in terms of what’s the strategic role... (CC16B17)

In-depth analysis of individual employees’ inter-organizational movements also revealed a distinct directionality for this mobility that predominantly favoured a move from local, national organizations to foreign companies (see Box I.3.iii). A large majority of the employees interviewed based their transitional moves across organizations on the strategic decision to gain employment in multinationals and specifically courted these foreign companies during the course of their careers.

**Box I.3.iii Directionality of inter-organizational mobility**

Obviously it’s a good brand… Telecom Co is a local company… (but) Bank Co is a multinational… it’s one of the leading financial institutions in the world. That’s the main reason to join Bank Co. (CB8)

It was a conscious decision to work in multinationals because multinationals offer you an environment that our local companies do not at least at this stage. The processes are world class, the people and the company culture is also world class. So I consciously tend to stick to MNCs. (CC10C13)

I joined because of certain reasons… a) I was in a local company and I wanted to come into a multinational… in a multinational your chances of expatriation and travel are much more… and so that’s what I really want. (TP6S9)

I always prefer to have the MNC culture… before Chemical Co my experience was in 2 different national companies… I did not like that... (and) after Chemical Co I got another 6 months work experience with (a) national company… it was a very growing company but still there was so much that had been neglected over there. So I was wanting to again join an MNC and I (was) starting to feel at that time that I don’t have the stamina for a national organization and I can’t feel very comfortable in that area… (FC6B10)

This preference was predicated on a range of variables such as foreign organizations ‘superior’ work practices (specific stress being laid upon attention to ethics and customer service), distinct organizational cultures (that is, relatively less bureaucratic, hierarchical structures and greater meritocracy) and increased opportunities for personal and professional development. A senior manager at Chemical Co highlighted a combination of the factors that had influenced his mobility decisions and the bias towards multinationals in particular,
I joined a local organization... that was the point I detracted from my career in multinational(s)... because (2 previous organizations) were both multinationals... and I felt the difference between multinational and national so then again I decided to join a multinational. I think national organizations have (a few) shortfalls which made me decide to join a multinational... number one benefit of customers... multinational did not compromise on their ethics so over time... national organizations lost their customers trust... they compromised on quality... then national companies... the top management did not have strategic business sense. It was a one-man show... there was no system... But multinationals had an established system... their HR... their financial systems were well aligned... (FC5B9)

It was interesting to note that even though the majority of the managers interviewed preferred employment in a multinational, and many had consciously made a transition to these preferred organizations from national organizations, there was a particular cadre of elite managers whose entire career history was restricted to these foreign companies. The number of inter-organizational moves for this particular group was the same as the rest of the cohort but the transitions were specifically between multinationals. These elite managers had the distinct luxury to redefine a relatively more constrained external labour market for themselves. The brand manager at Beverage Co (who had moved between two MNCs previously) highlighted the mindset of this elite group when he argued,

You can almost rate the organizations that take you further. And among the top league in fmcg’s in particular you would put P&G, Unilever, Pepsi and Coke and maybe Reckitt. And therefore if you are working in any of these 5 you do have an advantage over others. I think that’s how I would want to take it forward - to stay within a select group of companies. (CC3C21)

Another significant result in terms of directionality was the possible impact of the age variable on the direction of inter-organizational movements. The younger managers were building valuable work experience in foreign companies which they expected to ‘cash in’ in local organizations at a later stage in their careers. For instance, the branch sales manager at Bank Co explained that,

We people staying in the multinational banks honestly give less importance to the wages and salaries. I believe this is not the stage where we should go to a local bank. Later yes, after you get onto the top list, area manager and above then you should... then you can look out for the perks but right now the brand is needed more. (CB13)
This point of view was supported by the brand manager at Beverage Co, who had done a thorough analysis of achieved and potential organizational movements across his entire career lifecycle,

I’m pretty much at the start of my career. So right now I would rather invest in myself by sticking to (foreign) companies and by learning a lot and if I think that by the age of 50... I’m not getting anywhere then I’ll most probably take a rain check and go to a smaller company where I can enjoy a far more senior position and which pays me more as well... (CC3C21)

According to these views it would be feasible to expect the older managers in the sample to be considering imminent moves to national firms and reaping greater rewards both financially and in terms of organizational status. However, in reality the older managers interviewed revealed that they were no longer capable of adjusting in national organizations. A regional manager at Chemical Co explained that ‘when I saw the comparison between the national and the multinational organization… it reached the point … (where) I left it and was actually going to start my own business…” (FC5B9). Similarly, a very senior manager on the export side of Beverage Co when explaining his decision to seek employment in his current organization also admitted that he was more ‘...comfortable working in Beverage Co… I specifically chose a multinational environment...’ (CC8C11).

This could imply that anticipated external labour market flows were hypothesized in terms of movement from national organizations to MNCs during the initial career years and from MNCs to national organizations during the later stages. However, conscious efforts to gain a foothold in the coveted MNCs external labour market (ELM) towards the start of their careers, and continuous long-term employment within these foreign firms, made the eventual reality of the ELM flows very different from the perception. Therefore, over the course of the career lifetime older managers became incapable of removing the earlier self-imposed restrictions on their potential ELM. They chose to restrict employment (and potential movement) within MNCs despite only a few having the opportunity to progress further (and regain some of the financial rewards sacrificed) by getting international
opportunities (as will be discussed in Chapter 7).

Analysis highlighted that individual employees’ personal characteristics could restrict or increase psychological mobility across organizations. For instance, employee perception of their capacity to move across different employment contexts exhibited very little variation between older and younger managers. The younger employees were not only very confident of their capacity to adjust in different work domains but also actively (and regularly) considered potential career moves. This self-perceived notion of success beyond the current organization was also evident in older employees’ statements. This finding supported Segers et al (2008) results that age was not a significant predictor of a more psychologically mobile attitude. Even though the overall employee sample was predominantly young, falling within the 23-35 years age bracket (only 12 per cent were above 40 years of age), there was similarity in managers’ perception of their ability to achieve mobility across all ages.

Even though female employee sample was very small (only 14 per cent) analysis highlighted that psychological mobility was influenced by the gender variable. This variance held true despite the fact that most of the female managers’ actual mobility levels were similar to male managers. Female managers’ self-conceptualized capacity for inter-organizational mobility (i.e. psychological mobility) was negatively influenced by atypical working hours and positively influenced by employee diversity policies and organizational cultures. For instance, the customer relations manager at Beverage Co when referring to her previous employment in a global outsourcing company said that,

… I did not want to leave (previous organization)... it was because I got married… and the working hours… everyone was fine with it but I did not want my husband to have a virtual wife because I worked while everyone was sleeping. (CC15B20)

Despite exhibiting high job involvement and organizational commitment at her previous place of employment, jobs and organizations requiring atypical hours were no longer a possibility for her because of family commitments. Therefore, this gendered restriction of potential movement into certain
organizational contexts was based on subjective and societal perceptions regarding family roles rather than performance/adaptability issues. Secondly, one of the female managers consciously considered her employing organization’s commitment towards the recruitment and development of females in general when contemplating career moves,

When I joined… since it’s the oil sector I felt it is even more male dominated than other sectors in Pakistan but the organization’s environment is such that it’s very encouraging for women… and I think we have equal opportunities to grow. There are a few ladies here who are on very good senior managerial posts and that sets a good precedent for the rest of us. And the recent hiring they have done… most of them are females so it seems like the organization is very conscious about that… (TP9S19)

Organizational cultures and work environments also influenced female managers’ desire and potential ability to move across organizations. For example, an Energy Co brand manager admitted that,

… the environment you are working in… I think that makes a very big difference as well… I will give you a very small example… I wear trousers and western tops to work in the winters simply because I don’t like to be cold and it’s not a problem (here)… I have never felt uncomfortable… and for me that’s a very big plus… I know for a fact having worked in banks and having worked in a local company that that’s not the case over there so… it (is) a perk for me… there is a comfort level… (TP6S9)

Therefore, female managers’ self-perceived capacity to cross organizational boundaries in the future was limited by their own perceptions of different jobs and organizations, which resulted in relatively lower levels of psychological mobility as compared to male managers. A final predictor of psychological mobility was employee accumulation of relevant work experience. A good example would be that of the country finance manager at Beverage Co who had initially planned to augment his professional accountancy degree with an MBA because he argued, ‘if I want to eventually be a business manager, or a general manager or a country head I need to have the business knowledge and for that I need to formally educate myself’. However, after six years of managerial experience (across two organizations) his mentor (the previous country head of Beverage Co) advised him to build further on his work experience through diversified jobs within the organization instead of pursuing an MBA,
... he said... you don’t need to have (further) formal education. All you need to do is polish your skills in operations and marketing. Try to get involved in a lot of their projects ... and then after a few years... you will be ready. So... (I’ve) started involving myself more in the commercial finance role(s). (CC1C23)

This particular manager expected far greater opportunities within and outside his employing organization because he perceived his diversified work experience to have significantly improved his future employability and ability to make transitions within and across organizational boundaries. Similarly, a managerial employee had specifically moved between organizations in the past to increase his exposure to different work practices,

... my previous experience was also in a multinational firm so I could foresee that had a positive impact on my career path. Because in that job I was having experience on the Japanese management systems and now I am having experience on the American management system. So … I have got ample experience on both sides… when you have international qualifications, when you have international exposure… these things are what matter in terms of career development18.

In terms of psychological mobility specifically, these examples highlight how managers’ perceptions of their own potential to initiate inter-organizational moves were positively enhanced as result of their varied work experiences across different organizational contexts. Therefore, higher physical mobility in the past was positively correlated to higher psychological mobility in the future. A significant finding was that several junior managers who had as yet not undergone any actual physical transitions also exhibited high psychological mobility. These perceptions were based on their current work experiences, particularly the value attached to employment in foreign MNCs in the managerial ELM. As a management trainee at Bank Co aptly put it,

... if you have 3-4 years experience in Bank Co you are a very valuable asset. Compared to a local bank... we are very small... but despite the size the experience is exceptionally powerful and every day my value increases. And whenever people shift from this organization their financial package, their benefits, their position is all better than what they had here. Way above. If you spend enough time here you get the benefits... (CB12)

Consideration of the employee sample revealed that these Pakistani managers’

18 Interviewee code hidden to ensure organizational anonymity.
inter-organizational mobility was predicated on achieving upward progression and experiencing challenging career opportunities with high learning potential. Moreover, directionality of movement was often from national to multinational organizations because of the societal value attached to work experience in these foreign companies. Psychological mobility varied between male and female managers but showed no significant differences across age groups. Finally, employees with higher inter-organizational moves in the past also tended to exhibit higher psychological mobility with regards to future moves.

Cross-industry mobility

An analytical overview of all four organizations revealed that boundary-crossing behaviour was also evident across different industries (both in the past and the future). Individual employees’ cross-industry mobility choices were predicated on a range of factors incorporating managers’ subjective, personal evaluations and career goals (see Box I.4.i) as well as objective, external appraisals of the potential industry choices available to them (See Box I.4.ii). The most significant subjective factor was the desire to learn and the perception that movement(s) across industries positively enhanced individual employees’ knowledge base. This focus on knowledge enhancement was consistent with the predominant protean behaviour of continuous learning and involved the development of a range of general and/or technical skills through exposure to different industries/sectors. This exposure was expected to translate into both greater personal growth and faster organizational development. A key finding was that certain respondents engaged in far greater cross-industry mobility because previous movement across industries was perceived as directly increasing their capacity to adapt to new, unexplored contexts (similar to higher psychological mobility because of previous inter-organizational moves as discussed above).
These particular employees attributed their higher degree of cross-industry moves to a range of variables – such as their educational qualifications, exploration and development of general (rather than specific) occupational skill sets within their employing organizations, and past experience across a wider (as opposed to narrower) range of industries – that made future transitions into new industries a lot easier. For instance, general managers (located in functions like sales, marketing and finance) exhibited relatively
higher cross-industry mobility because of the requirement and application of a similar skills set across industries, as compared to Bank Co employees with strong professional identities and skills primarily relevant in the financial sector. These differences highlighted that despite evidence of boundary-crossing across different industries, employees also imposed certain broad mobility restrictions on other sectors. Even though there were exceptions to this rule however, the overall trend was that managers in Bank Co predominantly favoured moves within the financial and service sectors specifically whereas many managers in the other three MNCs preferred to stick to the industrial/manufacturing context. For instance, a senior manager at Beverage Co (with previous moves between the textile, automobile and now beverage industry) explicitly stated that, ‘I would prefer to remain in the industrial side rather than shifting to a bank or some other service organization…’ (CC18B19). Conversely, a relationship manager at Bank Co stated that, ‘as long as I’m in the financial sector I have no problems switching companies…’ (CB6).19

Finally, even though employee learning and development and ease of adaptability were the most consistent subjective variables cited in interviews for cross-industry movement, some managers also referred to the indirect impact of their individual personalities that made the process of industry shifts easier and in some cases even imperative. For instance, the brand manager at Chemical Co when describing his initial decision to move back to Pakistan (from Belgium) as ‘a person coming from abroad’ and his trepidation at moving into an agro-chemical industry primarily serving the rural areas of the country, attributed his ability to deal with this ‘hurdle’ because of his personality and ability to see the move as challenge rather than a handicap (FC1B3). Similarly, a management trainee at Beverage Co, when asked whether she would move to another industry, candidly admitted that ‘Of course…I always like diversity. I also get bored very easily doing one kind of job and I think that if the opportunity arises I would definitely take it up’ (CC7C10). The customer services manager at the same organization also

19 Additional nuances of this delineation between the different groups of managers will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 6.
raised an interesting point about her personality not suiting certain industries which ultimately made her shift,

In Pakistan unfortunately the understanding is that girls should be more into the education sector… but I am not the teaching sort and I am not the sitting at the desk 9-5 sort… I constantly need to be challenged everyday… in the education sector you need to very patient and you need to do the same things day in day out. So that slow pace didn’t suit me either (CC15B20).

Apart from these subjective influences on cross-industry moves certain external variables were also highlighted during the analysis stage. There was evidence of conscious industry hopping by the managerial employees under consideration. Their decision to cross boundaries within the external labour market and move across different industries was based on two main factors, 1) employee evaluation of the nature of different industries (specifically their health and growth rates) and 2) the nature of work symptomatic of specific industries (see Box I.4.ii). Several respondents explicitly referred to, and were seen to have acted upon, a subjective analysis of different industries and there was a deliberate effort to link their own careers with the most advantageous options available. Boundaryless movement between industries was first of all predicated on the overall characteristics of the industry – that is, the size and significance of the industry for the economy as a whole, the number of key organizational players and the ratio of national versus multinational firms (because of employees’ preference for working in foreign MNCs as discussed in the previous section). For example, a middle manager at Beverage Co was specifically targeting the fertilizer industry for a future move since ‘the fertilizer sector… is particularly important in Pakistan’ (CC11C14) because of the country’s primarily agrarian economy. A large majority of the employees interviewed also sought to determine ascendancy patterns, based on subjective rating, whereby different industries were ranked on the basis of which industry was seen to be performing better financially, which industry was growing more, and most importantly which industry was expected to sustain this growth. Answers to these questions determined the rate and direction of inter-industry transitions, with employees favouring those industries whose growth and overall health ensured long term career opportunities. For example, the area manager at Energy Co justified his current and future decisions to move
across industries as,

Anything related to the financial or the power sector, the energy sector… that’s where the growth is. Probably I’ll stick to this industry now…. And because of the nature of the (oil) industry really. There are a lot less layoffs in this industry. And probably more jobs than any other sector… the oil industry is pretty much the best one to work in… and so the opportunities for me are more as well… (TP11S17)

**Box I.4.ii Cross-industry mobility: External influences**

- **Nature of industry**

  … for the time being I will stick to the petroleum industry because there is a lot of growth in this area. Because of the current economic recession I think the petroleum (industry) has been the most profitable… the profit might have gone down from previous years but it’s definitely earning more than other industries. (TP2S4)

  (currently employed in Bank Co) I’m thinking of moving to the telecom industry because of the financial crisis and the credit crisis we have in Pakistan at the moment… telecom industry specifically… because it is in boom at the moment and seems relatively less affected by the credit crunch… (CB16)

  For Chemical Co I don’t think the financial conditions (will) really impact our operations in Pakistan. (Pakistan’s) population is increasing, our food requirements are severe and our farmers need more yield per acre and we have expanded our brands, our territories and we are seeing that our business opportunities are growing rather than shrinking inspite of the financial problems worldwide. (FC3B6)

  (brand manager at Beverage Co) I like marketing and fmcg is the training ground for marketing and even in the long term this is probably the best industry to be working in… particularly for someone wanting to develop a marketing career. If you move out of fmcg from marketing (perspective) the other industry you can go to is consumer electronics but they don’t have their marketing offices in Pakistan and secondly marketing isn’t their core function, it’s generally engineering so you kind of get the backseat and that doesn’t take you towards important positions from the long term career perspective. So considering this factors fmcg is the best option… if you want to stick to marketing. (CC3C21)

- **Nature of work offered by industry**

  (previously worked in a telecommunications company) … you need to see the overall business situation in Pakistan… the business circumstances regarding the (telecommunications) sector… they’ve almost covered all the areas of Pakistan so now they are just trying to wind up here because there is no more expansion … so you can also say no more responsibilities for a civil engineer… all the civil works have been successfully executed all over Pakistan. So what I was feeling was basically… under-utilized… being a civil engineer I wasn’t achieving much. (TP5S8)

  … there were a lot of issues in the stock market… over there as well (my job) was an equity sales job… and in terms of sales I couldn’t see further career opportunity… that’s why I switched to banking… (CB6)

  Actually I was looking at the management side of the story… it doesn’t matter for me which industry I am in… because in (previous organization) I was a part of the management… so when I left I came into plant management over here… (FC4B8)
Moreover, since the predominant focus of these employees was consistently on personal and professional development through learning (as constantly alluded to in detail in the previous sections) it was not surprising that past and potential cross-industry mobility was also predicated on the nature of work available in specific industries/sectors. Respondents across all four organizations when explaining cross-industry mobility highlighted the nature of work such as the ability to work on a ‘multi-product dimension’, maintaining ‘direct contact with the consumers’, constant diversity and change in work assignments that alleviated boredom and monotony, a ‘fast paced’ work environment, the importance of exposure to best practices across different industries, and so on.

Analysis revealed that individual employees’ self-perceived movement across industries was subject to certain gender restrictions, signifying lower psychological mobility for female versus male managers. Even though female managers only comprised 14 per cent of the overall employees interviewed, yet despite a small sample size their psychological mobility across industries specifically was relatively limited compared to male managers. Several of the female managers interviewed placed a lot of emphasis on ‘work environments’ and offered examples of industries that were unsuitable or undesirable as potential moves – thereby highlighting restricted capacity for perceived mobility. Two female managers explicitly stated that they would be unwilling to move to the banking industry. For instance, a management trainee within HR in Beverage Co explained,

I don’t have exposure to many industries but I definitely don’t want to go into banking because I have interned at a bank… banks are set to lure customers to meet targets…and they use girls as a tool to achieve that… to attract men into putting money in the bank… (CC13B22)

Similarly the credit control executive at Energy Co argued that,

I think in the banking sector even if you are in the corporate or the consumer side you have to meet people and handle male clients who are basically desi\textsuperscript{20}… even if it’s a multinational bank. I actually got a job at Bank 1… I was hired as a relationship

\textsuperscript{20} A colloquial expression that is often used pejoratively to imply ‘rustic’, ‘illiterate’ or ‘uncouth’.
manager… I went for only 4 days and they told me to just sit there and meet with customers… I felt it was a front desk job… and it was something I wasn’t really comfortable with… (TP9S19)

These negative perceptions were not shared by the two female managers interviewed in Bank Co. However, the examples can be used to hypothesize that female employees’ perception of their capacity for mobility may be relatively constrained because of subjective assessments of different industries specifically predicated on their gender (for male managers did not report any such limitations when considering moves across industries/sectors).

5.4 Conclusion

Analysis of individual employees’ interviews revealed that Pakistani managers did exhibit certain protean and boundaryless career orientations. However, the actual implementation of these orientations was not a straight-forward process and involved realistic compromises, responses to organizational constraints and differentials across employee groups. Therefore, individual managers engaged in the subjective self-evaluations reminiscent of protean careers by focusing on continuous learning rather than upward mobility and financial rewards in the short-term. Employees also exhibited greater commitment to their careers rather than their employing organizations. However, professional pride, self-esteem and work identities were influenced by personal/subjective and organizational/ objective determinants. Similarly, boundaryless career orientations were also evident with regards to inter-organizational and cross-industry movements. However, these transitions were simultaneously predicated on subjective, protean values such as learning, self-directed development and increased adaptability as well as organizational/ structural determinants such as upward progression, organization type (national versus foreign enterprises) and the growth and health of different industries/sectors. Moreover, the uptake of protean and boundaryless career orientations varied across different employee groups. All employees sought to increase adaptability. However, specialists sought to improve flexibility and employability across employment contexts by initiating transitions into generalist roles while general managers sought to sustain adaptability by
resisting learning in unrelated employment contexts. Similarly, female managers exhibited comparable inter-organizational mobility with male managers but self-limited psychological mobility because of perceptions of organizational policies, company cultures and industry/sector characteristics. These results have significant theoretical implications for careers research and practical implications for employers encouraging or responding to these ‘new’ career orientations.

From a theoretical perspective consideration of Pakistani managers’ protean and boundary career orientations highlighted the significance attached to learning. Individual employees were seen to accept lower financial rewards and delayed upward mobility on the basis of extensive and valuable learning opportunities within their employing organizations. Moreover, they often evaluated future career opportunities in other organizations in terms of learning potential as well. The learning variable has been flagged up in existing careers literature. The protean career in particular has been highlighted as a ‘continuous learning process’ (Kerno 2009: 321) whereby autonomous individual career actors experiencing reduced external/organizational support find that ‘a developmental or learning process is required to adapt’ to these new employment conditions (Hall 1996: 10). Hall and Moss (1998) have argued that continuous learners will survive and thrive because ‘the most important driver of learning for employees is the fact that the new career contract is not with the organization; it is with the self and one’s work’ (p. 28-30). However, despite the significance of learning empirical research on contemporary careers treat this variable simply as a correlate rather than a necessary component of these careers (Briscoe et al 2006). The problem with this approach is that learning is seen as an outcome of ‘new’ career attitudes rather than a viable individual career strategy to internalize and enact these attitudes. My results show that continuous learning and professional development is the most dominant career strategy deployed by individual employees to enhance their self-directed, psychological and physical mobility. In fact, the dominant attitudes ascribed to these contemporary career concepts such as versatility, flexibility and autonomy (Hall 1976, 1996; Kerno 2009) were primarily predicated on learning.
Therefore, these Pakistani managers’ internalization of these ‘new’ career attitudes such as individual agency (seen through self-evaluation, career commitment and psychological boundarylessness) and flexibility (seen through adaptability attitudes and mobility patterns) was dependent on the availability and nature of learning opportunities within their employing organizations.

This has wide-ranging implications for the study of these ‘new’ careers. From a theoretical perspective it highlights the inadequate operationalization and subsequent empirical investigation of these contemporary career concepts. Inkson (2006) has argued that protean and boundaryless career concepts are dominant, ‘attention-grabbing’, broadly functional metaphors that should be seen as ‘models of particular career types rather than full-blown theories of career’ because they need additional elaboration, accuracy and constructiveness (p. 58-60). They continue to be relevant career concepts because their ‘complementarity’ with ‘organizational and social changes’ (Inkson 2006) and ‘changes in employment practices’ (Valcour and Tolbert 2003) has made them ‘a standard part of the new career vernacular’ (Briscoe and Hall 2006: 1). However, the efficacy and utility of these metaphors is circumscribed because of the predominant focus on the identification of career attitudes rather than career behaviours. This is especially true for the formalized consideration of protean careers and psychological boundarylessness that are predicated on individual actors’ dominant career values, attitudes and aspirations. Career attitudes such as ‘freedom, self-direction, and making choices based on one’s personal values’ are investigated (Briscoe and Hall 2006: 6) resulting in a research focus on cognitive and evaluative components of these careers at the cost of investigating vocational behavior (Briscoe et al 2006). Career behaviours have been highlighted with regards to physical mobility by measuring the number of inter-organizational moves (Sullivan and Arthur 2006). The key argument is that a similar approach needs to be applied in understanding protean career attitudes and psychological mobility mindsets so that the behavioral component and its connection to these dominant attitudes can be highlighted.
A second problem with this approach is that protean and boundaryless career attitudes are conceptualized to have differential impacts on physical mobility patterns (Briscoe et al 2006). However, the relatively passive but equally important career behaviour of continuous learning is sidelined and therefore, its impact on precipitating or delaying inter-organizational mobility is lost. My results revealed that learning was a significant career behaviour that needs explicit (rather than superficial) consideration in contemporary careers literature because it was the key career asset that underpinned individual actors’ psychological and physical mobility. Therefore, protean career values were in evidence because these Pakistani managers deployed the subjective strategy of continuous learning. Moreover, this learning strategy in turn influenced their boundarylessness particularly with regards to inter-organizational mobility.

Individual employees’ career orientations highlighted in this chapter also have significant implications for the employing organizations’ responses to these changing career conceptualizations. Contemporary careers focus on individual employees’ self-directed, values-driven, mobility highlights the key development that ‘individuals may be separating their career involvement from a single organization’ (Granrose and Baccili 2006: 164). However, the key questions to ask are the extent to which this separation is being enacted in work environments and what role do employers play in either encouraging or responding to these changes in the employment relationship and the psychological contract? The findings in this chapter highlight individual employees’ implicit and explicit consideration organizational/structural factors in the uptake and enactment of these career orientations. Therefore, ‘new’ career claims that individual employees are ‘defining and discovering career success on their own terms’ (Briscoe et al 2006: 43) need to be treated with caution. In fact, the key change in terms of career development may be that these individually-motivated career actors now expect employers to provide the resources and opportunities needed to achieve the ‘continuous learning which will result in the creation of employability’ (Hall and Moss 1998: 26). It is important to realize that the study of careers requires a ‘two-pronged approach’ (Gunz 1989: 27) because career development is a joint process
involving individual career planning and organizational/institutional career management (Gutteridge 1986). Thus, there is a need to move away from a naïve emphasis on ‘the primacy of individual needs, goals, and values’ (Pfeffer 1989: 393) because individualism is in itself ‘not sufficient to describe many career-related phenomena in organizations’ (Rosenbaum 1989: 349). Therefore, key issues to consider are ‘how do organizations respond appropriately to employees in this new era of careers?’ (Currie et al 2006: 771) and what is the analytical imperative for ‘studying the interaction of individual, organizational and social worlds’ (Pringle and Mallon 2003: 850). Moreover, there needs to be explicit acknowledgement that the internal and external careers are both psychological constructs and will therefore have very different ‘meanings in different cultures’ (Derr and Laurent 1989: 458). To this end the next chapter specifically looks at the organizational and implicit societal/institutional influences on Pakistani managers’ career orientations and subsequent career development.
Chapter 6 – Organizational and Institutional Influences on Managerial Career Development

6.1 Introduction

Contemporary careers literature emphasizes individual employees’ self-directed, values-driven approach to career development (Hall 1976; Briscoe and Hall 2006) that focuses on individually-defined psychological success (Hall 2002) across different employer boundaries (Arthur and Rousseau 1996). These ‘new’ careers have questioned ‘the ubiquity of (the) traditional model’ (Storey et al 1997: 67) with its focus on job security and career development along a well-defined career ladder in return for employees’ organizational commitment and performance (Waterman et al 1994; Granrose and Baccili 2005). With regards to the employment relationship there have been claims of additional emphasis on the market-oriented system (Dore 1989) and a move away from the traditional psychological contract to the ‘dreaded employability contract’ (Cappelli 1999a: 1). However, others have argued that these changes and tensions are still played out within the confines of a relatively durable internal labour market (Butler et al 2006; Grimshaw et al 2001) and the traditional employment relationship remains resilient (McGovern et al 2007; Jacoby 1999). A key finding is that these resilient internal labour markets differ in strength across different organizations (Storey et al 1997). In light of these theoretical debates this chapter explores the strength of the internal labour market and the nature of the employment relationship across the four case study multinationals in the Pakistani context. Therefore, the key research objectives were i) to explore whether these ‘new’ career concepts and the associated ‘marketization’ of the employment relationship were supported or contradicted by these MNCs’ HRM policies and practices, ii) to highlight any variations in ILM conditions across the different organizations and iii) to examine the degree of influence exerted by distinctive institutional and societal arrangements on the employment relationship within these foreign subsidiaries. The following sections consider analytical results across the key HR policy areas (i.e. recruitment and selection, training and development, job security and intra-organizational mobility) that highlighted contrasts between
6.2 Recruitment and selection

A striking similarity across all four case study MNCs was the pragmatic and realistic substitution of ideal and realistic employee attributes during the recruitment and selection phase. However, what was particularly significant about this process of compromise was the constant interplay between the explicit organizational goals and the implicit institutional/societal preferences during the recruitment and selection phase. Employer level interviews revealed that senior managers applied two different sets of characteristics to choose potential candidates (see Box II.1.i).

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**Box II.1.i Recruitment and selection: A compromise of ideal and realistic criteria**

- …when I was in the (U.S.) we used to get people from certain schools that were preferred just because of the standing of those schools… if you talk about in Pakistan I think again … we wanted (certain) schools…that were preferred over the others but the nationality, the colour, the culture, the background was never the factor… *Chemical Co HR manager Asia-Pacific region*
- It really depends on the individual…I mean if you are working in local organization and you have the skill, knowledge and expertise then why not… we don’t care if you are working in a local place… but most of the time we are looking for people who have worked or are working in a multinational organization… *Energy Co Vice President HR*
- We have a set criteria which we use in our filtration process of CV’s … we try our best to go for the best institutions… then the second best and then if we need to compromise some more then the 3rd level…. *Energy Co recruitment manager*
- … in Pakistan you do have many good universities and good institutions so that is not a criteria that we prefer foreign degrees… but definitely we still feel that in Pakistan the foreign degrees are always preferred because they have a broader scope than the Pakistani students… *Beverage Co country HR manager*
- … personality counts a lot for us… perhaps we may compromise on the experience but we can’t compromise on the personality. People having less experience but high rating in terms of personality… we know that they can do something and make something of their jobs… *Beverage Co country HR manager*
- there is no preference that a person has to be from a foreign bank or a local bank… a lot of the people in the top positions (in local banks) are people from foreign banks… so they have trained their (employees) there (in a similar way)… I sometimes find great people from local banks… *Bank Co Vice President corporate banking*
The first list comprised of ideal features. These included a postgraduate degree (preferably from abroad or some of the top schools of the country) in a directly relevant subject (with implicit preference given to business degrees), prior relevant work experience in a multinational and personal attributes that fit in well with the organizational culture. These ideal characteristics resonate with Storey et al’s (1997) research on managerial recruitment and selection in Japanese companies and the focus on sourcing an elite cadre of graduates from prestigious national universities. However, there also existed a more realistic list of selection criteria whereby an undergraduate degree in a directly relevant subject, internships or work experience in large, well-known national organizations and well matched personal attributes were considered. Since the recruitment and selection process often involved a panel of people, a balance was struck between the ideal and the realistic. For instance, the HR department tended to focus on qualifications and work experience while the line managers focused more on personal attributes. There was a conscious decision to balance out different criteria - such as a foreign degree with experience in a local organization or a local degree with the capacity/personality to ‘fit’ within the organization (for example, ambitious, able to take pressure, professional attitude to work, and excellent communication skills). However, what was particularly interesting was that this degree of compromise between the ideal and the realistic attributes did not stray too far from the existing standard of the internal labour markets (ILMs). Even when the organizations explicitly sought employee diversity through a ‘mix in terms of the background… thinking patterns… educational institutions’, the nature of Pakistan’s small, predominantly elite, managerial external labour market constrained the degree of choice that could be exerted at the recruitment and selection stage. This created a relatively similar labour pool belonging to the country’s social and economic elite, exhibiting high career self-efficacy, and capable of capitalizing on personal and professional networks if needed.

There was an implicit ILM preference for these ambitious, well-educated employees, with some foreign exposure (either through foreign education or work experience in MNCs) because of two key organizational objectives. Firstly, these employees were seen as highly compatible within the context of
foreign organizations pursuing the transfer and implementation of certain distinctly Western management practices. Beverage Co’s country HR manager on the export side argued that managerial employees with experience in foreign MNCs were given preference during the recruitment stage,

...first of all because of the culture... because we believe that all the multinationals have a more or less same culture... so people coming from that slot will be knowing the norms of the company and the business and that really helps them to settle down quickly in Beverage Co as well.

Similarly, Chemical Co’s HR manager for the Asia-Pacific region explicitly admitted that,

We did look at many companies... but definitely there was a preference for getting people from multinationals... ... for the very reason that the grooming, the learning, the exposure, of those candidates was at a different level... at a different pedestal... sometimes we would find some very good talent from some of the national, local companies... but mostly that was people (with) 2 to 5 years of work experience ... they presented you with a lot of potential... what I used to call the rough diamonds... so bring them in... kind of nurture them, groom them, train them, and they can fit into the culture. But bringing in somebody at a senior level from a totally different background was usually not something we preferred...

Given the social and economic disparities in Pakistan’s societal structures (as discussed in the literature review) specifically targeting managerial employees with prior exposure to, and greater appreciation of, foreign policies (such as performance related pay, individualized evaluation and appraisal and focus on meritocracy rather than seniority) automatically meant tapping into a higher social and economic class. Moreover, there would be no major cultural or linguistic challenges in these employees’ interaction with foreign affiliates or senior management within their employing MNC’s global operations. Linked to this was an additional organizational consideration (primarily in Beverage Co, export side and Chemical Co) of recruiting candidates who had the potential to eventually become members of the small, internationally mobile, managerial cadre in these organizations (as will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 7). For instance, a very senior HR manager at Chemical Co noted that,

I recall a lot of times I would say to my colleagues oh you’ve got to take this person
in and see him 5 years down the road and see him become a potential for cross-border assignments… and in that I would say the personality… the communication… written and verbal… and their ability to express themselves were some of the factors we really looked at long and hard.

A second reason behind this implicit organizational pursuit of a relatively homogenous ILM during the recruitment and selection phase could have been to hire candidates capable of adapting and responding to a relatively more tenuous employment relationship. Traditionally, Pakistani managers employed in national organizations experience a relatively protected and stable employment relationship, embedded in collectivist and paternalistic organizational cultures (Eldridge and Mahmood 1993; Rieger and Wong-Rieger 1990). Therefore, Cappelli’s (1999a) notion of a ‘marketized’ employment relationship within the Pakistani context would be more applicable in these foreign MNCs, with strong corporate performance pressures, rather than the monolithic and relatively protected national organizations. Employee level interviews highlighted a pragmatic acceptance of this new employment contract (considered in detail in the section on job security). Thus, it may be hypothesized that the implicit employer preference for limiting recruitment and selection to a relatively small, elite group of employees may have been senior management’s response to this ‘new’ contract. If senior managers had to ‘lower the expectations of employees by limiting the employer’s obligations on job security and career development’ (Cappelli 1999a: 1) they chose to employ candidates most capable (in social and financial terms) of shouldering these additional responsibilities for their careers and jobs.

However, there was an interesting exception to this implicit homogeneity in the internal labour market. Chemical Co had ambitious growth and expansion plans for the Pakistani operations and therefore, needed relatively greater stability in their ILM. In order to achieve this stability they pursued a distinct recruitment and selection strategy for specific parts of their operations that was less focused on the elite managerial cohort. At the territory operations Chemical Co had started targeting young graduates with little work experience, often referred to as ‘young blood’, with overall greater ‘exposure’,
capable of ‘out of the box thinking’ along with a ‘…positive attitude, the ability to think big and think far, aggressiveness, and passion as well’. This was because the growth plans were primarily going to be driven through the regional sales officers and the senior sales officers (i.e. the lower management tiers at the regional territories). This anticipated company growth would make these lower level managers a core employee group handling increasingly diversified product/service portfolios, identifying new clients, providing additional advisory services to existing clients, and increasing market penetration across several agricultural regions. Therefore, young, high performing managers without the elite social, educational or work backgrounds were targeted to create a more stable labour market at the territories. There was evidence in employer interviews that the pool of candidates recruited for these regional sales offices were very different from the elite business graduates recruited for the Pakistani head office. Candidates with local agricultural post-graduate degree were preferred primarily because they would have a better idea of the Pakistani agricultural needs and the primary sector specifically. As a result the management was very aware that the primarily urban, elite candidates were unlikely to apply for (or be interested in) jobs in the outlying/rural locations where the business was being developed. For instance, a regional sales manager admitted,

…at my level people with a foreign degree might not come to me… because it’s the job of a sales officer… so usually people who have graduated from here apply for those… at the regional level it’s usually nationally qualified candidates… because even if I want to hire them (foreign qualified candidates) they might not really want to take up a job at the level I manage.

A comparative analysis across all four case study MNCs highlighted that the formal recruitment and selection process involved compromises between ideal and realistic characteristics and sought to enhance employee diversity. However, the small size of the managerial external labour market and the similarities shared by these elite managers (in terms of educational and socio-economic backgrounds) meant that the internal labour markets were quite homogenous. Employer interviews highlighted an implicit preference for accepting and sometimes actively maintaining this homogeneity because the
managerial elite helped fulfill several organizational objectives such as employee internalization of Western management practices and organizational cultures, better employee-organization fit, employee acceptance of the ‘marketization’ and individualization of the employment relationship and the creation of a potential cadre of international managers.

6.3 Training and development

All four organizations offered substantial training for their employees and the main differences lay in the nature (general versus firm-specific) and provision (formal versus informal) of these training and developmental opportunities. Bank Co and Beverage Co both offered the greatest amount of formal training with an annual average of five to six courses (although some employees in Bank Co received formal training on a monthly basis). Both organizations had well-planned annual ‘training calendars’ and most of the employees interviewed expressed satisfaction with the training provision. However, there were interesting differences between these two MNCs. Beverage Co offered a large variety of formal training courses (general and firm-specific) for all management levels within the Pakistani subsidiary (see appendix 6). Moreover, senior managers had the additional option of identifying training opportunities on the ‘Beverage Co university’ website and were then sponsored by their managers to attend these trainings in international locations. For instance, the head of the public affairs and communications department highlighted that,

... at my level I have to attend 3-4 trainings... its mandatory for me per year... so these are the trainings I chose for myself... in different subjects… (they) can be within Pakistan but they can also be abroad… if it is within Pakistan then the trainer will be from abroad to teach us… and generally I can go abroad anywhere within my region ... exceptionally I can go outside my region as well. (CC16B17)

On the other hand, there was very little organizational emphasis on, and provision of, informal training within the Pakistani subsidiary. For instance, a senior manager on the bottler’s side argued that ‘I would say as an organization, different functions have different levels of on-the-job training.
Honestly I think there is a huge gap that I feel coming from the U.S. to Pakistan although it’s a multinational…” (CC8C11). Similarly, a senior manager in the IT department admitted that, ‘I do a lot of coaching because I actually enjoy developing my people here but formal structure of coaching is still not developed’ (CC10C13). Junior employees sometimes even explored the option of contacting colleagues laterally within the international Beverage Co operations (particularly on the export side) for additional information and advice because informal training and mentoring within the Pakistani workplace was not a well-established practice. An employee interview with the business applications manager highlighted,

... it’s my own effort to... see how I can improve things... we do get guidance from our bosses on how to do things but they are mere judgements, almost a formality. So what I usually do is I get in touch with other Beverage Co systems, and see how they are doing things abroad. So our counterparts in Turkey etc… we get to know how they are doing things and if we can replicate all that over here… so we do have a lot of lateral learning across systems... over here we don’t get much training from our bosses… we are mostly left to our own resources. CC6C16

There was some evidence to suggest that the organization was trying to overcome this; particularly after the recently launched graduate recruitment scheme in which all candidates had been allocated senior managers as ‘mentors’ and ‘advisors’. For example, a management trainee in the finance department explained that,

... all of the management trainees including myself have a mentor and that mentor is not associated with the function at all... mine is the chief commercial officer… so he has no involvement with the finance department and I can talk to him about anything or everything whether it is personal or professional. And that’s a very strong part of the informal training because on [sic] every meeting mentors are asked how they are communicating with their management trainees, and what is going on and what problems we are facing. (CC7C10)

A significant finding was that there were intra-organizational differentials in the provision of informal, on-the-job training between functions. Several managers highlighted how ‘an excellent and very successful example of on-the-job development is for the sales guys…’ and how ‘there are a few functions where on the job training is a must… for example in the sales department…’
Bank Co also offered a large number of formal training programmes ranging from general personal development courses to firm and job-specific training (see appendix). The corporate banking head for Lahore argued that,

Bank Co’s (training) is more intensive and I guess… more organized… because if you are in so many countries you need to have a certain degree of formalized level of training… the policies and procedures are a lot more elaborate so you need to have gone through them and basically understand them… you need to be trained in various situations…

With regards to formal training specifically there was a relatively greater focus on the more firm-specific courses because employees needed to be formally trained with regards to both the corporate/organizational and Pakistani banking and financial sector rules and regulations. An employer interview with a branch manager highlighted that,

… if the training is for systems and security… then that is communicated by head offices in like UK, or U.S… and if they are training for example for sales training or services training [then that is Pakistani based].

Moreover, there were also intra-organizational differentials in the provision of training, with the core employee groups (i.e. bankers within the corporate and branch banking functions) being offered relatively more training because of their direct and intensive contact with customers as compared to more back-end, support functions. For example, a Bank Co executive in branch banking revealed he attended trainings ‘once a month or maybe twice a month… on average once a month… its mandatory… we have to attend… it’s for sales and services particularly…’ (CB5). In marked contrast a personal banker in the auxiliary services and sales coordination department argued that, ‘Bank Co doesn’t invest on training a lot... you have to learn it yourself. Usually whatever knowledge comes and goes is from your seniors’ (CB17). Similarly, the quality assurance reviewer highlighted that

Actually… most of the trainings Bank Co provides to front-end staff… I’m back end staff… again bank’s main concern is to make money so that’s why they spend a lot of money on front end staff… so they don’t provide a lot of training to back end staff… only basic training… once in a year (CB8).
However, Bank Co supplemented these differentials in training provision with extensive informal, on-the-job training for all employee levels across all departments. In fact, experiential learning and supervisory support and mentorship were seen as an integral part of the organizational culture. The corporate banking head revealed that,

... there is of course on-the-job training as well... a lot of this is mentoring and coaching ...as you have your subordinates working with you and they see how you are (working) they pick up tips from you...you give feedback along the year... and a part of the supervisory function is to develop your people and their soft skills and that is my responsibility.

Chemical Co had the lowest level of formal training (both general and firm-specific) as compared to the other MNCs studied, with many employees citing a maximum of two trainings annually. However, like Bank Co there was a strong organizational focus on extensive, on-the-job, informal training with senior managers actively involved in developing their human resources. This training and development approach was predicated on the lean structure of the organization and a global strategic orientation that emphasized informal, on-the-job training rather than formal training. The Asia-Pacific HR manager captured this organizational approach in her statement,

Chemical Co’s never been big on training... the definition of conventional training is you go to a workshop... sit in a seminar the whole day... you’re not doing work... in my mind training is if I’m coaching somebody and telling somebody how to do it... I think again there was a lot of unwritten, unspoken on-the-job training... a lot of other multinationals have a ... whole programme with everything kind of calendarized... (but in Chemical Co) it was very unstructured ... again it’s a very corporate thing... it’s the culture of Chemical Co... in Pakistan over the last few years there’s been a lot more focus... maybe not as far as people may want it to be... but then again training doesn’t add a lot of value ... it can’t be added up ... it has to be reflected in individuals... so (the question is) how much do we need to spend on training workers and how much do we want to stretch these people and give them different kinds of exposure and learning and provide them training in a different light. Pretty much that’s how it’s done globally.

Even though formal training opportunities were relatively limited, there were intra-organizational differentials in the provision of these opportunities. Firstly, the lower management levels employed at the territories (across the different geographical locations within the country) were offered extensive general sales-related and product-specific training. However, many of these
Trainings were in-house, conducted by the senior managers from the country head office and the manufacturing plant. The head of sales and marketing revealed that,

… the marketing team… we sit together and we make a complete sales call for a product when it’s launched and then I go to the (sales) people and give them a very interactive training. I even teach them how to speak… how to stand… how to see the customer… what words you have to say when doing a sales call… This year we have a plan… so from different regions we are going to take one person who is very good in making a sales call… we are going to collect them together… and then we are going to make a training cell for Chemical Co… for the products (specifically).

Secondly, senior management from the territories and middle and senior managers at the head office were also offered general and product-specific training but in international locations within the MNC’s global operations. A senior HR manager highlighted that ‘we could be doing stuff… that was done more on the regional side… and of course the audience for that was… very very selective because of the cost…’ Recently, these senior managers had also been offered business strategy trainings, once again by foreign training consultants, to help them achieve their ambitious growth plans. For example, a senior marketing manager mentioned a recent training where ‘all the management… 50 people… we were in Tashkent… we had a trainer from outside and he gave the training to think outside the box to push limits…’

Finally, support functions such as HR, administration and IT were offered the least amount of formal training (either general or firm-specific) because they had no direct customer contact, were not involved with the production and distribution of the specialist products, and their roles were primarily limited to the Pakistani subsidiary. For example, the HR and administration supervisor felt that,

On the job training is more over here… that culture is very much there… (but) the focus is more on sales and marketing. I learn the soft skills on my own. I always propose trainings… but with all the budgeting constraints and the overall culture sometimes you just feel… what’s the point it’s not going to happen! (FC6B10)

Finally, Energy Co lay in the middle of this training and development organizational continuum across the four MNCs and had a very distinctive approach to training and development. It offered extensive formal training
during each employee’s orientation which included a wide range of general as well as firm-, function- and product-specific courses. However, after this initial and intensive training phase, training opportunities were limited to a maximum of four formal workshops annually for all managerial employees across the different departments. The area manager of retail explained the situation as,

… they are like we trained you when you were hired… which they did… they train us for almost 2 months when we were hired… but after that they are like… figure it out… sometimes your manager just leaves you out there… hanging… and that is when you wish there was some support. (TP11S17)

Significantly, out of all four MNCs this organization’s provision of formal training exhibited the least amount of differentials across the different employee groups and departments. The Pakistani subsidiary followed the central, corporate strategy of a formal, well-defined training schedule that was then applied across all departments and hierarchical levels. The HR vice-president explained that,

… we call it a training passport… there are 2 things… one is the management training path and it is for the job so it is well-defined already. For example 0-3 years in a sales job you need to do this, this, this… 3-5 years middle management you need to do this, this, this… (the other thing is) the individual training path. That will come from the line management in the annual appraisal process…so the line management will identify the training courses one, required for the present job, two required for the overall career. HR…will evaluate and validate it… then we will make the training plan, get it approved by the CEO and then it will be implemented over the whole year.

There was also some evidence of informal training and mentoring. For instance, the brand manager within the marketing department valued the ‘mentoring’ provided by her line manager who had ‘14 years of experience in the industry… so my experience is nowhere near his… but it’s a great advantage because he can tell me things’ (TP6S9). However, since there was no established organizational culture and precedent for informal training (as in the case of Bank Co and Chemical Co), informal on-the-job training depended entirely on different senior managers’ personal approach to employee development. Many employees argued that ‘it’s all very formal and there isn’t a lot of focus on on-the-job aspect’ (TP3S6) and ‘learning from others is not
something very common here. You need to learn by yourself” (TP4S7).

Table III.1i Formal and informal training: A summary of results

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<th>Formal Training</th>
<th>Informal training (on-the-job development)</th>
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<td></td>
<td>General</td>
<td>Firm-specific</td>
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<td>Beverage Co</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bank Co</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chemical Co</td>
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<td>Energy Co</td>
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A cross-comparative analysis of the four case-study multinationals highlighted that there were inter-organizational and intra-organizational variations in the nature and provision of training and development opportunities offered to their managerial employees. However, a significant similarity was the strong organizational emphasis on training and development and the durability of internal labour market conditions. Given that all the employees interviewed were graduates, with a significant number holding postgraduate qualifications, organizations had the option of rationalizing their training programs. However, individual career orientations in the previous chapter highlighted that learning was a key career strategy and organizational commitment, as well as pursuit of alternative employment opportunities, depended on the degree of learning and development offered by their employing organizations. These ‘new’ career orientations may have exerted implicit pressures on these MNCs to fulfill employee expectations. Employer interviews highlighted the cost-based emphasis on fulfilling ‘training needs’ that benefitted the organization rather than ‘training needs’ based on employee demands alone. However, at the same time employer interviews also underlined that ‘employees drive their own training’ schedule to quite a large extent. Perhaps this is why organizations offered fairly extensive training and in cases of intra-organizational inequalities sometimes sought to supplement these gaps through substitution with informal developmental opportunities. For instance, Chemical Co supplemented high informal training to compensate for low formal training opportunities.
6.4 Job Security

Employer and employee accounts regarding job security revealed several interesting correlations with managerial career development. Protean and boundaryless careers have heralded the rise of self-directed, subjective career orientations that encourage employees to find career validation outside the traditional organizational boundaries and structural constraints. This would imply that employees would be less dependent on their employing organization for job security and long-term career prospects. Analysis of the job security theme revealed labyrinthine connections between changing employee perceptions and organizational structural limitations.

There was evidence in employer and employee interviews to suggest that the long-term psychological contracts reminiscent of traditional organizational careers were neither offered by organizations nor interestingly expected by employees (see Box II.2.i). There was almost universal acknowledgement that ‘times had changed’ and individual managers were responsible for the durability and ambit of their own careers. Career survival and growth were explicitly tied to performance targets in these results-oriented organizations and while employees felt the pressure of constantly having to achieve performance targets and goals, they also appreciated the subsequent guaranteed meritocracy in terms of career rewards and recognition.

This individual internalization of job security was so pervasive that senior managers, interviewed for the employer perspective, while highlighting organizational commitment to employee retention often provided an insight into their own personal, and often highly individualized, attitudes towards job security. For instance, the country marketing manager at Chemical Co underscored individual responsibility for job and career survival,

…[they] should feel secure if they are performing well… if they are performing then really don’t get laid off… In the last 3 years in Chemical Co Pakistan what’s happened is the overall environment has become totally performance-oriented… in this culture the people who weren’t able to perform left by themselves… because it was difficult for them to run so fast… 2-3 very important people… business managers left the organization…
The vice president of HR at Energy Co claimed that job security is ‘A plus in Energy Co… and for the group as a whole it’s A-plus… reason being that the group consolidates and then moves forward’ and this view was corroborated by employees attesting that ‘there is no aggressive firing policy over here’ and ‘they are expanding at a very good speed so job security is good’. However, the pervasive individualization and internalization of career responsibilities

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Box II.2.i. Job security: Employee perceptions & organizational structures

I think job security is not what it used to be… like in the days of our parents when they joined one job and they died in the same job… now it’s different. Companies’ structures have changed… and so accordingly employees… are also changing… (CC10C13)

… as long as an individual is performing, with a little bit of luck on his side there is always a job available. The phenomenon of job security I feel no longer exists… people have thought once we are in and we are doing a good job we will always have the job but I think we will have to pull ourselves out of that thinking because every business has to be run profitably… (so) that the concept of job security is no more there… (CC1C23)

… if you are performing you are secure… so I personally think having job security is dependent on you and I don’t look towards the organization for that… FC7(B11)

… one thing I’m sure about, the day I become a bad performer there is no place for me in this company… that I’m very very sure about… as long as you are performing you have access to all the benefits and the training and the opportunities and the praise… and you get the reward from it right away. If I have performed this year I will definitely get my benefits at the end of the year. Next year if I am not performing I won’t be able to say hey I did this I did that… because I would already have gotten credit for that. How you performed in 2008 counts for 2008... in 2009 you start again. (FC1B3)

I think job security is quite good if you perform well… if you are performing well there are no security issues so it really all depends on your performance. (TP2S4)

… as far as job security is concerned you are always afraid… there is a little part of your subconscious that is always afraid that any time anything can happen. The company itself has been really good… and there hasn’t been… a single case in the entire company where because of the global crunch or the financial problems a person is laid off from the company. (TP8S20)

… I would rate (psychological security) very low… there is this constant reinforcement that you should be thankful you have a job at all… what does that say about job security? (CB11)

… if you are good if you know your stuff you can be a VP (vice president) in your twenties and that’s a big deal. But if you are not good you are out! That’s what I have seen either you are in or you are out. Bank Co’s culture is very distinct if you are not exceptional you are out. (CB12)

Definitely if I’m not performing I myself will know what my position is but if I’m doing well and getting my numbers then the security is there… (CB15)
was evident in another senior HR manager’s views on job security, … where in the world is a job really secure… especially nowadays… obviously a lot is performance-based… a lot is behaviour based… and it’s up to the individual to safeguard their own job. So it’s not only about being confirmed or being permanent… it’s more about individual behaviour and attitude. (S10)

Moreover, despite employee acceptance of individual responsibility for job security there were certain organizational constraints that increased managerial sensitivity and insecurity (see Box II.2.ii). Bank Co as a group was in the throes of global recession and this externality had led to large scale organizational rationalization internationally. Layoffs had not been initiated on an appreciable scale in Pakistan. However, a negative trickle-down effect on job security and long-term career prospects within Bank Co was observable.

**Box II.2.ii. Job security: Impact of additional organizational pressures/changes**

**Bank Co -**

**Employer perspective:**
Nowadays its very challenging…I would like to give an example… you have a shop (that) could be run by 2 employees… and you have hired 4 employees… when the shop is not profitable… you would definitely fire 2 people… the same happening in banking. In Pakistan as compared to other countries in the world… for example U.S. and the UK there is much more job security (here)… because… Pakistan is a very small part of Bank Co group… so basically we do not have that much pressure on revenues… (branch manager)

**Employee perspectives:**
It wasn’t like that a year or 2 ago but right now the situation is different. Because obviously the organization is stretching as much as it can to generate revenue and in that scenario little security… (CB15)

As far as current scenario (is) concerned nobody is safe… (CB16)

**Beverage Co -**

**Employer perspective:**
… we did have people voicing concerns especially with respect to job security because accidentally our restructuring took place immediately after the financial crisis started and people were doubly worried that people would be laid off within the company. And I am happy to report that on the contrary we have hired a lot of people this year. So sometimes actions speak louder than words or formal communication… (CC20C8)

**Employee perspective:**
As far as psychological security goes… this is something slightly contentious because… couple of years back we had this acquisition by Turkish bottlers so now we come under Turkey so there have been some serious structural changes over here and the overall organizational outlook has also changed which may have a ripple effect down the line… (CC6C16)
The case of Beverage Co was vastly different because the Pakistani operations had been recently acquired by the Turkish headquarters who had then initiated a programme of large scale restructuring. Even though this restructuring has led to hiring rather than firing, employees’ career uncertainty had increased in response to organizational change. These views offer interesting insights. On the one hand both employers and employees seemed to have internalized the notion of individual rather than organizational responsibility for jobs. However, any additional organizational changes and pressures served to highlight the increasingly fragile nature of this equilibrium and elicited a disproportionate response from the managerial actors that purportedly subscribed to self-directed and boundaryless careers.

Another significant finding was that the actual implementation of this individualized employment contract was negotiated through certain implicit societal forces (see Box II.2.iii). Data analysis revealed that even in these foreign subsidiaries, subject to strong performance pressures, and employing managers who seemed to have embraced Westernized notions of career development, institutional influences persisted. Societal norms, informal personal relationships and religious values transmuted the extent and execution of both self-direction by individual employees and devolution of career responsibility by the employing organizations.
The existence of these societal norms highlights an interesting organizational dichotomy within the specific institutional context of Pakistan. The managers interviewed exhibited both approbation and adoption of Western organizational values and structures. Their career expectations for themselves and their subordinates were also increasingly individualized. However, on such an important issue as job losses they chose to deviate from organizational
control mandates, and self-prescribed Western career ideals, and acted in accordance with the often sidelined and increasingly amorphous (in the workplace at least) cultural and societal norms.

The links between career conceptualizations and job security offer several interesting conclusions. On the one hand, it can be argued that career expectations have truly changed whereby managers as employees and employers expect and accept individual responsibility for job security, performance and subsequent impact on their careers. However, the debate that cannot be conclusively resolved is whether tenuous psychological contracts and the increased employee propensity for adaptability and mobility (as explored in the previous chapter) are driven by truly evolving individual attitudes or whether organizations (hampered by rationalization and restructuring concerns) have forced employees to shift the axis of their career expectations from the organization to the self. What can be argued is that employee attitudes regarding individual versus organizational responsibility for careers have changed and this suits performance-driven organizations. However, this transmogrification is neither complete nor unchallenged within the Pakistani context because while managers may have increasingly individualized career attitudes, as senior organizational members they continue to feel responsible for employees under them as mandated by implicit societal and cultural norms. The influence of societal pressures on the underlying fabric of the foreign MNCs resulted in implicit adjustments of Western employment practices to accommodate the more traditional social values specific to Pakistan.

6.5 Mobility

In the previous chapter we considered how individual managerial employees negotiated mobility across different organizations (inter-organizational mobility) and different industries/sectors based on their subjective protean and boundaryless career orientations. Moving away from the individual level of analysis to the organizational and institutional perspectives revealed two additional considerations with regards to mobility. Firstly, intra-organizational
movement across functions and within the country was identified as additional sources of potential mobility for these managerial employees. Secondly, the three key pressures of individual orientations and expectations, organizational structural and strategic constraints, and institutional and societal influences, exerted differential influence on each form of mobility. Therefore, while inter-organizational and cross-industry mobility were largely determined by individual career aspirations (as discussed in Chapter 5), functional and within-country transitions were increasingly subject to organizational and institutional/societal variables. Since this chapter’s focus is on the organizational and institutional variables functional and within-country mobility will be considered in greater detail.

**Functional mobility**

Cross-comparative analysis of job rotation across the four case-study MNCs highlighted both similarities and differences between the four multinationals (see Table III.2.i). Firstly, the organizations studied can be differentiated on the basis of formalized job rotation between departments in contrast to an ad hoc organizational approach to functional mobility. Energy Co and Beverage Co (export side) had well-developed, formalized job rotation policies and practices. On the other hand, Bank Co, Chemical Co and the bottler side of Beverage Co had a more improvisational and uncoordinated approach to departmental mobility. Secondly, social status and hierarchy were also ascribed to the different departments creating a *social ordering* of the different functions that implicitly influenced employees’ uptake of functional mobility.

Energy Co and Bank Co (export side) both actively encouraged job rotation albeit with slight differences in the strategic purpose behind this organizationally sanctioned functional mobility. Energy Co implemented functional movement and job rotation in line with the global policy of the foreign multinational and in order to increase skills diversification and encourage in-depth knowledge of the business in Pakistan. The manager of recruitment and benefits indicated that, ‘there are a lot of parallel movements going on from department to the other till the time you reach the top…’ (S10).
Table III.2.i: Functional mobility/job rotation across all four multinationals

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<th>Bank Co</th>
<th>Chemical Co</th>
<th>Energy Co</th>
<th>Beverage Co</th>
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<td><strong>Employers:</strong></td>
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<td>I guess there is no specific policy for rotating someone into other areas...as you become slightly senior...sometimes if you too big for your shoes in that particular department...maybe there is a senior level opening in another department so naturally as part of their career progression (they are moved). (Corporate Banking Head)</td>
<td>Generally people...grew in the ranks...hard core sales, people rarely move out...finance stay put in finance...and I would say the same thing for marketing...so I didn’t see a lot of cross movement between and across functions and departments... (HR Head – Asia Pacific)</td>
<td>… we strongly believe in inter-departmental movement. How we determine this is through replacement plan meetings...you will move horizontally to the other department at the same job level and then move vertically to (a higher) job level... (S5 - VP HR &amp; Admin)</td>
<td>… we strongly believe that if somebody can do something better in another department we normally provide them with that opportunity. (HR Head Export Side)</td>
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<td><strong>Employees:</strong></td>
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<td>... in sales you have a far better chance of rapid growth as compared to other departments...so I prefer it here. (CB14)</td>
<td>... in Chemical Co... finance is not an isolated dept... I’m not only looking after accounting and finance I’m also overlooking IT and most of my time is spent in imports...this multi-tasking I found the most challenging and exciting aspect of my job here...and I actively wanted to be involved in multi-disciplinary areas. (FC2B5)</td>
<td>I have been working in this area for the last 13 months now &amp; I have already explicitly mentioned this in my appraisal...so I now want to switch to another dept. I’m interested in...communication or retail development... I have learned the basics and now I want to move on to the next thing. (TP4S7)</td>
<td>It can be a functional shift...but it’s mostly when the need arises...so far we haven’t planned it... (HR Manager Bottlers)</td>
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<td>… for the last 2 years I was in services and I felt that was it...there was no further position in that particular area so that’s why I switched to (sales). (CB15)</td>
<td>… if you switch from one department to another then you can see how the company is working as a whole. Right now I can tell you everything about my particular department but for example if I go to finance or I got to HR I will have to see the other side of the mirror...(TP10S18)</td>
<td>… if you switch from one department to another then you can see how the company is working as a whole. Right now I can tell you everything about my particular department but for example if I go to finance or I got to HR I will have to see the other side of the mirror...(TP10S18)</td>
<td>… I consider myself to have more knowledge and more confidence compared to some of my other colleagues who have been stuck to just one specific area (Export CC8S11)</td>
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<td>… I want to learn more and in the future have the opportunity of a job in another department. We need to know what the bank is all about and the background should be there...the treasury, the writes, how does it work, what is the whole movement of the bank. (CB13)</td>
<td>… I want to learn more and I want to move my career...in a specific department and profession (HR) (FC6B10)</td>
<td>… job rotation is good for employees because it helps you develop know how to deal with different things...and it’s not just one department that helps the company grow… (TP9S19)</td>
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Both organizational job levels (and associated job descriptions) and career paths were explicitly tied to frequent functional mobility. The vice president of HR argued that,

… we have very well-defined job levels and we determine job levels on one methodology and head office is the one… and by head office I mean the headquarters in (parent country)… who validates it… … For example, generally a fresh MBA we hire as a management trainee and then he is moved to sales. A natural career growth for him is (going) to development … marketing… communication (then) going back at a senior position in sales… so this is a natural career growth for that position. People coming in HR if they have the potential they can go to junior positions in finance, they can go to supply chain, and if they have a flair they can even go to sales. (S5)

Beverage Co (export side) on the other hand had a slightly different organizational rationale. The export side was a very lean structure, comprising of very senior managers often directly reporting to functional heads at the regional and international HQ levels, and these employees’ future career development was likely to involve international expatriation. Therefore, horizontal moves were deployed as an organizational tool to develop human resources within the Pakistani subsidiary with diversified skill sets that could eventually be exported to international subsidiaries. For instance, during an informal conversation with the head of the public affairs and communications department he revealed that senior managers at the regional HQ had implicitly indicated to his boss that he was in the running for expatriation but first he needed to add-on to his educational qualifications (by getting an executive MBA) as well as getting some commercial/operational experience outside his own department.

Any evidence of functional mobility in Bank Co, Chemical Co and Beverage Co (bottler side) was in terms of rare, ad hoc instances, informally initiated by the employing organization (or in some cases by individual employees). For example, the branch manager at Bank Co when questioned on functional mobility highlighted that,

… there is nothing written in the job description … they do it as additional work... for
example if we have a service person... like a relationship manager... she has the liberty to do everything... if she wants to contribute to sales... she can do that... they can take an interest.

The informal, improvisational nature of functional mobility offered by these organizations was also evident in the employee account given by the HR manager at Chemical Co. She had been offered an expansion in her job role whereby it would be ‘50 per cent HR and 50 per cent marketing’ – an offer that she had to turn down because of the lack of clarity of the job role and reporting line,

... I’m not a person who says I can’t do this or I’m not the kind of person who does not welcome change but the picture and the situation must be clear. You should be able to see that your career will be this and you will be moving in this direction because one should not be hung in between roles... (FC6B10)

From an organizational perspective these one-off functional movements were primarily in response to two key organizational pressures. Firstly, functional mobility was offered in cases where there was no immediate room for vertical movement and the employing organization wished to retain valuable resources. For instance, the country finance manager at Beverage Co had been given a ‘unique and different’ job role that accommodated his personal aspirations for commercial experience because he was a highly experienced and valued manager,

... if you compare it with any other finance function in any other company... it’s not a simple finance job or a simple accounting job. It has a lot to do with commercial finance which is all about developing new consumer products, trying to be an integral part of that organization where you take risks for new ventures... so from that perspective I think I’m already quite functional and moving between different roles... in the next few years I don’t see myself working purely in finance. I see myself managing the business... I’m not a finance manager I’m a business manager... that’s the mindset I operate on. (CC1C23)

Secondly, functional diversification and expansion of job roles was offered in response to the immediate business needs of the organization. For instance, in Chemical Co the regional business manager for the south, chosen from the sales and marketing department, was unprecedentedly also put in charge of HR and finance for his geographical area primarily because of the
geographical distance between the south and the head office, and secondly because the HR and finance departments at the head office in Lahore had very lean structures,

... in my current job role I am working in other functions because I am responsible for my team, about their career development and training and I deal with the day to day HR issues... then I am dealing with the financial information that is fed back to the finance director at the Lahore head office... (FC7B11)

An additional issue beyond these differences in the organizational encouragement and provision of job rotation were the implicit societal influences underlying this HR policy. Analysis revealed that institutional and societal effects on functional movement were evident in the implicit ordering of the different departments mirroring the distinctly Pakistani emphasis on status and hierarchy. For example, in Bank Co the treasury department at the Karachi headquarters was considered the most coveted, high status function by employers and employees because it not only provided very fast career growth and richer learning experiences, but also ensured involvement with more macro level, strategic decision-making processes. The sales/branch banking and corporate areas seemed at par as far as image importance within the organizational hierarchy. However, services, operations, administration, IT and other back end divisions ranked the lowest because these departments were smaller in size, had low strategic value in terms of business creation and tended to provide support services for the employees rather than dealing directly with the clients. The nature of their job subsequently diminished their importance within the underlying organizational hierarchy created purely on the basis of societal values. Similar social ordering and attitudes within the workplace were also evident across the other organizations and to an extent shared by employers and employees. For instance, Energy Co’s regional sales manager when discussing his next functional move made an interesting observation,

I would want to and love to work in some other department now… like marketing maybe or logistics… or maybe development. I don’t think I would be very happy with development but it is one of the most important departments… I will get more exposure and make myself a better candidate for the position of (national sales head) in the long run... (TP1S3)
This employee attitude of desiring functional moves to certain key departments, for example the marketing and sales functions, sometimes despite lack of personal interest in these functions, was evident across all four MNCs. For example, a management trainee in the finance department of Beverage Co knew that at some point in her career she would have to make ‘a departmental shift’ out of the finance department (her chosen area of functional expertise) because that was the ‘wordly and necessary approach’ needed for long-term career development (CC7C10). Therefore, inter-departmental and functional mobility was not just a consequence of organizational strategies but also tied in with this implicit social hierarchy of different departments. A shift from a back-end, support department to a front-end, sales function was often considered an organizational and social progression - mirroring the bottom up approach of formal progression. For instance, one of the branch manager’s interviewed at Bank Co cited the example of an employee in HR who was shifted to the liabilities department because he was doing very well with liability mobilization. His response to the question on functional, inter-departmental movement only considered a shift to sales,

… if somebody is in the services department… or in cash dept or in operations… if he is capable of doing sales… or he could be a potential manager… we don’t have any issues of transferring from any back office departments…

However, a movement in the opposite direction, i.e. out of high profile departments like sales and marketing, was categorized explicitly as functional mobility, but regarded implicitly as downward mobility. Several managers employed within the ‘high status’ sales or marketing functions expressed considerable reluctance when asked about functional movements,

... if I had to go into a department... like HR… it would be a very very painful thing for me… marketing suits me… it suits the kind of person I am. (TP6S9)

I wouldn’t mind going from marketing to sales but I have no interest in HR or finance. I would rather stick to my area. (FC1B3)
Table III.2.ii. Job rotation: A summary of results

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The combined influence of organizational policies and implicit institutional/societal pressures on functional mobility highlights several interesting conclusions. Firstly, it is important to acknowledge the relationship between organizational/corporate and local isomorphic pressures (Ferner and Quintanilla 1998). In instances where the MNCs did not have a formal organizational policy of functional movement (e.g. Bank Co, Chemical Co and Beverage Co, bottlers side) corporate isomorphic influences on job rotation were weak and therefore, increased the influence of local isomorphic pressures such as societal value structures (i.e. differentiation between departments based on status). As a result, employees in the high status departments such as marketing and sales, within these particular organizations, were much less likely to want to move out of their highly coveted functions. The underlying, institutionally distinctive reasons behind this employee resistance to horizontal mobility were very different from Storey et al.’s (1997) results on lack of inter-functional mobility because of employees’ interest in specialism. On the other hand, organizations such as Energy Co and the export side of Beverage Co which had a formal, well-developed organizational policy of frequent job rotation exerted a stronger organizational influence on functional mobility and therefore lessened the impact of local isomorphic pressures stemming from societal/institutional influences. Within these particular MNCs there was far greater employee acceptance of functional movement and a greater number of departments favoured equally by employees (reducing the high status dominance of specific departments).

Secondly, a comparative overview of all four multinationals raises interesting questions about the nature and extent of organizational influences on
functional mobility in particular, but more importantly, the significance of external influences on individualized protean and boundaryless career attitudes in general (see Table III.2.i and III.2.ii). The tables highlight how employees’ attitudes towards functional mobility varied across the four organizations. Within the organizations with more formalized job rotation policies there was a clear trend for managerial employees to be more open to functional movement. On the other hand, employees in organizations with a weaker precedent of functional movement were a lot more resistant to functional moves. This could lead to the hypothesis that in instances where organizational support for functional mobility was available, employees actively engaged in it to increase their business knowledge and skills’ diversification. However, where this organizational mandate was absent, employees sought to consolidate their career futures by staying and specializing in ‘high status’ departments. From these results it can be hypothesized that in certain cases managerial employees might be forced to take on responsibility for their careers, not solely because of changes in employees’ attitudes but because of lack of organizational support for sustained long term career development. The continuing importance of organizational and institutional variables on managerial career development highlight two key questions: i) are we truly facing a shift in attitudes and orientations or a simply shifting of responsibilities? And ii) is this reallocation of risk (Jacoby 1999) expanding or restricting individual employees’ self-determined career choices within their employing organizations?

Cross-country Mobility

The inter-relationship between organizational and institutional/societal influences was also mirrored in within-country movement (see Box II.3.i). Employers across all organizations highlighted how relocation, particularly at the junior and middle management levels, was difficult to achieve because of employee reluctance to move away from their hometown and families. The strength of the family and strong provincial affiliation (also mirrored in constant inter-provincial conflicts in politics, allocation of state funds and development/growth patterns) served as inhibiting factors in moving within
the country. In some interviews the cultural and linguistic differences between the different provinces of Pakistan were also specifically referred to. For instance, the recruitment and benefits manager at Energy Co argued that,… we consider issues like languages being a barrier in a specific region… gone are the days when you just move one individual employee working in a city to another city where he has no idea what the culture or the language is… (S10)

Box II.3.i. Interplay of organizational and institutional/societal influences on cross-country mobility

… you would not always find people very open to relocation… if you are bringing in people at entry to mid level… relocation is much less… because what the offerings are compensation wise (they) are really not that high to compensate people moving out of their homes… yes the moves from mid to upper levels are relatively much more because your compensation packages become more. (Chemical Co - HR manager Asia Pacific)

My employees… attend meetings, trainings in Lahore and Karachi… so that’s a form of movement… but they remain based where they were originally recruited… (Chemical Co - regional sales manager)

My top priority is obviously staying in Lahore. Given that it’s always a combination of the kind of job you get, the kind of package that you get and then also the place you are being moved to. For example, if it’s a great job in a very nice city somewhere and where commuting is fairly easy to Lahore then perhaps I’ll also consider that. (CC3C21)

If I am in Pakistan I would rather stay in Lahore and this is the head office so I would much rather prefer to be based in the headquarters. But if it’s abroad then definitely. (CC13B22)

Within Pakistan we try to hire people who are mobile but you know in Pakistan… if you are working in Peshawar then it’s a completely different world and if you are working in Karachi it’s a different world… and if you are working in Lahore it’s a different world… very few people from Lahore want to move to Karachi and the same stands for people who are in Karachi… they don’t want to move to Lahore. And this is a big big challenge in careers… they don’t have a mobile mindset and at the same time they want to grow. So it’s difficult… we cannot promote people in specific function(s) for example in sales… I will never promote a person to a senior level in sales if he hasn’t worked in at least 2 regions of Pakistan… at the very least… because otherwise he doesn’t know the different markets so he won’t be able to handle it. (S5 - Vice president HR)

Opportunities come up (across the country) and the bank enquires if I would be interested because my hometown is Lahore… the bank always does ask… one has to be a bit intelligent about getting back when one is asked… my view is it is a polite way of saying that you might want to move otherwise you might lose your job or be shifted to another department… (CB11)

Similarly, employees also expressed a reluctance to move outside Lahore because of family considerations. The employee relations manager at Beverage Co candidly admitted that despite personal openness to within country movement he had to take into account his family,
I am based in Lahore and this was one of the reasons why I settled for this particular job. Since I have always been running around both within and outside the country so this was the final settlement and my kids needed me here so I chose to limit myself geographically. (CC9C12)

Interestingly, while these societal values with respect to the importance of the family and institutional barriers pertaining to provincial differences inhibited within-country movement they were not perceived as barriers for international moves. This considered and differential weighing criteria for mobility within and outside the country was expressed by the brand manager of Energy Co who explicitly admitted that ‘outside the country definitely. 5 minutes notice no problem. Within the country also yes if it’s worth my while’ (TP6S9). This difference can be partially attributed to financial considerations attendant upon such moves. Many employees expressed concerns that moves to other parts of Pakistan would be difficult to achieve from a financial point of view and the compensation offered was rarely worth the upheaval and personal/family sacrifices. For example, a customer relationship manager at Bank Co argued that,

Over here ... I am well settled (if) a very good opportunity comes up somewhere else (or) I personally ask to be shifted to Islamabad or Karachi the bank is not going to provide accommodation or travel costs... those kind of advantages are provided at very high management levels... so ultimately it doesn’t benefit the individual or the bank very much. (CB10)

However, organizational variables exerted a strong influence on the actual reality of within-country mobility; particularly where the employing organization implicitly tied upward mobility to cross-country movement. There were many instances of employees who had previously moved within Pakistan and were open to additional moves if there were distinct career advantages involved. However, there were marked differences in cross-country mobility between the four multinationals based on each organization’s structural setup. Within Chemical Co, there was some evidence of cross-country mobility as evidenced in the case of the regional sales manager,

… the company was really appreciative of my efforts in the Lahore region and they offered me this opportunity specifically for my career development… where I would be in charge of the marketing for the south region… in fact if I had stayed in Lahore
work would have become quite repetitive because I had already covered a lot of ground in my time there… and the company wasn’t able to create a big enough role for me over there… Karachi is traditionally a really really problematic portfolio of the company… so it was presented as a learning and challenging career opportunity… (FC7B11)

However, such moves were rare because the MNC had an explicit organizational policy of extensive short-term travel. Employees were quoted as saying that ‘normally on a monthly basis I visit at least one region… and I try that on a quarterly basis I have done 2-3 visits…’ (FC2B5) or ‘about every 15 days I go to every city in my region…’ (FC5B9). And employer-employee perspectives on the utility of this extensive travelling matched. The country head for marketing proudly confirmed that ‘the culture at Chemical Co in Pakistan here is that (all managers)...spend 60 per cent of their time in the field… in different areas… all over Pakistan…’ This policy was corroborated and appreciated by employees who felt that constant cross country movement was essential for ‘multi-dimensional experience’ and without ‘work(ing) closely with the people in the other offices... you cannot perform…’

Within Beverage Co there were also instance of cross-country movement primarily at the bottlers side (for the managers at the export side were in the running for international rather than national moves). However, there were two distinct employee views regarding cross-country movement. On the one hand, some employees saw it as a ‘development opportunity’ and organizational knowledge-building because ‘head office combined with the territories you have a broader perspective on how things move within the organization. (CC4C18). On the other hand, you had a set of employees, who saw movement out of the head office in Lahore as a demotion,

... this is the head office so we don’t have any better options in Pakistan of shifting somewhere else. If they shift me somewhere else that will honestly be a demotivating factor. Because over here we are managing things and if I am sent to a location it will be just a small part of what I’m am doing right now... (CC6C16)

A closer look revealed that these differences in employees’ views were based on structural considerations – departments such as finance, operations as well as manufacturing/engineering functions had strong operational linkages with
regional territories and manufacturing plant locations and therefore their employees would benefit from within-country movement. However, more general management positions such as marketing, HR and IT services had larger, more strategic roles at the head office as compared to the regional territories, and within-country movement for these employees was not relevant.

Energy Co and Bank Co provided an interesting juxtaposition in terms of cross-country mobility. Energy Co had a formal policy of cross-country movement based on the business development of the organization as a whole. As a result strategic development plans and ‘which corners of the country Energy Co is planning to expand into’ dictated cross-country moves. Moreover, the organization explicitly linked upward mobility to movement within the country whereby employees ‘sign(ed) a national mobility agreement... and if you resist then there is definitely a negative impact with HR and senior management’ (TP5S8). Therefore, employees accepted cross-country mobility as a necessary variable in career development within the organization. For instance, one of the area manager’s pointed out that,

At the back of my head... regarding my field (I know) I need to work at different locations... because as an engineer you can be required at any specific place... so I have to be ready for it... I’m absolutely open to it. (TP10S18)

Within the context of Bank Co as well, there was employer and employee acceptance that cross-country geographical moves were unavoidable and there were also instances of employees who had already experienced such moves. However, there was no formal organizational mandate and upward progression was only implicitly tied to within-country geographical relocation. Therefore, the head of corporate banking explained that,

… It’s sometimes because of promotion...(but) the bank is ready to listen… people are willing to accommodate… if somebody’s good and knows his work… the bank usually tries to retain him by doing whatever they possibly can.

This relative flexibility was also evident in employee attitudes whereby they knew cross-country movement was linked to their career progression, and that since Karachi was the national hub for banking services they would have to
make the transition out of their hometown of Lahore (which was where the interviews were conducted) at some point in their careers. Cross-country mobility was often regarded from a long-term career perspective by Bank Co employees’ as evident in the statement below,

... the main hub is Karachi and for career growth at some point I will have to move there. And obviously at some point you have to make sacrifices… sacrifice your family life. It depends what the position is but I prefer staying in Lahore. (CB14)

Based on these similarities and differences across the four multinationals it can be argued that cross-country mobility is subject to institutional/societal barriers because of deeply ingrained perceptions of provincial differentials. However, these externalities are not insurmountable and over career lifetimes organizational effects can dilute their relevance. Consideration of the organizational perspective specifically revealed that there were distinct structural differences between the four case study organizations that had far reaching consequences in terms of organizational policy on (and established precedent of) cross-country movement. Therefore, in conclusion it can be argued that despite employee reluctance to engage in frequent cross-country movement (as a result of family concerns), as well as intra-country institutional/societal differences rendering these transitions difficult, organizational mandates (determined by MNC structures and business development strategies) exerted the strongest influence in determining actual cross-country mobility patterns.

Mobility differentials across different employee groups and between different forms of mobility

The preceding sections on mobility highlighted the inter-connections between organizational and institutional/societal influences their often dual impact on the mobility choices of the managers studied. A cross-case comparative analysis also underlined differences in these managerial employees’ ability and propensity for the different forms of mobility (i.e. functional, inter-organizational, cross-industry and cross-country transitions). One of the key findings of this project were the simultaneous interplay of individual, organizational and institutional influences on mobility patterns as well as the
interconnections *between* the different forms of mobility. Managers employed in the coveted, high status departments were reluctant to move out of their functional areas but often supplemented this self-circumscribed lack of functional mobility by exhibiting higher levels of boundarylessness across other employment boundaries. For instance, the area manager of retail in Energy Co exhibited conscious trade-offs between the different mobility options available to him,

... right now I would stick to sales... you get quicker promotions... bigger packages... any functional shift is way down the road... I won’t be considering HR (though)...

I don’t want to stick around forever... if I do get promoted then I will give it another 2-3 years but if I don’t get promoted I’m not going to invest that kind of time here... it’s not just Energy Co... even if I was working for Citibank, Shell, PSO or any other company... it totally depends on one thing... if I see myself and my career growing...

Anything related to the financial or the power sector, the energy sector... that’s where the growth is...

I have been based in Lahore from the beginning. But I won’t mind moving... it’s really the company’s initiative. I’m definitely open to the idea. (TP11S17)

On the other hand, managers with more specialist educational backgrounds (for example, IT, finance and engineering) and functionally specific work experiences (for example, Chemical Co’s territory managers’ agro-chemical industry experience) sought to increase learning in general managerial skills (as discussed in Chapter 5). This often entailed higher willingness for functional mobility (in order to increase their adaptability according to individual protean values) from specialist to generalist management functions, higher self-efficacy in making successful cross-industry moves (because of perceived ease of adaptation – i.e. high psychological boundarylessness) and greater openness to cross-country mobility. For instance, the assistant manager of business planning employed in Beverage Co’s finance department underlined these shifting employee mobility motivations,

... when I see myself 5-6 years down the line I want to become the CEO of a big multinational company... now for that dream finance alone cannot get me to the top... you need commercial knowledge and commercial practical experience... I’v been to cement, I’ve worked in an fmcg, I’ve been through teaching, I’ve been through the consultancy route, I’ve even had a bit of experience in telecomm... so I’m open to the idea of a future shift (across industries)... sitting in the head office you
don’t really know where the territories stand and sitting in the territories you don’t understand what the head office is saying... given a longer stay in Beverage Co I would like to see how things work in the territories that would actually give me a significant gain… (CC4C18)

Similarly, some of specialist agro-chemical managers in Chemical Co had relatively lower inter-organizational and cross-industry mobility. These managers had specialist agricultural degrees (and in some cases specialist work experience primarily in the agro-chemical industry) which reduced their employment opportunities in non-agricultural organizations. Moreover, their cross-industry mobility was also quite low primarily because agricultural product and services markets in Pakistan are large and geographically widespread allowing them to have varied work experiences within their particular industry. Therefore, they sought to make transitions to, or at the very least get valuable experience in, the high profile/high status general management functions. For instance, the process engineer at Chemical Co admitted that,

… before this all the work I had done was within health, safety and environment quality… this was a new opportunity and the difference was that it would also include mechanical aspects, managing a team … plus there would also be engineering aspects… so there was a greater degree of diversification. (FC4B8)

Conversely, many managers in Bank Co exhibited low functional mobility because employees in the sales and liabilities departments, followed by corporate bankers, had high profile, high growth careers and did not wish to move out of their strategically and socially important functions. Significantly, this particular cohort of managers also had the least number of cross-industry moves because they had developed a highly specific skills set that would offer the best ‘pay-offs’ within the banking/financial services sector. More importantly, they exhibited a high degree of identification with, and loyalty towards, their professional identity as bankers. However, these managers’ organizational mobility was quite high; possibly because of their demographic characteristics (employees at Bank Co were all male and comprised the youngest cohort studied) but also because they operated in a small, well-connected ELM. In line with institutional/societal focus on the creation of informal networks the head of corporate banking admitted tapping into this
informal network when recruiting,
… ours is a very… sort of a small world… everybody knows everybody else in the banks… I know who my counterpart in Standard Chartered is, who my counterpart in Barclays, in ABN Amro is… we have the same clients… we keep running into each other… we get feedback from the clients…they might say ‘oh the relationship manager in that bank is excellent’… or we are very happy with that bank because that person is really good… so you get a bit of an idea who in which bank is doing well…

These distinctions in mobility patterns highlight that different managerial employees had very different individual career orientations, and these individualized protean and boundaryless career conceptualizations were constantly influenced by the inter-connected, twin forces of organizational and institutional/societal variables. More significantly, analysis also revealed that all these different forms of mobility were not affected in isolation and career movement in one direction often inhibited and/or encouraged mobility in other directions, suggesting strong inter-relations between the different forms of mobility.

6.6 Conclusion

Analysis of the four MNCs’ HR policies and practices influencing managerial career development highlighted several similarities and differences between the four companies studied. All four organizations had relatively homogenous ILMs because of the high degree of uniformity in Pakistan’s small managerial ELM. Moreover, there was also extensive provision of training and development opportunities across the four subsidiaries. This highlighted the durability of the traditional employment relationship and the continued persistence of internal labour market arrangements. However, there was also some evidence to support the ‘new’ careers claim of ‘risk reallocation’ (Jacoby 1999) of job security and career development from the employer to the employee. Overall, the results supported the conclusion that a reassessment and renegotiation of the traditional career model was underway (Storey et al 1997; Butler et al 2006) that was quite distinctive from the employment relationship in evidence in national organizations. However, the ‘demise’ of career jobs and ILMs was not an imminent development (Cappelli 1999b) within the context of foreign MNCs operating in the Pakistani managerial
labour market. Moreover, analysis revealed that there were interesting organizational differences in the formal and informal provision of training and development opportunities and implementation and practice of functional and cross-country mobility policies. These cross-organizational similarities and differences in the internal labour markets highlighted two key conclusions.

Firstly, the interplay of organizational policies and implicit institutional and societal pressures on the actual implementation of these policies highlighted the dual competing existence of centripetal and centrifugal forces in these workplaces. This corroborates Khilji’s findings in Pakistan (2002, 2003a, b) that elements of social and cultural traditions are often incorporated alongside more modern, Western notions of management. This duality of pressures, work values and sources of legitimacy also resonate with Gamble’s (2010) research in China. He highlighted the ‘considerable flux and heterogeneity’ that characterize transitional, deinstitutionalizing economies whereby it was ‘highly problematic to state categorically… which institutions are most influential, and which are most or least malleable’ (p. 728). My research revealed that there were pressures for change towards a more individualized, ‘marketized’ and performance-oriented employment relationship in the MNCs studied. The recruitment and selection policies of these organizations led to the employment of an elite managerial workforce with stable socio-economic and educational backgrounds that was relatively more open to the internalization of Western practices. Moreover, the employer and employee interviews stressed individual responsibility for job security and long-term career prospects that were distinctly at odds with the prescribed Pakistani approach of paternalistic, protective and seniority-based employment in national organizations (Eldridge and Mahmood 1993; Rieger and Wong-Rieger 1990). On the other hand, there were also pressures for the continuity of a stable internal labour market whereby senior managers informally shouldered the responsibility of providing stable and relatively protected employment relations. Analysis of all four organizations revealed that extensive training and development was offered to employees and organizations sometimes attempted to plug any gaps in the formal provision of these learning opportunities by supplementing formal with on-the-job training.
and development (for example, Chemical Co). Moreover, continuity was also evident in the implicit institutional and societal influences of paternalism and informal networking that determined the actual implementation of job security within these workplaces.

Secondly, an organizational and institutional analysis of these four MNCs highlighted the constant interaction between local and corporate isomorphic pressures (Ferner and Quintanilla 1998) at the subsidiary level of analysis. Local isomorphic influences were evident in the continuing societal preoccupation with status and hierarchy and the subsequent social ordering of different functions/departments within the MNCs studied. This restricted functional mobility for certain employee groups (i.e. general managers employed in the strategically and socially high-status departments) but increased desire for inter-departmental moves for other managers (i.e. specialist managers seeking transitions into generalist roles to ensure long-term career development). Moreover, institutional/societal pressures such as family considerations and inter-provincial mobility barriers (because of cultural differences and political tensions) exerted influences against organizational attempts to initiate cross-country mobility. However, analysis revealed that corporate isomorphic pressures were often able to dilute the effect of these local isomorphic influences through the implementation of formal job rotation policies (for example, Energy Co) and linking of cross-country mobility with employees’ long-term career development and career prospects (for example, Bank Co and Chemical Co). Therefore, these multinationals were able to implement certain organizational policies by capitalizing on stronger corporate cultures and giving greater precedence to internal consistency, thereby overriding the more implicit and indirect societal and institutional influences. This conclusion has significant theoretical implications because it underlines the continuing importance of MNCs as ‘vehicles for the transmission of new forms of human resources policy’ (Rubery and Grimshaw 2003); particularly in the context of a developing host like Pakistan. In contrast to my findings, Rosenweig and Nohria’s (1994) study of foreign MNCs’ American subsidiaries highlighted the stronger forces of local isomorphism on the implementation of different HRM practices. Thus,
the strength of the corporate isomorphic pressures exerted by the MNCs studied, and the subsequent diffusion of certain HR practices such as job rotation and cross-country mobility in Pakistan (despite opposing societal pressures), may be attributed to the ‘dominant country theory’ (Rubery and Grimshaw 2003). Therefore, the home country dominance effects of these multinationals may have facilitated the implementation of certain HR policies in the ‘follower’ Pakistani subsidiaries (ibid).

These subsidiary-specific findings of dual pressures of continuity and change on the one hand and distinctive negotiation of competing isomorphic pressures on the other hand also have wider implications for the methodological approaches to international HRM. The culturalist (Hofstede 1980, 1991) and institutionalist (Whitley 1999, Kostova 1999) theoretical perspectives often take the national culture or country-level institutions as the primary unit of analysis. A particular problem with these approaches is that there is a tendency to focus on ‘differences as static and unchanging characteristics of particular economies’ (Rubery and Grimshaw 2003). These ‘static, overly homogenized, and over-determined models’ are particularly problematic for the study of HRM diffusion in transitional, developing economies (Gamble 2010: 711). Within the MNC context specifically the combined influence of home and host country effects’ results in distinctive HRM configurations leading to hybridization in ‘an unfamiliar cultural, political and institutional milieu’ (ibid: 706). The results of this chapter highlighted that this interplay of organizational policies and implicit institutional/societal influences led to a distinctive, dynamic and subtly differentiated approach to HRM across the four subsidiaries.

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21 Even though recent institutional literature addresses the ‘impoverished state of theorizing on issues of institutional change’ (Streeck and Thelen 2009: 95-96; Streeck and Thelen 2005), literature on the diffusion of HR in MNCs often treats host and home country effects as static variables and ignores the potential for ‘partial transfer and hybrid outcomes’ because of a ‘complex mixture of both institutional holes and deeply embedded institutions’ (Gamble 2010: 708)
Chapter 7 – International careers: Employee orientations and organizational opportunities

7.1 Introduction

The changing dynamics of international careers explored in the literature chapter, such as the changing nature of international assignments (Reiche and Harzing 2011; Collings et al. 2007), the problems associated with traditional expatriates (Woodall 2011; Lee 2007; Tung 1987), and the ever increasing organizational demand for internationally mobile professionals (Suutari 2003; Suutari 2002), underline the importance of exploring the internationalization career potential of host country nationals’ (HCNs) like the Pakistani managers studied. However, current literature has focused almost exclusively either on traditional home country expatriates (Dowling and Welch 2004; Scullion and Collings 2006; Woodall 2006), or as has emerged in recent years, on individuals’ self-initiating international career moves (Thorn 2005, 2009; Suutari and Brewster 2000). Thus, a third employee group that is, the HCNs, has been relatively neglected. Here we are concerned to explore both the international career orientations of HCNs prior to actual internationalization and the nature and extent of international opportunities offered to this group by their employing MNCs. This chapter is organized in two main parts: the first section considers Pakistani HCNs’ self-conceptualization and self-efficacy with regards to international careers while the second section explores the types of international opportunities offered by the four case study organizations. The key research objectives were i) to explore individual employees’ international career orientations and any differences within the sample studied, ii) to understand the extent to which the organizations under consideration provided different kinds of international experiences and iii) to identify the implications of a potential disconnect between employee desire for internationalization and organizational fulfillment of these career ambitions.
7.2 International career orientations

All the employees interviewed expressed an interest in international career exposure and international work experiences. Therefore, it can be argued that all of them exhibited international career orientations, that is, a set of work attitudes and beliefs that predisposed them in favour of international career opportunities. The results of the questionnaire support this claim as 95 per cent of the employees expressed an interest in experiencing an international assignment at some point in their careers (and 69 per cent of these agreed to a great extent). Furthermore, almost 93 per cent of the employees who filled out the questionnaire agreed that international work experience would make their professional lives more interesting. In fact, these were the only two items on the overall questionnaire which manifested the greatest degree of unanimity in employees’ career attitudes and beliefs across all four organizations. However, despite respondents demonstrating high international career orientations, the following discussion will explore differentials in managers’ conceptualization of international careers with regards to learning (through work in challenging international environments and on challenging work tasks), international networking opportunities, firm-specific knowledge, financial rewards, career progression, potential country of relocation and gender. Analysis revealed that these differentials influenced employee receptivity towards internationalism, the subsequent degree of internationalization desired by different employee groups, and the gap between managerial employees’ desire for internationalization and their actual capacity to translate international career orientations into active pursuit and up-take of international career opportunities.

Learning

A significant career goal that emerged from the data was employee expectations of learning as result of internationalization because of increased exposure to new work environments (see Box III.1.i) and challenging work tasks (Box III.1.ii). This focus on learning accruing from international experience complemented the organizational motive of management
development through international assignments (Edstrom and Galbraith 1977; Reiche and Harzing 2011). Firstly, these managers’ international career orientations were predicated on the potential of working in challenging international business environments where practices, systems, regulations, and products/services were anticipated to be far more developed and complex as compared to Pakistan. Exposure to advanced economies was seen as a distinct career advantage because diversified learning was expected as a result of exposure to ‘international industries’, ‘multi-cultural environments’, and ‘different economic trends’. More specifically, some employees emphasized the nature of particular foreign business environments as facilitating learning while for others learning expectations were more generally based on regional areas.

**Box III.1.i Learning in challenging work environments**

- Since it’s a multinational I will be expecting my next move to be somewhere with a bigger market than Pakistan and having added responsibilities… where I can gain valuable work experience, polish my communication skills, my cultural skills. (CC10C13)
- some Asian countries have very large and well developed concerns… for example Japan is very well developed… they have a huge range of products and services and Chemical Co has a very strong base there so definitely I would love to go there… (FC7B11)
- … exposure is the main thing because working in a remote market versus working in international markets are altogether different experiences… Pakistan has got a very dynamic market… (but) working in an international market… according to international standards, with international people… that would be a different experience altogether. (TP8S20)
- … you see the Pakistani market is right now developing financially. A lot of advanced financial instruments are being executed and used in let’s say Singapore, Hong Kong and Europe and I would personally feel that the real value addition to what I’m learning will be through exposure to such transactions. The different markets abroad are at different stages of development altogether. From a career perspective I would love the opportunity of working in a place that is more demanding and provides more opportunities for learning. (CB11)

Even though there was a strong emphasis on learning through internationalization across a majority of the employee interviews, there were two notable exceptions. The brand manager at Chemical Co highlighted that he had the potential of making a move to the Middle East but ‘I wouldn’t give it preference… because the market in Middle East isn’t as developed yet. There are a lot more local opportunities…’ (FC1B3). Similarly, a senior
manager at Beverage Co also admitted that,

I think working in Pakistan is actually an advantage because Pakistan is one of the 20 countries that Beverage Co international has identified as a high potential country… so investment is coming in and the focus of the company is there and we do get high profile leadership and senior managers at the top level coming in so that just shows the importance of this region… (CC16B17)

However, these were fairly isolated points of view and based on specific industry/sector advantages. Chemical Co’s Pakistani operations had high potential because of a very large primary sector in Pakistan as opposed to more developed economies, and in Beverage Co Pakistan growth were predicated on the burgeoning population levels that outstripped demographic growth in most other countries. Moreover, even in industries or companies where the potential of learning was quite high within Pakistan (because of the nature of the industry and/or organizational projection of growth and expansion) most of the employees continued to exhibit high receptivity to internationalization and expectations of learning through exposure to different business environments.

Box.III.1.ii Learning through challenging work tasks

- … at the international level the number of products are far more so you get a lot of exposure… over here we just look at branch banking so mainly assets and liabilities… at the international level there is investment banking… and so many other things… so through that you get more exposure…. (CB6)
- As long as I am getting the opportunity to learn, as long as I’m getting better status in terms of responsibilities I would not mind any change geographically… (TP4S7)
- …a (regional) business unit finance role is on the plate… and from that I’m perceiving that I will be managing about 15-20 countries where the business is a lot more difficult, a lot more complex. Because the assignment I have been told about is in the Middle East and that is more challenging… (so) it’s really more the international experiences and the everyday challenges at work. (CC1C23)

A second important variable pertaining to the influential learning determinant was employee emphasis specifically on new/challenging work experiences. This was a particularly significant variable for employees within more specialist occupations and functions (such as banking or accountants and IT specialists) where continuous learning within their own fields was often quite limited at the national level once they reached a certain point on the career
Several senior managers in more specialist job roles openly considered moves into more general management areas in order to ensure career progression, challenging job responsibilities, variations in work tasks and learning increments (as discussed in Chapters 5 and 6). For instance, a manager at Bank Co had moved from an IT/finance role in a specialist organization to a general management position in a bank because,

> I was in a technical field and in Pakistan the problem with being in a specifically very technical position is you hit the ceiling very quickly. Unlike in the states or abroad where there is a parallel career path for engineers or people in the IT business…

(CB11)

Therefore, for these employees in particular, international moves allowed the freedom to pursue greater specialization in their specific fields because of employee perceptions of foreign markets’ higher degree of development and more comprehensive career ladders for technical/specialist job roles as well. This learning-based career attitude in turn may be symptomatic of changes in the employment relationship and the nature of the psychological contract. As Yan et al (2002) have argued, the shift from relational contracts to relatively more transactional contracts may signal a change from a long-term, loyalty based employment relationship to a more project-based, learning oriented one (p. 376).

**Networking**

Existing literature has highlighted the role networks and social capital play in employees’ career development and career trajectories. Jokinen et al (2008) argue that these ‘knowing-whom’ career capabilities consist of a range of intra-firm, inter-firm, professional and social relations combined in a network’ (p. 981). Several respondents underlined the importance of proactively creating social capital across their employing organization’s international subsidiaries in order to increase their visibility (Box III.2.i quote a) and deploying organizational commitment to improve their chances of potential international career opportunities (Box III.2.i quote b).
However, within the international assignments and international careers literature the issue of creating social capital through the ‘knowing-whom’ career competency (De Fillippi & Arthur, 1994; Inkson & Arthur 2001) has yielded contradictory results (Jokinen, 2010). Some research has suggested that working abroad negatively impacts relocated employees’ networking skills because of an unfamiliar local environment/culture, difficulty in maintaining home country (HQ) contacts while away, and varying importance of international external contacts versus international organizational contacts (Dickmann & Harris, 2005).

**Box III.2.i Networking and international career orientations**

a. In order for the decision makers to be aware of your presence you have to do a little bit of networking a well, you have to let people know that I’m here and I want to grow. Within the framework of the organization you get the opportunities to do that for example by being on a training in a different country. For example, when we go to Turkey (regional HQ) we end up meeting people there so that’s basically an opportunity your company is giving you to network. (We) also have a very good communication system and the policy is very open door. Within limits you can contact people all across the globe and gain exposure that way. (CC8C11)

b. I would rather stick to one bank and be promoted within the bank rather than go out and hunt (for) a job… be on a learning curve, getting to know people (abroad)… getting to know the system… (CB11)

c. The benefit of working at the head office is that you are constantly interacting with the top most management levels of the company… you also get to interact with all other (international) locations… if you were working in a territory you probably wouldn’t be interacting with all the locations….. so I have gotten a lot of opportunities to network... (and) if you make good contacts then your network alone can carry you far. (CC13B22)

On the other hand, studies have also shown that managers with international experience exponentially enhance their social capital both within and outside the organization (Makela, 2007), these networks are regarded as valuable symbolic capital by employees, peers and employers (Doherty & Dickmann, 2009), and the benefits of networking outweigh the problems arising from frequent relocations (Suutari & Makela, 2007). These contradictions are also highlighted in Jokinen’s (2010) research on Finnish expatriates. Respondents acknowledged the advantages of contacts in achieving task-based, organizational objectives. However, social networks were not cultivated for personal benefits or career goals. In fact, the author argued that some of the
employees viewed networking ‘as a burden rather than an opportunity’ and ‘disliked the idea of deliberately creating and using relationships for personal benefit’ (p. 331). This is in direct contrast to the Pakistani managers interviewed who actively pursued networking opportunities. In fact, those employees better placed to cultivate and maintain international contacts considered themselves at a distinct advantage as compared to other employees (see Box III.2.i quote c).

One explanation for this palpable difference could be differences in employees’ cultural background. As the literature on Pakistan’s cultural and institutional environment revealed, creation of in-groups and the use of both personal and professional contacts in the workplace is a culturally widespread and socially sanctioned practice. Given that networking, and the deployments of contacts, are normative and cognitive institutions, Pakistani HCNs may be particularly good as what Reiche et al (2009) identified as ‘knowledge brokers’ by capitalizing on and linking social networks created during international assignments across their employing MNC’s global operations. Moreover, this difference could also be a reflection of variation in the attitudes and career priorities of home versus host country employees. Traditional expatriates moving away from company headquarters to subsidiaries are going to be concerned about damaging their home network (Dickmann & Harris, 2005) whereas host country managers creating social capital within regional and international HQs would be enhancing their future international career development.

Organizational knowledge

Analysis across all four multinationals revealed an interesting career goal of increasing organization-specific knowledge through international experience. Several respondents linked their international career orientations to directly increasing their know-how of their current organization’s international operations. However, there was an interesting difference in perspectives. Some employees sought increased operational insight of the MNC’s Pakistani operations in order to improve their chances of moving to an international
subsidiary (see Box III.3.i quote a). For instance, the HR supervisor at Chemical Co argued that her immediate career goal was to ‘work hard and get closer to the Chemical Co business and to participate strategically as a business partner…’ in order to qualify for future international opportunities because ‘I really need to be more in charge of the Pakistani operations because until and unless I don’t, how can I say I am now 100 per cent capable of moving to another country…’ (FC6B10).

**Box III.3.i Organizational knowledge & internationalization: A dual relationship**

*a. Increased subsidiary knowledge facilitating internationalization*

- As far as moving abroad is concerned I would say you have work in a company… locally… to see what is the culture of the company… and then you can try to move out as well. You need to have prior knowledge of the company… you need to work with the company for a while and understand its culture to establish whether you want to continue with it or not… in Pakistan or abroad. Because if you are not happy… then it becomes very difficult for you to… explore further opportunities in other subsidiaries. TP8S20

*b. Internationalization facilitating increased organizational knowledge*

- I think the experience was great… when you… need to deal with something that you previously had an issue or a problem with before… maybe you were just not in the right frame of mind or you couldn’t think from the global perspective… (after international experience) you end up dealing with that issue or problem quite easily and that is the point when you realize… Oh! This is what I really learned from my time abroad… so a lot of things in my daily professional life I am doing differently… CC16B17

On the other hand, some employees desire international experience because of their genuine interest in organization-specific knowledge of a global company. In the long term this organization-specific knowledge could ultimately be harnessed to serve other career interests. For instance, the chief information officer at Beverage Co was primarily interested in international career opportunities because he wanted to gain greater company based exposure and knowledge through experience in ‘a bigger market’ and with this knowledge ‘maybe 10 years down the road I will be targeting a managing director’s position’ (CC10C13). Similarly the national manager of public affairs and communication, who was one of the few employees who had been sent on short-term secondments to Beverage Co’s regional HQ in Turkey and the international HQ, valued his international experiences mainly because of their direct and incremental impact on his company specific knowledge of
organizational structures and cultures at the HQ level. This knowledge in turn improved immediate task efficiency (see Box III.3.i quote b).

Therefore, employees’ focus on increasing organizational knowledge had a dual impact on international career orientations. The more immediate (and personal) career goal was to enhance and capitalize on subsidiary specific knowledge to facilitate an international career transition within the organization’s global setup. The more long-term career goal (that encapsulated personal and organizational objectives) was achieving an international relocation to enable a deeper, more contextual understanding of their current organization’s global operations.

Financial rewards

Employee interviews revealed that greater monetary benefits were not a dominant factor in determining international career orientations. This was in line with the previously discussed employee attitudes of often giving learning and career progression precedence over financial benefits (see Chapter 5). The results of the questionnaire revealed that almost 78 per cent of the employees agreed that they would be able to earn a higher salary with an international career. However, despite this clear acknowledgement, greater financial rewards were not highlighted during the interviews as one of the determining factors when discussing their international career orientations. In fact, a national operations manager who had worked in the U.S. for thirteen years before moving back to Pakistan and joining Beverage Co, admitted that ‘the salary I am getting after 7 years (here) is far less than what I was making in the U.S.’ (CC8C11). However, he argued that foreign training opportunities, international exposure, ‘expanding your horizons’, and potential of international career growth were additional ‘incentives’ that also needed to be considered when evaluating the overall financial package. Thorn’s (2009) study of motives behind international careers revealed a positive relationship between economic factors and international mobility, i.e. ‘the importance of the economic motives increasing with the number of movements’ (p. 452). Therefore, since many of the Pakistani host country managers wished for, but
had not as yet realized, an international career transition, the financial/economic motives were unlikely to be the predominant influence on international career orientations. However, they were likely to become a more significant career variable a few years after internationalization had been achieved.

There were two notable exceptions across the entire employee sample. One of the managers at Bank Co admitted turning down an international career opportunity in Barclays Dubai because ‘the salary wasn’t what I expected’ (CB16). Similarly, Energy Co’s area manager of retail who had previously worked in British Petroleum in America was candid about his primarily financial motivations to internationalization,

… if I am offered a job in Energy Co or actually in any other company obviously I will take it. The conversion rate! I would reap significant financial benefits working abroad. Other than that there can be no other reason because there is no country like Pakistan. (TP11S17)

Career Progression

Analytical results also revealed that employee preoccupation with career progression was inextricably linked to their international career orientations. Employee receptivity to internationalization was predicated on external and internal influences on these managers’ upward mobility. External influences included organizational limitations (i.e. lack of career opportunities or slow progression) and domestic ELM conditions which served as the ‘push’ factors in positively influencing employees’ international orientations. Moreover, the internal (i.e. personal) long-term employee goal of career progression into international markets, either within their current organization’s international ILM or the international ELM, served as a ‘pull’ factor that also impacted employees’ international career orientations.

Even though almost all employees exhibited international career orientations, external influences created significant variation between different employee groups’ perception of achieving this preference for internationalization. Firstly, certain employees’ skills sets were so industry specific (see Box III.4.i
quote a), or the products and services offered by their employing organizations nationally tailored or relatively restricted (for e.g.: Chemical Co and Bank Co respectively) that their overall scope for internationalization was often limited because of their existing job role. For instance, a business manager at Chemical Co admitted that, ‘at my level the (international) opportunities are there but they are rare… because the nature of our job requires a more national focus’ (FC5B9). Therefore, in order for these employees to ensure career progression, personal exploration of internationalization was a visible, and viable, strategy.

**Box III.4.i International career orientations: Career progression & external limitations**

a. … if a specific skills set is required… like expertise in health and safety, or auditing a plant etc… that can lead to international opportunities but other than that there are very few options of internationalizing. The chances of having a career abroad within Chemical Co are slim. The only possibility is that I try to capitalize my own skills set myself. (FC4B8)
b. … in the next 2-3 years I will be the national head for sales or marketing… and after that I will need some clarification about my career path because after that there wouldn’t be a national level left… so at that point I will talk to the senior management (about international opportunities)… (FC7B11)
c. … the position I am currently in… if I am looking for a better placement, more salary and a good package… I may have to relocate abroad. In Pakistan I am not expecting a lot of opportunities at my level. (CC17B18)
d. … definitely I would welcome international opportunities. Obviously everybody has that at the back of their minds… if you get the opportunity you obviously avail it. But it depends what kind of position Bank Co is in… whether there is any opportunity. When business is growing…when the market is doing well… then it’s definite. (CB9)

Moreover, for certain very senior management levels, hierarchical limitations of these multinationals’ Pakistani operations made international career transitions (either intra- or inter- organizational) necessary in order to ensure consistent and speedy movement up the career ladder (see Box III.4.i quote b and c). Finally, the economic crisis had also created uncertainty and increased employees’ negative expectations of job opportunities and career progression at the national level (see Box III.4.i quote d). Since the managerial employees under consideration were a highly educated, elite work group with a relatively strong position in the ELM, they countered external limitations on their career progression in the ILM with a strategy of career internationalization.
Box III.4.ii Career progression & internal (personal) career motivations

- Bank Co… was my first choice… I did have the impression of greater career mobility… it would have been easier to move to other countries as you entered more senior positions and your responsibilities increased. (CB11)
- my ambition is not (just) to become a VP (vice president)… my goal would be to move to a VP position… in another subsidiary of Energy Co… in Indonesia, Malaysia, France… Singapore… wherever a position opens up. (TP8S20)
- … my prime objective is career development… and if Chemical Co provides those opportunities well and good… because they do provide international opportunities and they have moved a lot of people into Asian subsidiaries and international offices… I would appreciate that kind of move and I would definitely take it up. (FC7B11)
- Frankly… I want to focus on the business unit level… Pakistan falls under the Southern Eurasia unit which controls 12 countries… so… in the next 3 years I am looking to place myself somewhere in the business unit. (CC16B17)

International career orientations of managerial employees were also predicated on their personally defined international career goals (see Box. III.4.ii). Many of these employees felt that beyond a certain stage in their careers internationalization was imperative. At the very least they sought a horizontal move to an international subsidiary that offered ‘greater business responsibilities’ or vertical career progression to regional business units which involved control of larger geographical areas. Therefore, international career orientations were a visible variable either ‘pushing’ managerial employees out of their organizations because of external limitations on their career progression or ‘pulling’ them out in response to their subjectively defined long term career goals.

Country of relocation

International career orientations of these managerial employees were also influenced by the country of relocation (see Box III.6.i). Analysis revealed two distinct trends in terms of geographical directionality. A larger group of employees specifically indicated the Middle East in particular as a viable option for relocation, considered ‘the best option’ because it was a ‘safer and an easier transition’ (see Box III.6.i quotes a).
Box III.6.i Geographical specificity in internationalization

a. Relocation to a specific international location
- After working at Bank Co I would like to spend some time in some other country… not necessarily America or the UK… I would like to go to Dubai perhaps… because… I can stay in touch and come back also. And there is a large Pakistani community there. (CB12)
- … sitting in Pakistan the experience that you have is more relevant for a similar set of countries like for example the Middle East. That’s how most of the company’s progression works. So there are more opportunities that will be coming up in Central Asia and the Middle East. And then the next step would be from there. (CC3C21)

b. Relocation to a specific international organizational operation
- I would love to have an opportunity to work at the head office … Moving to the head office has a slightly different culture… so it’s always better if you working in the hub… it gives you more exposure and you get to interact with more people if you are in the head office… (TP9S19)
- If I can find a good opportunity that makes me want to stay then really the sky is the limit… Atlanta is the final destination as the company headquarters… (CC13B22)

This specificity of geographical preference can be attributed to employees proactively engaging in a risk-assessment exercise in the pre-internationalization phase. The Middle East was a preferred relocation region because of existing organizational precedent of successful moves to that region, and employee perception of lower cultural and institutional distances with an Asian and predominantly Islamic region. However, there was an interesting exception to this preference as expressed by a relationship manager at Bank Co,

I would love to be in a place… not in a pseudo Dubai type place… but in a place that will add value to my career… I would like to move to an advanced market. I would not want to do the same thing in let’s say Dubai because it’s the place to be and you can have a good car etc. (CB11)

A second employee preference in terms of international geographical relocation was based on their employing MNC’s organizational structure and employee preference of relocation to the regional or international headquarters (see Box III.6.i quotes b). More significantly these employee preferences for geographical specificity had very different underlying career objectives, attitudes and expectations. The first group had a wider range of objectives
encompassing job-specific (such as MNC’s regional structures, task-based success anticipated as higher in familiar environments, successful organizational precedents etc.) and personal (for e.g.: ease of relocation, presence of local Pakistani community, low travel distance/time to Pakistan etc.) attitudes and expectations within and beyond their employing organization. However, the second group considering geographical relocation specifically along organizational structures was predominantly focused on job-specific outcomes (such as exposure to central organizational systems and policies, complex hierarchical structures, sophisticated working practices, and a more global strategic outlook).

Gender

In terms of demographic influences on international career orientations the most significant determinant was gender. Even though the percentage of female employees in the overall sample is too small (only 14 per cent) to make generalizable claims of strong external validity, analysis of the handful of interviews with female managers highlighted some interesting results. All the females interviewed exhibited international career orientations comparable to male managers. For instance, the credit controller at Energy Co had worked in the UK and Kuwait as part of her professional accounting degree and had found those early international experiences so valuable and interesting that she had specifically found a job in her current organization with the aim of making a more permanent transition abroad,

I joined in Lahore over here but I do expect to move outside the country within this organization… that is my personal, main objective… It’s a multinational so there (are) much more career growth opportunities… and there is much greater international mobility as well. (TP2S4)

However, intriguing differences between male and female managers emerged in terms of the direction and degree of internationalization. Firstly, almost all the female employees expressed an interest in international career opportunities within their current employing organization signifying a distinctly intra-organizational international career direction. This was in direct contrast to a larger numbers of male managers who were also open to pursuing
international work experiences independently. For example, the executive assistant (promoted to assistant manager shortly after her interview) to the foreign CEO of Energy Co explicitly stated that,

I do plan to go to the UK actually… I have been exploring opportunities there actively… and I have already been in discussion with my boss that I would like to be transferred to the Energy Co offices in the UK. I look forward to working within Energy Co… … because if I go from this position to another company… it would be a new start all over again. (TP3S6)

Similarly the HR supervisor at Chemical Co was keen to internationalize her career eventually. However, throughout the interview she consistently conceptualized her international career orientations within her current organization. This intra-organizational directionality in female managers’ orientation to international careers was in direct contrast to Tharenou’s (2003) research in Australia which revealed that there was no significant difference in receptivity to international careers among male and female employees. One interesting explanation for this difference in Pakistani employees’ international career orientations could be that female employees imposed more stringent success assessment criteria onto their potential international careers. For instance, the manager of Beverage Co’s national contact centre argued that,

… if I do a good job with setting up the contact centre here, I might very well get the opportunity to set one up in another country within the parent company’s operations. I would be open to that kind of international move because what’s the point of acquiring all this experience and knowledge if you can’t test it in very different and more challenging environments… (CC15B20)

Her views in combination with the other quotations of female managers highlighted above indicate that these female employees ideas of self-efficacy in international careers, and therefore receptivity to international relocation, was primarily predicated on demonstrable and organizationally sanctioned skills acquisition and performance. This underlined a more stringent assessment of their potential international success that not only specifically built on their organization-specific performance in Pakistan but also played out within the same MNC. Female managers sought a greater degree of
familiarity (thereby ensuring their career success) with the organizational structure, product/industry, and policies and practices. In contrast, male managers’ orientation towards international careers was predicated more on individual notions of internationalization where self-efficacy, relocation receptivity and outcome expectations were primarily based on personal instead of organizational assessment of international capabilities. As a result male managers’ discussion of potential internationalization often included career possibilities outside their employing organization. For instance, a relationship manager at Bank Co admitted that international career opportunities were quite low at his hierarchical level so ‘obviously I will have to look for international career opportunities actively myself” (CB6).

Secondly, despite similar international career orientations of male and female managers there was a difference in the degree of internationalization considered acceptable by the two employee cohorts. Male managers’ international orientations included long term transfers and permanent relocations whereas some of the female managers expressed explicit preference for shorter term, non standard international assignments. This was primarily because of the differentials in male and female employees’ ‘family-domain situations’ (Dupuis et al, 2008) based on the continuing relevance of traditional gender division roles in Pakistan specifically, and the significance of the family role in women’s construction of their social identity generally. Dupuis et al (2008) argued that ‘women appear to give more weight to family ties in their decision to accept or refuse an international assignment. When considering such an opportunity, given life-role salience and the normative nature of gender roles, women are more likely to be influenced more by the demands of their family role and men more by the demands of their work role’ (p. 291). Analytical results supported this perspective because married female managers with family responsibilities exhibited international career orientations but also simultaneously accepted limits to actual internationalization because of their family roles. For instance, the customer relationship manager at Bank Co categorically stated that, ‘I would personally like to stay in Pakistan’ (CB10) because she was soon getting married. Similarly, a management trainee in Beverage Co’s accounts division expressed
a keen desire to have international work experience but admitted the limitations imposed by her domestic situation,

(It can’t be) a permanent move abroad… because I have a family here and my husband has an established career here and ultimately his job is more important than mine. In case of training opportunities or short term workshops I would gladly welcome international exposure… but a permanent move has to be a joint decision and it would be very difficult realistically… (CC7C10)

This was in direct contrast to the male perspective, whereby a gold executive (made an assistant manager shortly after the interview) at Bank Co observed that, ‘They definitely do provide (international) opportunities… and obviously at some point you have to make sacrifices… sacrifice your family life’ (CB14). Existing research has also highlighted how female employees experience more work-family conflicts than male employees resulting in significant gender based discrepancies specifically within the international labour market. Low female participation in international careers was highlighted by Jokinen et al’s (2008) recent study of more than 200 Finnish expatriates where females comprised only 28.4 per cent of the total sample. Moreover, Suutari and Brewster’s (2000) work highlighted that many females had international careers because of the dual-career couples’ phenomenon whereby ‘some of the female group probably got work after following their partners abroad’ (p. 423). Interestingly, despite the skewed gender based labour participation in international careers in existing literature and my own research, an alternative view also emerged from the analysis of these Pakistani female managers’ international orientations. While married female managers willingly applied personal constraints on their international aspirations, single female managers saw international career opportunities as an escape from socially imposed sanctions and career constraints. The brand manager at Energy Co candidly admitted that she would immediately accept an international opportunity,

… outside the country definitely. 5 minutes notice no problem! Because of the environment in the country right now… especially for a woman. And I am single and I just have my mother so I don’t have any liabilities at this point in time so it would be really easy for me to do so. And I feel that being single and being alone I would have less societal pressures abroad than I would over here. (TP6S9)
Similar sentiments were also echoed by another single female manager at Energy Co, who stated that,

… being relocated abroad is a lot more appealing than being relocated within the country. I have some reservations from the family front… working women is a new concept for my family… (but) if they have allowed me to work then you never know what could potentially happen in the future. But personally I would be very happy to take advantage of these opportunities… you get a sense of freedom, a sense of individuality… it’s not just about the money… it feels like you have achieved something. It feels like you are growing in life and you are not stagnant. (TP9S19)

7.3 International career opportunities

Given the Pakistani managers’ propensity for career internationalization it is important to consider the kind of opportunities that were made available by their employing organizations. The following discussion considers each case study organization’s provision of a range of career opportunities (see table IV).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizationally-driven International Opportunities</th>
<th>Beverage Co</th>
<th>Chemical Co</th>
<th>Energy Co</th>
<th>Bank Co</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tradional Expatriate Assignments (3-5 years)</td>
<td>Medium-high</td>
<td>Medium-high</td>
<td>Low-medium</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Secondments/Assignments (1-24 months)</td>
<td>Low-medium</td>
<td>Low-medium</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Travel (approximately 10 days)</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low-medium</td>
<td>Low-medium</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Virtual Communication</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low-medium</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Employee-driven International Initiatives</td>
<td></td>
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Table IV: International Career Opportunities: An organizational overview

(Note: going down the 1st column on the left denotes lower organizationally-
driven opportunities and greater individual proactivity and going up the column denotes vice versa).

The two most common forms of international exposure, i.e. expatriate assignments (defined as long-term, permanent relocations lasting at least 3-5 years) and international secondments (defined as short- to medium-term international assignments ranging from 1-24 months) were considered. Moreover, with the careers literature heralding the rise of new forms of international assignments and international exposure (Reiche and Harzing 2011; Collings et al 2007), two previously under considered categories of business travel (Welch et al 2007) and virtual communication (Welch et al 2003) were also identified as non-standard international opportunities. Business travel was taken to include short-term business visits to different locations within the MNC’s global operations, international trainings/conferences/seminars/workshops and finally project-based input (typically not lasting longer than 10 days). Secondly, international virtual communication across organizational subsidiaries was also included. With the current rise in virtual teams and knowledge sharing through this medium (Reiche and Harzing 2011), it was interesting to consider the degree of international communication offered by the four very different organizations. Analysis across all four case-study organizations revealed that in many cases individual employees took active initiative to drive forward business travel and virtual communication while international secondments/assignments and expatriate assignments were more organizationally driven.

**Beverage Co**

Within the organizational context of Beverage Co employees had recourse to a wide variety of international opportunities. The HR country manager on the export side of Beverage Co explained that previously international experiences were offered to employees purely based on their performance levels. Performance in turn was formally evaluated ‘through the PDF (personal development forum) sessions’ which offered ‘a good opportunity for the employer and the employee to have a good discussion…’ about the potential
of international relocations within a general career development plan (CC10C19). This formal process led to traditional expatriate assignments within the international operations of the multinationals. The country manager of HR elaborated that,

… 2 or 3 of our colleagues are now in Istanbul and Bahrain… like Nadeem our country director of marketing is now the director in Istanbul. Previously some of our country managers are at senior positions in Atlanta and other countries… so the opportunities are there and these are permanent relocations … (CC10C19)

This precedence of international transition by Pakistani managers was considered a distinct, yet achievable, career possibility by both employers and employees. Employees agreed that there were ‘opportunities at the business unit level and then at the group level, then maybe in the head office in Atlanta as well’ (CC1C23) and that ‘the opportunities are available because within our organization we have had several people go out to Turkey’ (CC8C11). However, these permanent relocations were predominantly available for either senior or high performing, and therefore highly valued, managers. These employees’ future career progression and potential management development could not be accommodated solely within the Pakistani subsidiary.

This situation was expected to change because there had been a strategic realignment in the MNC’s international operations and the Pakistani operations were now managed by the Turkish headquarters. This change in reporting line, management, and regional headquarters had given rise to two distinct organizational developments. Firstly, organizational restructuring had placed Pakistan within a larger regional group whereby ‘our region comprises of Pakistan, Afghanistan, Turkey, Kazakhstan, Jordan, Syria and Iraq etc…. so a lot of opportunities are there’ (CC5C17). This expanded regional structure was expected to positively impact the number and frequency of international career transitions offered to Pakistani managers. For instance, a senior manager on the export side of Beverage Co argued that,

… we can move sideways because there has recently been a lot of restructuring and there are more vacancies, there are more opportunities and next year we expect even more restructuring. And now that we are a part of a bigger group obviously the
Secondly, the new Turkish regional HQ had also driven the recent introduction of a formal, structured system of identifying and nurturing high-potential employees across both Beverage Co entities of Pakistan - with the specific intention of developing international careers for these employees at some point in the future. For instance, one of employer interview’s revealed that,

The formal program regarding career development is our HIPO program… (it) is an international program so its managed from the head office… there’s quite a lot going on about succession planning… the program has been launched and the people have been identified and they have been informed that they are HIPOs… (and) they can be recommended from any department or area… (CC20C8)

In line with this organizational development a few employees within the high potential cohort had already been offered exposure within the international subsidiaries of Beverage Co. One of these employees, the national head of public affairs and communication, explained that,

…the group office identifies people who they think are… high potential employees (and) gives these employees… opportunities to move into the group office or the corporate office for short periods of time… so I was lucky enough to get the opportunity to go to the group office in Istanbul and then the opportunity arose in Atlanta… they needed someone who could support them with digital media so I had the chance to go there for 3 months as well… (CC16B17)

However, even though this programme was expected to increase overall international mobility for high performing employees across the organization, it was still in its infancy and therefore very restricted in its application. Several new employees who had been hired a year ago, specifically to spearhead the new expansion plans in Pakistan, had been excluded entirely from all previously offered and newly anticipated international opportunities while the programme was developed properly. This was a significant organizational drawback because lack of international exposure limited these employees potential to drive the new departments and job roles that had been created for them. A newly appointed senior manager highlighted that,

In (previous organization) I have done a lot of assignments abroad… even in the UK, Australia, Fiji, Papua New Guinea. I went on a lot of managerial international level
courses… for a newcomer I think it is very necessary to have some sort of more formalized orientation… at my level you have to have short-term secondments such as visits to world class plants within the international company… so that one gets the opportunity to work with another plant for a specific amount of time… and that is when one learns a lot and can benefit the organization as well. I would love to (go to) the world class manufacturing plant in Turkey but there has not been any discussion so far… (CC14B21)

Moreover, the new organizational changes underlined the existing inequalities in the availability of international opportunities for different employee groups. Firstly, there was disparity in the availability and incidence of international movement between the export and the bottling sides’ sister companies of Beverage Co Pakistan, whereby the former offered far greater international transitions and the latter almost none at all. For instance, the HR management trainee on the bottling side, despite exhibiting high international career orientations, felt that an international movement was very unlikely for her despite the recent organizational changes,

I highly doubt I will be moved to another geographical location. Since I am on the bottling side of Beverage Co and since our operations are based within Pakistan so unless I apply for a vacancy in the international Beverage Co structure (myself) that is something different but otherwise there is… no formal path to make an international move… on the company side (international mobility) happens… so if I get a chance to move there… then it will be a possibility… but I think on my side of the company I don’t have any such expectations because it is just not done. (CC13B22)

Imparity in international career opportunities was also observable across different functions. More general management positions fared relatively better in terms of international exposure while the functions with a commensurately greater national focus (such as accounting and finance or HR) were less likely to be nominated for international career opportunities. The country finance manager corroborated this,

What I’ve seen is that in the marketing and technical sides it’s easier to take those assignments. But in finance which is already a very lean function… from the Pakistan perspective when any one of us goes even for a 2 weeks assignment or training … it’s a mess because of the kind of workloads each person is handling… (CC1C23)
Box III.7.i Non-standard international career opportunities

- … I’ve been to at least 11 locations all across the world… most of them for training purposes. My longest travel was about one month and that was a short term secondment. (CC2C22)
- I’ve been to Argentina twice, I’ve been to Brazil, I’ve been to Turkey, I’ve been to Malaysia twice, and then we also had a workshop in Singapore. I have also been to Dubai a couple of times. So a lot of travelling. Some of them have been trainings regarding some tool… and a couple of meetings and workshop sessions in which basically we were discussing how to do alignment on the various areas between Pakistan and other countries and a couple of them were just new technologies that are just coming out… (CC6C16)
- … on the coordination side if you see our department actually has the maximum contact with the Turkish headquarters… because it’s the planning department so we are constantly exchanging emails and in contact with each other… (CC11C14)
- … in December I went to Istanbul for a visit… I was recruited as a trainer to run a course there but it was still a learning process (for me)... I didn’t opt for it… it came from Turkey… our corporate learning department there had invited us to attend this particular course and disseminate knowledge to other parts of Beverage Co. (CC18C19)

Beverage Co provided an interesting example for international career opportunities. Despite long and short term assignments (i.e. permanent relocations and international assignments respectively) being reserved for specific employees (based on considerations of seniority and tenure, the HIPO programme, function, and placement in export vs. bottling company), the overall organizational culture actively promoted the more non-standard, short-term international exposure for everyone. Therefore, many middle, and some junior, managers, while not qualifying for traditional expatriate assignments or short-term international secondments, were offered a relatively more non-standard international exposure and opportunities such as short business trips and virtual internationalization. Business trips included formal training courses, networking and exposure opportunities, and specialist input on international projects (of less than a month’s duration). Moreover, international opportunities were also conceptualized in terms of open virtual communication across all international subsidiaries involving exchanges regarding Beverage Co best practices, advice on operational issues, use and implementation of new policies and systems, coordination, reporting and so on.
These kinds of opportunities were accorded a great deal of value by both the employers and the employees because it simultaneously achieved organizational objectives, such as company-specific learning and task efficiency, and individual employee objectives of learning and development. Moreover, with these more non-standard international opportunities employees were seen to have far greater discretion and flexibility in *self-initiating* these international experiences. For instance, the business applications manager revealed that since there was very minimal on-the-job support, it was a great help to have lateral support from international colleagues,

… what I usually do is I get in touch with other Beverage Co systems, and how they doing things abroad. So our counterparts in Turkey etc… so we get to know how they are doing things and if we can replicate all that over here… so we do have a lot of lateral learning across systems. CC6C16

Therefore, Beverage Co provided its managerial employees with a whole range of international work experiences. The traditional medium to long-term opportunities (such a permanent relocation and international secondments of a few months) were relatively limited and only offered to very senior managers, with a burgeoning trend of high-potential employees qualifying for secondments. However, a wider cohort of employees from across all management levels had recourse to business travel, international training and exposure sessions (i.e. regional strategy workshops, operational visits etc), and in some cases specialist contributions to international projects. More importantly, an interesting feature of Beverage Co’s organizational culture was the international strategy of open communication and all employees, irrespective of function and hierarchical level, reported close contact with regional HQ, international subsidiaries (within and beyond their region), specialists in their own functions and their international counterparts.
While Beverage Co was undergoing significant changes towards *increased* international exposure for its employees, Bank Co, on the other extreme, was steadily cutting back on organizational policies that facilitated international work experience for its managerial employees. In previous years Bank Co Pakistan was a part of the international group’s ‘emerging market programme which recruited management trainees for places globally’ (CB23). The corporate bank head for Lahore argued that Pakistani managers in particular had traditionally done well in this programme because,

... the best thing about Pakistan is the quality of resources is excellent...both India and Pakistan... you have somebody who can speak English... good education... and people who are hard working and this combination altogether makes you a nice... mobile... resource... worth investing in... (CB23)

Moreover, there had also been the formal option of entering directly into the global Management Associate (MA) track, within consumer banking specifically, which involved direct recruitment into a foreign subsidiary of Bank Co. One of the relationship managers at the Lahore corporate head office explained that, ‘... some of my (MBA) colleagues who weren’t interested in corporate but consumer went into a global MA track...’ (CB11). Both employer and employee interviews revealed that in previous years there had been far greater opportunities of international mobility. However, the international financial crisis had negatively impacted all these avenues of international exposure. An employer interview highlighted this changing situation,

Mobility is one of the attractions for working in this bank... upward mobility it offers in terms of moving abroad... that has always been a plus point... I must say that mobility in the last one year has really gone down ... because internationally there is so much crisis going on... there are not many jobs available... we are seeing that staff is getting laid off... Bank Co fired a few thousand people across the globe last year... so in that environment there are few openings coming up... I guess its transitory and things will improve but historically yes... a substantial amount of mobility and opportunities (were) available... being a global bank in 140 countries there is always an opportunity there somewhere... (CB23)

This point of view was also corroborated by employees who had been working
in Bank Co for a few years and therefore had experienced first-hand this organizational transition from high to very low international mobility. A relationship manager within branch banking argued that,

You have opportunities at the international level too… we’ve had people who’ve transferred into Dubai recently… since it’s a global brand and we have branches almost everywhere…… We can go to a lot of places… people have moved to Kazakhstan as well… (but) that totally depends on how the economy is doing… (CB7)

In fact, many managers knew friends and colleagues from previous years who had successfully made an intra-organizational international transition prior to the financial crisis, and experienced the subsequent drastic reduction in international opportunities made available to managerial employees. For instance, a quality assurance reviewer reminiscing about previous international opportunities explained that, ‘history says all… many of my seniors are working in Dubai, Bahrain, London, New York’ (CB8). Another middle manager employed at the corporate head office argued that,

Right now there are zero career opportunities as far as mobility across countries is concerned… because the current crisis is not specific to Bank Co… (previously) a lot of my seniors were exported… there is hardly anyone left in the Lahore branch from back when I joined… they have either left or been exported. Most of them in the corporate department have been exported and are in the Middle East or Far East region… (CB11)

In the current scenario the employees felt that the bank was constrained by external circumstances but because of previous openness towards internationalization still entertained individual employee driven pro-activity in pursuing international opportunities. Therefore, even though there was ‘no policy as such from the bank itself involving transfers abroad’ (CB10), there were options such as ‘you have the opportunity to give your CV’s on the net or you can forward them to the Karachi HR head office’ (CB14). This can be attributed to the organization’s attempt to formally acknowledge their employees’ persisting international orientations and expectations that in previous years it had encouraged and actively capitalized on. And the employees were very aware of this organizational dilemma. As one employee succinctly argued,
Right now the message throughout the organization is that one should be thankful one has a job… having said that, the organization has never hindered career mobility in the past… right now if I go and say I want to move abroad they would gladly put my name in a list that will then be screened against opportunities… but since the opportunities are not there, it’s not the organization’s fault. (CB11)

The financial crisis and organizational emphasis on cost-cutting had had several far-reaching impacts on the overall policy of international work experiences. Firstly, the organization was predisposed to accommodate high performing employees within the national operations with a view to retaining talent ‘because they (senior management) wouldn’t wanna export people who are performing well over here… it’s going to be a bad decision exporting (them)’ (CB2). This was a particularly important strategy because the primary rationale behind Bank Co’s presence in Pakistan was profitability, that is, ‘foreign banks major concern is to make money… (otherwise) they will wind up the business from Pakistan’ (CB8). This meant that high performing employees that were likely to qualify for international opportunities were actively courted because their staying in Pakistan would help sustain the Pakistani subsidiary’s financial viability in the international group. An employer interview with one of the branch managers interestingly revealed that,

… in some cases the employee’s working really well and the employee has good potential… the management gives options to the employee… better options in Pakistan… (CB24)

Secondly, international career opportunities were now available solely for very senior managers and the bank was no longer able to offer international experiences for a wider group of managers. An employer interview with the Vice President revealed that,

… where people have put in ‘x’ number of years in the country… finally they’ve grown too big for their jobs and if you want to keep them motivated you have to move them on to bigger better things… (CB23)

Employees were aware that international opportunities were now the sole preserve of very senior management, whereby ‘you need to be at a very senior level… at the VP level for example… not at this level… they have those kind
of opportunities’ (CB9) and international work experiences were offered after considerable tenures of ‘10 years or so at a senior level’ (CB15). As a result, many male junior and middle managers in Bank Co specifically exhibited relatively greater openness to capitalize on their work in a well-known, foreign MNC, with a marketable ‘brand name’ attached to it, and actively find international jobs themselves. The role that the financial crisis and hierarchical levels played in limiting organizationally sanctioned internationalization for many managerial employees, were also pertinent for the more short-term, non-standard international exposure (i.e. international business travel, exposure/networking opportunities, training etc.). Business travel across the multinational’s international subsidiaries had been significantly pared down and out of all the employee interviews only one respondent mentioned an impending short term business visit to India ‘because this product is very good in India so we will be scheduling (a visit) very soon… probably by next year… to just have an idea what they’re doing there how they’re doing it…’ (CB2). Similarly, international training courses had previously been available for junior and middle management employees as well. An employee who had joined on the management associate track within graduate recruitment had experienced this shift in international opportunities first-hand, … Before this crisis… I was due for training in Turkey last year for 5 weeks… but because of the financial situation they are focusing on reducing costs… right now it’s not in Bank Co’s hand but otherwise amazing opportunities (were provided). There were trainings that took place abroad. (CB11)

However, the increasing national provision of training was not just because of the climate of economic uncertainty but also because of the nationally oriented nature of Bank Co’s operations in Pakistan whereby ‘training on new products happens once in a while basically when the bank launches a new product or makes a change in a product… it’s specifically tailored for Pakistan’ (CB6). Therefore, the scope for business travel and international training was quite limited anyway because of the national focus of the subsidiary and the products/services offered. However, this picture was quite different for very senior management who were still offered formal training courses in the regional training centre in Turkey. These courses had a more international
scope and rather than focusing on Pakistan-specific policies and procedures were seen as generic, regional courses ‘not specific to any particular geography’ (CB23).

Interestingly, these developments were pertinent to the long-term expatriate assignments (involving permanent relocation) and the short-term, business travel categories. Employer interviews revealed that, irrespective of the current financial crisis, the organization had never had a policy of short-term assignments/secondments or significant international communication across subsidiaries. One senior manager explained that,

In a few cases we have seconded employees for a short duration of time… to certain countries but essentially that’s more to help them get a job there… if we feel that a temporary position could lead to a permanent position… but the (Bank Co) brand doesn’t work on a temporary work model that much… you can’t with the kind of job that you have… it’s not fair… it’s like using him for 1 or 2 months and not giving him any career and sending him back… so he’s neither here nor there… so when he comes back here there is no job for him either… so people would rather prefer to have specific, fixed jobs… (CB23)

Even though most employees personally knew colleagues who had made permanent international transitions to Bank Co’s foreign subsidiaries, none of them were aware of any short-term international opportunities. This lack of precedent can be attributed to the nature of the work itself. Most of these managerial employees agreed that they simultaneously had to be aware of Pakistan’s state bank regulations as well as Bank Co’s central policies and procedures mirroring the parent country banking system. Therefore, a potential move to a third country would involve learning that particular country’s state regulatory structures which would not be viable, or even possible, for short-term visits lasting only a few weeks/months (even though this was the most valued aspect of learning expected from long-term international relocation). Secondly, international business visits in the other case study organizations were possible mainly because of similarity in products or organizational structures. However, the products and services being offered in Bank Co Pakistan had been specifically tailored for the Pakistani customer, thereby limiting comparability and transferability to other international subsidiaries. Moreover, the national subsidiary had very little central interference in the
day-to-day running of the bank, particularly at the branch banking level, and was fairly autonomous as an entity within the global operations (see Chapter 4). For example, the branch manager revealed that,

… we do take permission from those people outside Pakistan… (but decision relating to) a junior level… the management like branch banking head of Bank Co in Pakistan or the CPM of Pakistan can decide… (CB24).

International experience through virtual communication across subsidiaries was also not observable because the organizational culture and international structure of Bank Co did not require subsidiaries to liaise with other operations. In fact, the junior and middle management levels did not have any direct communication with branches across different cities within Pakistan. The overall picture of international career opportunities in Bank Co thus was fairly limited as a result of the financial crisis, organizational structure and culture, and features pertaining specifically to the Pakistani subsidiary. Therefore, only very senior management, at vice president and director levels, could anticipate movement to foreign subsidiaries and junior and middle managers had almost no recourse to organizational paths to internationalization in terms of both standard and non-standard international experiences.

**Energy Co**

At Energy Co international career opportunities in particular were monitored and controlled by the regional and central home offices with very little autonomy granted to the Pakistani subsidiary. An employer level interview with one of the senior HR managers revealed that,

We have a regional office and then the head office and these kinds of (international) moves are basically initiated from there… they have well-defined career management and development systems… so they identify which candidate will be most suitable for which job. ($10)

As a result of this fairly bureaucratic structure of control, employees were very conscious that any potential internationalization of their careers depended on,
… how well you perform and how well do you project it… if both things work… then you will definitely come into consideration of higher management sitting in Singapore… our regional office… so if you come in the limelight and if you are considered by them then yes it can definitely happen (TP8S20).

Moreover, centralized, organizational control was also evident in the presence of expatriate managers at very high levels within Pakistan’s operational structure. Not only was the CEO an expatriate (the last CEO had been British and the current one was French) but some of the other strategically important departments, dealing with the development and maintenance of business within Pakistan, were also headed by foreign managers. The presence of these expatriates created widespread employee perception of hierarchical ceilings within the organizational structure of the subsidiary. Employees were aware that if expatriates from the company’s global operations would be deployed at the senior levels within the Pakistani subsidiary, their own progression would ‘at the maximum it could be the head of the department’ (TP10S18). However, interestingly this was seen as advantageous in terms of internationalization by some employees who felt that it was evidence of organizational commitment to international careers for high performing employees. A civil engineer at a senior level management position, when commenting on the presence of expatriates, highlighted it primarily as a positive organizational aspect,

… nobody knows when an opportunity comes up… you can be sent anywhere in any part of the world. We have living examples over here… (so) people have been mobilized nationally and internationally… (TP5S8)

These optimistic perceptions of employees were specifically addressed by the Vice President of HR, who candidly admitted that,

… (when) people come for an interview… they think it’s a multinational organization… once we start working over here we will get the opportunities to move abroad… and this is a misconception… …we only give a chance to the high potential who have a very solid education background, who we foresee that the size of this company may be too small for this particular gentleman. He is going to grow a lot faster compared to the organization… (S5).

Another important variable that was considered to increase prospects of internationalization for managerial employees was the age and growth of the company. The area manager of retail and development argued that,
In the previous, early years of Energy Co… it was growing and people were needed here to make a strong network and to make the company a profitable concern and have a solid ground in Pakistan… once it was done then 3 of the potential candidates… 3 senior managers were moved… 2 to Singapore and one was moved to Indonesia… (TP8S20)

Many other employees also mentioned that in previous years international mobility had been limited because ‘the company was very new…’ (TP4S7) so the focus was disproportionately more on ‘expats… coming in to work in Energy Co in Pakistan… from different areas and different regions and different countries. Now we have set some examples recently where our own staff has been moved out of Pakistan as expats’ (TP1S3). The movement of Pakistani managers into senior positions in the Indonesian and Malaysian subsidiaries and the Singapore regional office had created very positive perceptions regarding the availability of international career opportunities for other employees (see Box. III.8.i)

Box III.8.i Employee perceptions of international mobility

- … now we know it is no longer impossible for us because we have 2 examples in front of us. I believe that anybody who is working and who is giving results will be considered… (TP1S3)
- Some of the people here have moved to Singapore, one in Malaysia… so I do have chances if I show performance to make that move in the next 3-5 years… because already some people have moved out… so that precedent is there. (TP2S4)
- … as far as moving aboard is concerned it is a very opportunity rich company… where you can go (anywhere)… (TP6S9)

This, however, was in direct contrast to the more tempered view of international mobility expressed in the employer interviews. Both the senior managers questioned on overall organizational policies, practices and culture of Energy Co stressed that internationalization was possible but the available opportunities were very limited. The Vice President of HR explicitly stated that,

… how many people will get the chance to go abroad… very very few… when it comes to internationalization… one should realize that you are in competition with the world… over here you are in competition with Pakistanis… and working in one small company… if somebody wants to be moved to (for example) Paris or Singapore so he is in direct competition with 138,000 employees. And the locals working in Singapore or Paris… (S5)
As with the other case-study organizations, seniority and job tenures were considered important variables in making an international transition within Energy Co. Many employees highlighted that only senior managers were given international opportunities and ‘for an international move you need to have a few years of experience… at least 7-8, even 10, years you need to work here before they make you an expat and send you abroad’ (TP4S7). This was in line with the company practice of slow and steady progression up a well-defined organizational career ladder. However, interestingly, employer interviews revealed that seniority was not the predominant factor in choosing a Pakistani manager for permanent relocation. Instead, after performance, several qualitative, more intrinsic elements were given relatively greater precedence,

… the behaviour and attitude… whether the person is ready to work in a cross-functional, multi-cultural environment or not… family situation… how old are the kids… whether the spouse is learned or not… whether he or she will be able to learn a foreign language easily… if you are moving to country where English is not the first language … so these are the things we see for international mobility. (S5)

Therefore, there was evidence to suggest that despite the limited number of international opportunities, Energy Co’s steady development in Pakistan had in recent years given rise to permanent relocations for some employees and created positive perceptions regarding internationalization within the remaining employees. However, analysis results revealed that there was absolutely no precedent for short-term international assignments or secondments of a few weeks/months. None of the employees highlighted the possibility of these non-standard international moves and the employer interviews revealed a distinct organizational stand on them,

… we don’t have monthly moves or secondments… we have more permanent tenures… once a person is expatriated they are moved for at least 3-5 years and after that they move on to another country… it’s simple. Short term can be for example a seminar or a conference but it cannot be a full term assignment abroad… absolutely not. (S10)

On the other hand, there was evidence of non-standard international experience in the form of business travel, international training, and exposure/networking opportunities. The manager of recruitment and benefits
also attested that the organizational culture actively encouraged the transfer of best practices across subsidiaries and that ‘this is the best mutual support across functions… within the group as a whole’ (S10). The regional sales manager, who had been on several trainings abroad, for example in Dubai and Singapore, gave a detailed account of an organizational seminar he had recently attended,

I went to Indonesia to attend a 3 day seminar that was internal to our company and I had interaction with all the 4 different business groups… there were all the department heads who… gave presentations for their business units. Then there were people from corporate strategy, then there were people from human resources, people from all other departments… almost everybody was there from … our global head office and they also gave a presentation… we were able to get full details about what our company is all about and what our industry is all about and where we are going. I believe that was an excellent experience for me. (TP1S3)

These international trainings were not only seen as valuable learning opportunities but also because ‘one reason for going on trainings abroad is also for networking purposes… and this is all part of it. Networking is needed to share experiences and not only on the place of the meeting but even afterwards…’ (S10). However, a closer look at the analytical results revealed that this organizational practice of international exposure through business travel across the company’s international subsidiaries was quite circumscribed. Firstly, it was offered primarily to the very senior managers (at the vice president or director levels). For instance, the Vice President of HR at the national level referred to his own experience as,

… once or twice a year we are all meeting somewhere in Singapore or Thailand to attend some seminars, HR seminars, sales seminars so that we can do some networking and share some best practices within the Asian region and then once a year at least we meet in (corporate head office)... all the subsidiaries from the world so that they can share their experiences and get the same information from HO. (S5)

Secondly, with respect to junior and middle managers, it was offered to employees who were clearly in the high potential category and had been employed with the organization for a few years. The length of tenure was an important variable because it proved not only their potential (in terms of task efficiency, learning, and career potentiality) but also highlighted their commitment to the organization. Therefore, organizational impetus for
providing international exposure was very strategic and specifically targeted the internationalization of those employees who would directly benefit the organization. The centralized nature of policy-making and implementation meant that these experiences were directly controlled by the head office. As an employer interview revealed,

… there are some group trainings as well… some recommendations which come from abroad… the high potentials are obviously a part of that… but that is specifically targeted towards employees that have stayed in the company for more than let’s say 3-5 years and they have the requisite talent to adapt to those types of trainings. It’s not really that it’s for senior members only… it can be a mix of people… some from senior and some from middle management. (and) these particular trainings involve employees going abroad… anywhere in the world… (S10)

Subsequently, a very small percentage of managerial employees were actually able to take advantage of this particular form of international experience and the majority of the employees interviewed believed that short and long term international mobility does ‘happen within the company but it happens for only senior manager not middle management’ (TP11S17).

Finally, in terms of virtual communication across international subsidiaries of Energy Co, a distinct picture emerged. In line with the traditional, bureaucratic structure of the organization, favouring centralized control, international communication channels were well-defined and only open for very senior managers. Junior and middle managers reported directly to the head’s of their functions and departments and these senior managers in turn reported to their function heads in the regional and the central HQ’s. This formalized chain of command and communication left very little room for extensive communication across international operations. As one of the employer interviews highlighted,

… we do not talk a lot with other subsidiaries but we communicate a lot with the head office who is evaluating us… So this is how it works but I’m not talking to India or Philippines or Korea… I’m not talking to China. (S5)

Conclusively, a picture of controlled and limited international movement emerged within Energy Co’s Pakistan operations. There had been a few instances of international relocation in recent years. However, organizational
considerations such as lean operations, seniority concerns, competition with other international subsidiaries, and centralized control over decision making considerably restricted international mobility for the Pakistani managers studied. Moreover, permanent expatriation and non-standard, business travel were the only options of internationalization available and short-term assignments and virtual international links were not accommodated by the multinational’s international structure.

**Chemical Co**

Chemical Co had a three-tier strategy to providing its managerial employees with a range of international work experiences. Firstly, they had an internal practice titled ‘leadership development reviews’ in which each region across the MNC’s international operations presented the international president of the global operations from the parent country HQ with a list of managerial talent within their area. The HR head for the Asia Pacific region explained these reviews as,

... we... talk about the talent... who are the people...what are they doing... the high performers were always well spotted... so even the chairman would know who the top 20 per cent was... and whenever we can get some opportunity... we used to give those people exposure...and exposure doesn’t only mean... an assignment but it could just be that the chairman is visiting the region... you would invite this kid and they would meet him... so that in itself used to become a really big motivation for these kids and give them exposure and at the same time let the senior management know who are these people.

Secondly, they had the formal online system of internal recruitment and rotation where all project-driven international assignments (between 1-24 months) and the traditional, expatriate assignments (between 3-5 years) were advertised. Generally, the positions opening up in different parts of the world required more senior managers. However, as a company tool it was open to all hierarchical levels and all organizational functions globally. The HR head highlighted that,

In Chemical Co we have an intranet site where a lot of positions were posted... and each employee had an opportunity... if they applied for it... they became part of the
pool... now generally for international assignments at the very junior levels the probability of moving all those people was low but not remote again because of the level and the cost... so there was a lot more opportunity for mid tier and above to be considered for it... (but) the opportunity was there for everyone...

Finally, very recently, ‘there was an international career conference in which they decided that people from each area will be involved in international assignments’ (FC4B8). However, despite all these possibilities available within the organization’s international network, there were significant differences in the degree of access to these international career opportunities across different employee groups. Fieldwork revealed that within Pakistan the managerial staff could be delineated into three main categories - managers employed at the territories (mostly sales staff deployed all over Pakistan), the managerial staff at the manufacturing plant (mostly specialist staff with specific agro-chemical backgrounds), and finally the managerial cohort at the head office (including HR, finance, IT, marketing and sales).

With respect to the first group there was almost no international mobility. These managers focus was on selling to Pakistani customers in the rural areas and their work was conducted entirely at the national level. Most of their trainings were conducted by the senior management at the head office in Lahore and there was no strategic rationale of providing them with international exposure. Therefore, the availability of international opportunities for them was also quite rare. The only exception was the team leaders for each region’s territorial staff. An employer-level interview with a regional sales manager revealed that,

My communication is mostly at the national headquarters in Lahore... but in some cases there is some interaction with Indian officers... if someone from there is over... to discuss some technical point... (or) like I’m going to India in a few days. And then we have communication with offices in other areas within Pakistan on project-related aspects when the need arises.

These managers were also offered a few international trainings in Asian locations (for e.g.: Tashkent, Dubai, India etc.). However, even these opportunities were specifically available for the mid-tier managers heading these territorial operations and not for the two rungs of employees working
under them (i.e. sales officers and business leaders). Yet the Chemical Co culture specifically highlighted that international opportunities were open to all high-performing employees irrespective of age, tenure, location, or department. For instance, a regional manager underlined that,

... at the local level ... of sales officers under me so far there hasn’t been a case where an employee from that level has been transferred abroad... but the important thing is that everyone knows that the possibility is there if they can prove themselves...

The second employee group based at the manufacturing plant fared better. On the one hand, they were exposed to significant business travel opportunities. For instance, the assistant safety and administration manager at the plant had visited several Chemical Co plants across four countries (including the parent country) with the dual purpose of learning from, and training, other international operations. Similarly, managers at the plant reported attending a range of international conferences and trainings such as the ‘annual sales conference’, the ‘annual training conference’, ‘process safety trainings’, ‘training on corporate safety strategy’ and so on. All these opportunities, though falling within the short-term, non-standard business travel category, were nevertheless considered extremely valuable by the employees and specifically provided by Chemical Co to increase these employees international exposure to, and understanding of, the multinational’s global operations. One of the managers at the plant highlighted that within his own area of expertise ‘I have been given the opportunity to visit other countries and for my career these visits were very beneficial’ (FC3B6).

Moreover, this employee group also had recourse to significant virtual communication across international operations. It is worth noting that often this communication was a formal requirement, because of the sensitive nature of their jobs at the plant, rather than an employee-driven initiative in pursuit of individual learning. For example, a civil engineer explained that,

... there are certain reporting areas which we need to share internationally on a monthly basis... with the people sitting in Chemical Co’s corporate headquarters... so for example, the environmental manager in America ... we were directly
communicating with him in carrying out a recent audit… how to achieve the targets set… how to deliver them, any alterations, any legal requirements we need to take into account because they are changing all the time as well. (FC4B8)

On the other hand, this group had very little opportunity to go on short-term international assignments/secondments or long-term expatriate assignments. Despite several examples of Pakistanis being relocated abroad, none of them had been from the manufacturing unit. This limitation in the degree of internationalization, particularly as compared to the head office employees, was explicitly highlighted by the managers at the plant. For instance, a middle-tier manager argued that, ‘they can provide me with the international level… but Chemical Co doesn’t really encourage me to seek broader chances and broader opportunity…but they do provide opportunities on the Asian level’ (FC6B6).

Finally, the managers based at the national head office had recourse to a range of international career opportunities - possibly also because of the very restricted headcount. As the national head of marketing pointed out ‘in the last 25 years in the history of Chemical Co Pakistan there have been cases of numerous people who were transferred… and they’ve got some really good growth out of it…’. These employees, from across a range of departments including HR, finance and sales/marketing, had been relocated permanently on expatriate assignments and enjoyed a truly international career moving from one international location to the next, on average every five years. Identified early on as high potentials and classified as the organization’s international cadre of talent rather than a national resource, the HR head for Asia Pacific explicitly stated that ‘this is something which globally… Chemical Co really drives it…’ Which is why recruitment and selection of managers at the head office in Pakistan was particularly thorough, whereby those candidates were hired who specifically showed the potential for movement to the next operational level within the company’s global structure. Moreover, despite the overall lean structure of Chemical Co Pakistan, hierarchical structures, organizational rules, seniority and age were not the determining factors for this group. The focus instead was on,
… what kind of potential you present… and what kind of performer you are…if you belong to that slate of talent that really needs to be developed, groomed and given more challenging opportunities and have the ability to move around… they offer it…

To this end these high potential employees were given extensive and varied exposure to all kinds of international opportunities. For instance, one high potential business manager revealed that ‘the head office had encouraged me that if I want to go for any learning or observational visits anywhere in the world it’s an open offer’ (FC7B11).

This freedom of international exposure was not just to improve their current task efficiency, in fairly expansive and strategically important national jobs, but also to prepare them for upward mobility to the next international operational level. Both employers and employees cited examples such as a ‘regional strategy meeting’ for higher management from across Chemical Co’s global operations, or a week long leadership conference bringing together Euro-Asia’s department heads. These meetings involved discussion on international issues such as ‘company’s vision, company’s mission and the strategy for next year… what areas are we going to focus on, the prices we will set, how the rapid developments in the Chinese market should be handled…’ (FC2B5).

This handful of employees was also given the freedom to initiate business visits to other subsidiaries. For example, a brand manager in the marketing department admitted that, ‘the Dubai visit was my personal decision. It was a new brand that had never been explored here so I wanted to see how it is used over there. I talked to my managing director and I initiated it’ (FMC1B3). An employer interview with the marketing head provided corroboration for this practice of going to ‘other countries for learning business…’ He highlighted the importance of visiting other subsidiaries for short business visits to fulfil specific learning objectives, and taking his own employees on these trips with him,

… for example I went to Indonesia to see what they are doing… and we invite people… 2 months back Indian people were here to see how Pakistan’s doing… I’m going to India next week to see how they are doing… so nobody stops us from going
to other places… its encouraged…

In terms of international virtual communication as well this group had the most advantages. Chemical Co international had a specific policy of creating a culture of openness which was also helped because of the overall very lean structure, whereby,

It’s a very open system… I could just pick up the phone and call up the international manager and I could send an email… I don’t have to go through the regional headquarters… that’s what Chemical Co is about… we don’t believe in bureaucracy… there’s a lot of openness a lot of flexibility for people to do what’s necessary… (HR head)

Similarly, the marketing manager argued that,

… everything is open… telephones, emails… supposing I want to get some information about Thailand I can directly call Thailand… if I need something from Brussels I can directly contact them… or someone in Brazil… and if we want to go there and see something… Hong Kong (regional HQ) is not going to stop us…

Finally, even though the MNC rarely offered short-term international assignments and the focus was more on business travel or permanent relocation, exceptions were easily made if assignments were needed to develop these high-potential managers for bigger, international roles. For instance, the deputy finance manager highlighted the additional career possibility that ‘within the finance department of Euro-Asia they move people from one country to another for 3-6 months specifically for training purposes…’ (FMC2B5). Similarly, the current Pakistani Indonesian country head had been transferred on short-term assignments to Hong Kong and Singapore, specifically to increase his international exposure, before eventually being moved to Indonesia. Another interesting example was of Pakistan’s current country head, who had originally been an engineer and in order to give him general business exposure he was sent for ‘a couple of months stint in Indonesia…’ and then made in charge of the Pakistani operations because ‘you really can’t give somebody a jump from running a plant to a country’ (HR head).

Therefore, the small number of managerial employees at the head office was
hired with the specific intention of qualifying for Chemical Co’s international cadre of high potentials. To this end, they were given a range of international opportunities such as long-term expatriate assignments, short-term international secondments, business travel (including visits to other subsidiaries and regional meetings) and extensive international communication across the multinational’s global operations. On the other hand, this was a very small group within the overall Pakistani operations and the managers working at the manufacturing plant and the territories were offered fairly limited international exposure.

7.4 Conclusion

This chapter sought to explore the international career orientations of individual HCN managers and the international career opportunities offered by the four case-study multinationals. Analysis of employee interviews revealed that a large majority of the Pakistan managers studied exhibited high international career orientations. This individual conceptualization of internationalization was predicated on a range of career advantages such as greater learning and development, networking opportunities, enhanced organizational knowledge (improving immediate task efficiency and long-term international career prospects) and career progression. However, there were also some differences across the employee sample with respect to the relocation country choice, differential emphasis on financial rewards, and the strong mediating effects of gender roles and expectations (with female managers more desirous of internationalization through their employing organizations).

The organizational level of analysis revealed several interesting similarities and differences across the four MNCs studied. Beverage Co offered the greatest overall international exposure for its managerial employees with the highest utilization of non-standard, alternative international assignments such as business travel and virtual communication, closely followed by Chemical Co. These findings support existing research claims that these alternative arrangements are cheaper, more viable alternatives to the traditional
expatriation that can be offered to a larger pool of managers (Reiche and Harzing 2011; Collings et al 2007). It is important to highlight that Beverage Co and Chemical Co’s Pakistani operations were undergoing significant expansion. Both the Pakistani subsidiaries had been identified as operating in high growth markets predicated on the size and demographic advantages of Pakistan’s food and drink and agricultural sectors respectively. Therefore, they were allocated strategically important roles within their respective MNC’s world-wide operations. This has significant implications from a global staffing perspective because research has suggested that parent companies often seek to integrate and influence strategically important subsidiaries (Beechler and Yang 1994) through the deployment of parent country expatriates to facilitate direct control over these important subsidiaries (Reiche and Harzing 2011).

However, in the specific cases of Beverage Co and Chemical Co there were no foreign expatriates in their Pakistani subsidiaries. Therefore, it can be hypothesized that since these were strategically important subsidiaries there was far greater focus on giving senior Pakistani managers international exposure so that the key organizational objectives of management development and coordination and control (Edstrom and Galbraith 1977; Harzing 2001) could be achieved. In the absence of foreign expatriates in these Pakistani subsidiaries the next best alternative was to increase the ‘socialisation of… local managers into the corporate culture and the creation of a verbal information network that provides links between the subsidiaries and HQ’ (Reiche and Harzing 2011: 195).

On the other hand, Bank Co and Energy Co offered relatively less standard and non-standard international exposure to their Pakistani managers because of the global financial crisis in the case of Bank Co and the young age of the subsidiary in the case of Energy Co. This latter case was a particularly interesting example. On the one hand, there was evidence of a well-established corporate strategy for international mobility and even a few examples of successful expatriation of Pakistani managers. On the other hand, the Pakistani subsidiary was relatively young and the organizational focus was more on centrally-mandated direct, personal control through expatriate managers deployed to Pakistan rather than on developing a flow of managerial talent out
of Pakistan. This focus on expatriate managers as sources of direct control corroborates results from existing literature (Harzing and Sorge 2003; Harzing 2000). These differences underline how consideration of organizational factors (such as size, age, performance and growth of subsidiary operations) in conjunction with external, business environment constraints (such as the global financial crisis and industry/sector) can have differential implications for the degree of international career opportunities offered to parent versus host country nationals (Reiche and Harzing 2011). Therefore, the staffing orientations of different multinationals are subject to change over time in response to the dynamism inherent in these organizational and environmental considerations. Thus, Perlmutter’s (1969) idea of polycentric and ethnocentric MNCs progressing along ‘a difficult road to genuine geocentrism’ (p. 14) may in reality be a far more complex and non-linear progression with MNCs jumping between different staffing options based on changing internal and external contingencies. For instance, Bank Co had moved from an earlier position of greater international mobility to a situation where the majority of the HCNs’ careers were restricted to the Pakistani operations. On the other hand, international mobility patterns in Beverage Co had become far more regionalized as a result of a corporate takeover by the Turkish regional head office.

Cross-comparative analysis of international opportunities across the four multinationals studied highlighted several similarities despite differences in overall organizational structures, policies and practices (as discussed in Chapter 4). One significant similarity was the differential intra-organizational provision of international opportunities and exposure across all four organizations. MNCs’ internal provision of international opportunities was predicated on organizational evaluation of individual employees (based on tenures, hierarchical position, performance and personality/internationalization capability) and organizational variables (such as restructuring, functions/departments, hierarchical structures and dual entities). This resulted in a constricted and differentiated supply of international opportunities with several important implications.
Firstly, there was significant disparity between employees’ high international career orientations (as explored in section 7.2) and selective organizational provision of international opportunities. Many employees had specifically sought employment in multinationals in anticipation of greater international exposure and experience. Secondly, these unrealized international career ambitions were further exacerbated because employees were working alongside the chosen few whose international orientations had become an achievable reality through organizational provision of international career opportunities. For instance, in Beverage Co the managers on the export side enjoyed far greater internationalization than the managers on the bottler’s side. Similarly, managers at Chemical Co’s Pakistan head office were offered a wider range of international mobility as compared to territorial managers. In Bank Co, only very senior managers had significant international exposure while in Energy Co time spent with the organization was an additional variable considered in the provision of international experience. Therefore, unrealized international career orientations because of differential organizational provision had the potential of creating career frustration, resentment, marginalization, perceptions of inequity and reduced organizational commitment in the multinationals studied. Existing literature on expatriates has highlighted that dissatisfaction upon repatriation (Tung 1998), unrealized career advantages (Stahl et al 2002) and under-utilization of international skills (Doherty and Dickmann 2009) leads to greater willingness of expatriates to find alternative employment (Moore 2006). This correlation may also be relevant for the Pakistani HCN managers whose unrealized international orientations, when coupled with their boundary-crossing behaviour (as discussed in Chapter 5), may fuel the existing problem of ‘job-hopping’ peculiar to developing/emerging economies (Gamble 2008; Demirbag et al 2011). MNCs are often seen to be engaged in a ‘war for talent’ in the ELMs of developing economies (Vo 2009) and this war may be because of the voluntary exit of valuable talent (suffering from career frustration) because of organizational deficiencies such as limited and differential provision of international opportunities.

A second interesting similarity across the four MNCs studied was the high
degree of central, corporate control exerted by the parent or the regional HQ over the provision of international career opportunities specifically. This may be attributed to the underlying motives behind international experience which focus on organizational development (Edstrom and Galbraith 1977) and coordination and control across an MNC’s global operations (Harzing 2001). Therefore, my results revealed that because of the strategic importance conferred upon international assignments by the MNCs new recruits were not offered international experiences. Instead job tenures, taken as an indication of organizational commitment, were one of the determining factors in the organizational provision and degree of internationalization. This centralized corporate strategy of greater global integration of international career opportunities corroborates Rosenweig and Nohria’s (1998) finding that HR practices affecting ‘executives… (and) internal decision processes’ were likely to be controlled by the parent headquarters (p.245-246). This was a significant finding from the ‘new’ careers literature perspective in particular because the centralized corporate control of international careers represents the continued existence of traditional, bureaucratic structures in multinational organizations. Therefore, the self-directed, subjective, employee orientations towards career internationalization were subject to, rather than independent from, the organizational structures and strategic orientations of these four MNCs. Individual managers exhibited high international career orientations, engaged in boundary-crossing behaviour when their international ambitions were unrealized, and sometimes even considered self-initiated expatriation strategies. However, organizational responses to these employee orientations and the subsequent provision of international career opportunities was tightly controlled at the corporate level because of the strategic value attached to internationalization.
Chapter 8 – Conclusion

8.1 Introduction and summary of findings

This research sought to understand the career perceptions of locally recruited managerial employees against the organizational backdrop of the career development and management policies and practices of multinationals’ operations within the specific institutional/societal context of Pakistan. The core research objectives were to highlight how protean, boundaryless and international career orientations influence subsidiary managers’ anticipated career trajectories within and outside Pakistan; and the extent to which these distinct career paths impact, and are influenced by multinationals’ transfer of HRM and their global staffing strategies. To this end the thesis approached each of the four case-study MNCs as ‘a complex micropolitical system of actors and interests’ (Ferner and Almond 2006: 4) so that the interplay between organizational strategies, individual orientations and dominant institutional and societal arrangements could be highlighted. Therefore, in accordance with new institutionalism’s theoretical traditions (Kostova and Roth 2002; Kostova and Zaheer 1999), a multi-level approach was adopted to highlight the ‘contextual embeddedness of the process of transfer… at three levels – country, organization, and individual’ (Kostova 1999: 308).

The research rationale for this multi-level analysis was in part motivated by the organizational and relational complexity inherent in MNCs (Kostova and Zaheer, 1999) because of intra-firm variations in preferences, interests and strategies (Edwards and Rees 2011). More specifically it also sought to address some of the research gaps identified in Chapter 2. Literature on protean and boundaryless careers has highlighted the subjective, values-driven, self-directed behaviour of the individual career actor (Hall 1976, 2002; Hall et al 1977; Briscoe and Hall 2006) encouraging increased employee propensity for movement across different organizational boundaries (Arthur and Rousseau 1996; Briscoe et al 2006) that now also includes the potential of self-initiated internationalization of careers (Suutari 2002, 2003). However, this ‘new’ careers body of research has not considered the application of these individual employees’ career orientations across different organizational and
Managerial career development in the specific context of the four case study MNCs operating in Pakistan revealed several interesting findings. There was evidence of certain aspects of ‘new’ careers such as career self-management, increasing individual employability external to the organization, and greater willingness to cross different boundaries (Chapter 5). However, these new career concepts were often tempered by individual characteristics (i.e. age, gender, previous work experience etc) as well as organizational factors and implicit societal influences (Chapter 6). This thesis specifically highlighted how MNCs’ host country set-up in relation to the overall global operations and organizational structures sometimes made inter-organizational mobility and self-directed career behaviour a necessity rather than choice (Chapter 4 and 6). This underlined the duality inherent in the coexistence of features of both
‘new’ and traditional organizational careers. That is, boundaryless and protean career attitudes were ultimately played out within organizational confines that in turn were influenced by Pakistan-specific institutional/societal pressures. Therefore, it would make more sense to see these ‘new’ careers not as rendering traditional careers and boundaries completely irrelevant but rather as signifying shifted, redrawn boundaries within the workplace. The following sections consider i) the implications for careers research that stem from Pakistani managers’ self-conceptualization of a hybridized and contested employment relationship, ii) individual employees’ understanding and application of the ‘new’ careers concept of boundarylessness, iii) the implications for MNC’s transfer of HR policies and practices pertaining to managerial career development that arise from the inter-linked and differentiated influences of individual, organizational and institutional factors, iv) the implications for global staffing and global talent management that emerge from a consideration of the different international career path options envisaged by individual employees and their fit with existing organizational needs, and finally v) the implications for future research, through a consideration of the research gaps uncovered and/or unaddressed by this thesis.

8.2 The employment relationship and institutional duality: A contested and realistic ‘marketization’

The research highlighted some interesting conclusions regarding the employment relationship and the traditional career model. In terms of a geometrical metaphor the workplace in these multinationals had reflective surfaces and internal angles. Therefore, the formal, organizationally-mandated surface reflected increasingly marketized labour relations, enforced by senior management and deployed by individual employees to their own personal advantage. However, the invisible angles revealed that the appraisal, assessment and advancement of managers was also subject to the more informal, societal influences that inevitably permeated these Western management principles. Application of the culturalist and institutionalist approaches to work values and business systems respectively (Hofstede 1980,
would classify a developing country like Pakistan as having a high cultural and institutional distance from the more Western, industrialized economies. Pakistani managers traditionally experience a protected and stable employment relationship within collectivist and paternalistic organizational cultures (Eldridge and Mahmood 1993; Rieger and Wong-Rieger 1990). However, my research revealed that when this connection between the host country institutional profile and the employment relationship is played out within the context of foreign MNCs in a developing country, there is evidence of both differentiation and hybridization. Therefore, the coexistence and interplay of Western and Pakistani work values also has wider implications for the institutional duality debate whereby multinationals face dual isomorphic pressures to maintain internal legitimacy in the organizational domain and external legitimacy in specific foreign subsidiary domains (Kostova and Roth 2002).

Analysis of employee interviews revealed that they regularly applied cost-benefit analyses onto their career decisions, negotiated trade-offs between intrinsic and extrinsic career benefits and engaged in constant subjective evaluations of the most favourable employment contexts (taking into account both organizational constraints and external business pressures). Thus, there were instances of employees actively exploring alternative employment opportunities in other organizations despite high job satisfaction and no immediate desire to switch employers (as discussed in Chapter 5). There was also evidence of managers deferring financial rewards in the short term in order to enhance their overall employability and learning which would facilitate ‘cashing in’ on their skills and work experience in the long term. Employee interviews revealed that individual managers had internalized job responsibility and expected job security as long as they met their performance targets and objectives. Moreover, many employees exhibited both past and potential movement across different employment contexts based on in-depth and rational analysis of the most advantageous employment conditions based on personal/subjective and objective career goals. The existence of these Westernized employee expectations across my sample highlights a key implication with regards to host-country institutional profiles and their
subsequent impact on the employment relationship in foreign MNCs in particular. The elite group of managers studied in this thesis had significant direct or implicit exposure to, and experience of, Western management practices. This exposure not only positively influenced their internalization of Western employment practices, and a relatively more ‘marketized’ employment relationship, but also helped reduce institutional distance within these organizations.

However, the implementation of this ‘marketized’ employment relationship was not a straightforward process. Employer interviews underlined senior managers’ (sometimes difficult) negotiation of contrary forces of corporate strategy, organizational constraints and business pressures with societal norms and cultural expectations. Consideration of the organizational context across the four case-study organizations highlighted that several features of the internal labour market (ILM) for the managerial cohort were still in place, albeit to different degrees (as discussed in Chapter 6). Functional mobility, which was often explicitly tied to employee development, was offered by Energy Co and Beverage Co (export side). Similarly, formal organizational training was an entrenched policy within Bank Co and Beverage Co. Across all four multinationals there was also a conscious effort to first consider internal resources and try to promote ‘from within’. However, given corporate pressures to offer a competitive employment contract, maintaining these features of traditional managerial careers was not a straightforward process and often involved implicit compromises. For instance, employer-level interviews revealed managers to be conceptualizing job security, remuneration and upward promotion in increasingly individualistic, meritocratic and performance-oriented terms. This was directly at odds with the continuing incidence of paternalism, nepotism and seniority-based progression in many private and public organizations in Pakistan (Khilji 2003b; Iqbal 2008; Eldridge and Mahmood 1993; Rieger and Wong-Rieger 1990). Thus, on the surface senior management seemed to have embraced foreign headquarter mandates of creating competitive ILMs that both reflected, and constantly responded to, external market forces. On the other hand, there was evidence of certain traditional societal values such as collectivism, paternalism and
informal networking within the workplace (as explored in Chapter 6). Therefore, senior managers sometimes circumvented the increasingly acceptable Western notions of competitive labour relations and sought to provide protection, and opportunities, for their subordinates. This process of recalibration of the Western marketization of the employment relationship to informal societal norms in Pakistan is akin to Butler et al’s (2006) findings on MNCs in the European context whereby ‘the more brutal facets of corporate strategy were perforce diluted to comply with local norms’ (p. 191).

Consideration of the employees’ perspective revealed active personal engagement with the ELM and both acceptance and, in cases of personal benefit (such as bonuses and promotion), approbation of competitive forces dominating the ILM. Thus, the implementation and uptake of Western policies and practices within these foreign subsidiaries had been successful to a certain extent. This focus on individualistic, performance-oriented employment relationships was somewhat reminiscent of Cappelli’s (1999a) ‘new, market-mediated relationship’ that brought the ‘market inside the firm’ and substituted insulated organizational bureaucracy for ‘market solutions’ (p. viii-ix). However, the negotiation of these management policies and practices within the prevalent societal and institutional arrangements led to nationally specific transmutations. In terms of a ‘marketized’ employment relationship, employees seemed to have made the initial transition of active engagement with the ELM and increased competition within the ILM. However, labour relations were also implicitly influenced by the societal/institutional setting and therefore, there was continued implementation of certain ‘traditional’ features of the ILM. It fell to the lot of the senior management to accommodate these myriad pressures of corporate policies, structural and environmental constraints and employee expectations. Within the ‘new institutionalism’ framework specifically this implies that the key issues were not simply the maintenance of internal legitimacy within the MNCs’ global operations or external legitimacy with the Pakistani host environment (Kostova and Zaheer 1999). Given the elite status and scarcity of these managers in the external labour market, the focus was specifically on creating internal legitimacy within the Pakistani host subsidiaries’ ILMs. The relatively
weak regulatory institutions in Pakistan correspond to Whitley’s particularist business environment exemplified by a ‘weak and/or predatory state’, ‘paternalistic authority relationships’ and unreliable institutions (2001, pp. 39).

Moreover, greater Western exposure of the managers studied (either through education or international experiences) diluted the influence of Pakistan-specific cognitive and normative institutions within these workplaces. Therefore, employee expectations from the employment relationship in these four foreign MNCs exhibited relatively greater accommodation of Western work values than could be anticipated from the traditional social values, shared norms and the institutional profile of Pakistan. However, ‘symbolic institutionalization’ continued to have an implicit impact on the ‘organizational’ and ‘relational contexts’ and influenced the organizational cultures and the attitudes of senior managers (Kostova 1999) at these Pakistani subsidiaries. This implies the existence of a dual hybridization whereby senior managers of foreign subsidiaries make implicit adjustments to societal/institutional pressures while the elite managerial cohort attempts to internalize Western influences on, and expectations from, the employment relationship (see for example section on job security in Chapter 6). The result in this particular research was a contested, dynamic yet realistic employment relationship within which both employers and employees in the MNCs studied constantly sought to reconcile competition and commitment to varying degrees of success.

8.3 Mobility: An inter-connected process of ‘boundary-creation’ and ‘boundary-crossing’

The ‘new’ careers literature has made much of increased employee mobility across different organizational boundaries. Self-directing, individually managing careerists (Hall 1976, 2002; Briscoe et al, 2006) are hypothesized to explore and exhibit increased movement across different employment boundaries (Arthur and Rousseau 1996). In terms of the individual conceptualization of boundarylessness, the associated psychological mobility has predicted increased willingness to move across different employment
contexts (Sullivan and Arthur 2006) that now also includes psychological perceptions of geographical mobility (Tams and Arthur 2010; Thomas et al 2005; Banai and Harry 2004). Therefore, there is a need to acknowledge the changing, geographically expansive, aspects of career mobility (Inkson and Thorn 2010; Cappallen and Janssens 2005) and employees’ reactions to these changes in terms of both physical and psychological career mobility. However, when it comes to the empirical consideration of mobility patterns the focus has primarily been on the inter-organizational moves affected by individual employees (Sullivan and Arthur 2006; Arthur et al 2005). Therefore, individual employees’ psychological mobility has been conceptualized in far more flexible terms whereas actual, physical mobility has been investigated only in terms of traditional, organizational boundaries. This disconnect in the thematic scope encapsulated by psychological versus physical mobility has presented a skewed picture of mobility because while employees are seen as increasingly confident in their ability to make transitions across many employment boundaries, their actual mobility has only been measured in terms of the number and frequency of inter-organizational moves.

In more recent years organizational studies have criticized the unbounded mobility conceived by early career theorists and referred to the continued persistence of intra-organizational boundaries such as functional chimneys (Storey et al 1997; Butler et al 2005). However, the crucial interplay of individual career perceptions and organizational realities, and subsequent impacts on psychological and physical mobility, remain relatively unexplored. Therefore, a clear research gap existed to not only explore the potential constraints on the more unbounded notion of psychological mobility but also to expand the relatively constricted understanding of physical mobility in order to have a more balanced understanding of potential and actual mobility. Analysis revealed that these employees exhibited specific protean characteristics of self-direction, adaptability and career commitment (out of the many of meanings ascribed to this career concept – see table I.1.i) which in turn influenced their contemplation and negotiation of mobility across a range of intra- and inter-organizational boundaries (see figure 8.1).
Insert figure 8.1
This thesis highlighted how different individual employees conceptualized mobility across different employer boundaries (as discussed in detail in Chapters 5-7) but a significant finding was how this physical and psychological mobility was negotiated in interesting patterns of both boundary-crossing and self-imposed, boundary-creation (see figure 8.1). For instance, younger and older managers both exhibited high psychological mobility in terms of self-perceived ability to make successful transitions across organizational boundaries. However, there was evidence of generational differences in the perceived application of this psychological mobility into physical boundary-crossing. Younger managers envisaged capitalizing on their MNC-based work experience later in their careers by making transitions into higher paying, high-status jobs in local organizations. However, older employees indicated more bounded psychological mobility and seemed increasingly unwilling to move out of multinationals because of employee affinity with these foreign companies’ distinct organizational cultures and style of management. Therefore, while older employees’ self-perceived ability to make transitions remained high, these perceptions were also subject to self-imposed mobility restrictions with movement envisaged primarily across other foreign multinationals. Similarly, female managers’ psychological mobility in terms of geographical boundary-crossing was the same as their male counterparts. However, there were differences in the degree and direction of this perceived internationalization of their careers. Female employees seemed equally confident in their ability to make international career transitions but chose to conceptualize these transitions in more bounded terms – i.e. formal international career opportunities offered by their employing organization and short-term international assignments rather than permanent international relocations. This difference was dependent on female managers’ higher need for security, self-efficacy derived from the organization, as well as strong societal expectations and traditional gender roles in Pakistan (which discouraged work transitions that seriously disrupted life/family roles – see section 7.2).

These variations in individual employees’ psychological mobility across different employee groups highlight a significant conclusion. The increasingly
expansive conceptualization of psychological mobility in extant literature may in fact be subject to voluntarily assumed constraints by individual employees (represented as ‘boundary-creation’ in figure 8.1). Thus, a key finding of this research is the previously unacknowledged existence of perceptual boundaries whereby individual employees may have high confidence in their boundary-crossing capacities (and therefore high psychological mobility) and yet intentionally choose to exercise this self-perceived confidence across a limited range of potential employment contexts by creating new boundaries. It is important to acknowledge and understand the creation and concentration of these perceptual boundaries across different employee groups, based on their distinct career motivations and career goals, because of the potential impact on internal and external labour market flows and corresponding organizational adjustments in HR policies and practices.

The theme of boundary-creation has been flagged up in literature with respect to the creation of new intra-organizational boundaries in reaction to increased boundarylessness. In terms of functional mobility, existing literature has highlighted how managerial employees in particular prefer to become functional specialists signaling low intra-organizational functional moves (Storey et al 1997). My research revealed that the notion of functional chimneys was relevant for certain managerial groups. Managers employed in general management functions (such as sales, marketing and HR) from across all four multinationals indicated an explicit preference to continue employment within their area of functional expertise. Irrespective of whether there was a formal policy of functional job rotation offered by their employing organization or not, there was low desire on the part of employee groups from within these specific functions to consider intra-organizational moves across departments. This corroborates with Afuah’s (1997) study of functional chimneys in Ford whereby ‘each function had its own goals and perspectives’ (p. 349).

However, functional boundary-creation and employee preference for development along ‘functional chimneys’ was not a generalizable result across the overall employee cohort. Managers deployed in the more specialist
functions (such as IT, finance and accounts, engineering etc) exhibited greater inclination to make functional transitions to the more general management functions. This was predicated in part on the nature of organizational hierarchies, in which senior management positions were often filled from the general management functions, and in part on the differential social status accorded to different departments. Within this informal social hierarchy of functions (possibly stemming from the societal/institutional preoccupation with status and hierarchy), areas such as sales, marketing and HR had more strategic and financial importance attached to them and specialist managers strove to negotiate functional mobility out of their specialist ‘chimneys’ into these more coveted general management ‘chimneys’. Therefore, the issue of intra-organizational mobility may be far more complex than has been appreciated in contemporary careers research. Certain managerial groups favoured functional specialism and reduced intra-organizational mobility as highlighted in existing research, whereas other managers actively engaged in functional boundary-crossing to facilitate career development in what they perceived as more strategically advantageous departments.

These differences in perceptual boundaries and varied preferences for intra-organizational boundary-crossing highlight the inter-connected complexity inherent in employee mobility patterns (see figure 8.1). Those employee groups who chose to restrict functional mobility (i.e. employees in general management positions) compensated through higher inter-organizational moves. Managers interviewed in Bank Co exhibited very strong professional identities and subsequently low mobility preference for cross-industry transitions on the one hand and high inter-organizational boundary-crossing on the other hand. Specialist managers in Chemical Co experienced low cross-industry movements because of their agro-chemical backgrounds, but expressed high mobility orientations for functional and cross-country movement. These distinctions between different employee groups’ mobility patterns were explored in detail in Chapter 6. The overall theoretical significance of these differential patterns lies in highlighting that individual employees’ protean attitudes of adaptability/employability and self-direction inextricably connected to their mobility decisions. Irrespective of job
satisfaction and organizational commitment employees either faced, or imposed, restrictions across certain boundaries and in response to these restrictions exercised greater flexibility and movement across others. Therefore, the understanding of ‘new’ careers as predicated on the irrelevance of the ILM and higher individually-driven boundarylessness needs careful reconsideration. Fractures in the traditional employment relationship may have shifted some of the burden of job responsibility from the employers to the individual employees. However, employee response to this shift is not so much the boundaryless, self-directed, subjectively driven career envisaged in contemporary careers research; rather it is a considered, realistic, survival-oriented trade-off between different boundaries. Therefore, these managerial employees, exhibiting the protean attitude of high career commitment, both selectively created new boundaries and crossed already established boundaries in order to ensure their continued survival in the internal and external labour markets.

My research across four multinationals with variations in organizational structures, business strategies and staffing policies highlighted that employee mobility is far more complex than has been signaled in existing literature. This can perhaps be blamed on the limited number of organizational contexts that have been explored when investigating the uptake and internalization of protean and boundaryless career attitudes. Data analysis across the four case study organizations clearly revealed that managerial employees were simultaneously negotiating (or conceptualizing) movement across a range of existing and new boundaries both within and outside their employing organization (see figure 8.1). Moreover, since each individual employee was subject to multiple pressures of reconciling individual career orientations and aspirations (such as adaptability/employability, career commitment and career self-evaluation) with organizational constraints and external/societal influences; the process through which this negotiation was affected was complicated and also varied considerably. In reality, boundarylessness, underpinned by psychological and physical mobility concepts, cannot be realized without individually or organizationally mandated conversions and adjustments. What this means is that contemporary careers are increasingly
preoccupied with mobility patterns. However, the picture is far more complex (and highly susceptible to individual and organizational variations) than has been captured in existing literature. Employee mobility may be unbounded in some directions, exemplifying the much touted boundary-crossing behaviour, and yet even more circumscribed in other directions leading to additional boundary-creation. Moreover, these variable patterns of individual boundary-crossing and boundary-creation are inextricably interconnected and coincident events and ultimately negotiated within the ambit of these multinationals’ specific organizational structures and Pakistan’s distinctive societal/institutional setting.

8.4 Implications for research on multinationals and the transfer of HR policies and practices

The transfer of HR policies and practices within multinationals is a central debate that primarily tackles the ‘global-local question’ (Edwards and Kuruvilla 2005) and the subsequent tensions between national business systems and forces of globalization (Ferner and Quintanilla 1998). This debate has, for example, considered the strength of the country-of-origin effects (Edwards and Ferner 2002; Ferner and Quintanilla 1998) across different industries (Beechler and Yang 1994), the mediating influences of the national institutional arrangements (Saka 2002) and the subsequent potential for hybridization of the transfer process in transitional, rapidly deinstitutionalizing economies (Gamble 2010). Therefore, diffusion is no longer regarded as a ‘universal tendency’ and the inter-relatedness of a range of factors such as MNCs’ parent country, organizational structures, product markets and intra-organizational political processes are all taken into account (Edwards et al 1999).

However, as Vo (2009) and Tarique and Schuler (2008) have highlighted, there is little research currently available that attempts an empirical investigation of HRM from the host country perspective; and even less that focuses specifically on developing countries. In developing economies’ skilled ELMs, organizations have to offer high wages (Jain et al, 1998; Ratnam,
1998), accept pervasive ‘job hopping’, (Gershenberg 1987; Gamble 2008; Demirbag et al 2011) and recruit from within a limited indigenous pool (Buckley and Casson 2010).

**Figure 8.2: Career development of host country managers (HCNs)**

This creates significant pressures on MNCs to offer favourable ILM conditions for skilled labour supply such as managers. Thus, consideration of
the transfer of HR practices that influence managerial career development in Pakistani subsidiaries requires a more nuanced approach that takes into account organizational structures, subsidiary-specific conditions (Reiche 2006) and crucially the ability of local level managers to wield power over the implementation of corporate initiatives (Edwards and Kuruvilla 2005). The key contribution of this research is the application of a pluralistic approach to managerial career development at the subsidiary level of implementation that is also sensitive to the developing country context and the distinct institutional/societal pressures. Moreover, this thesis sought to go beyond simply identifying the key factors affecting the transfer and implementation of HR practices and crucially considering both the differential impact of these mediating factors and the directionality of their influence on managerial career development. My research revealed that the career development of the Pakistani host country managers (HCNs) under consideration was dependent on a number of variables across multiple levels of analysis. As figure 8.2 shows actual and potential career development trajectories were influenced by individual, organizational (i.e. subsidiary and corporate HQ characteristics), and environmental (capturing economic, political, cultural and institutional pressures) factors. Moreover, all of these factors were inextricably linked to each other either through direct inter-linkages or through more implicit determining effects (filled and dashed arrows respectively). Therefore, career development of the HCN managers being studied was a process affected within a compelling web of differential stimuli.

At the organizational level of analysis pressures on careers were discernable at two main levels - the Pakistani subsidiary and the strategic headquarters level. Strategic pressures included the overall business strategy and global staffing orientation of each MNC (as explored in Chapter 4), the future business plans extrapolated for the Pakistani subsidiary (in terms of investment projections and product/service portfolio expansion) by the HQ and the degree of national versus regional/global standardization pursued by the MNC in Pakistan. For instance, global standardization for Beverage Co and Energy Co was higher, Chemical Co had a dual regional/global standardization strategy and Bank Co had a relatively more national/differentiated orientation. This is an important
contextual factor that can impact the transfer of certain HR policies and practices in general and career development in particular. For instance, McDonnell et al’s (2010) research highlighted how global/regional product standardization had a strong correlation with the provision of global succession planning in Irish subsidiaries. Moreover, corporate strategy included the varied level of influence exerted by the parent HQ and/or the regional HQ. For instance, in terms of the transfer of practices from the HQ to the subsidiary level, employer interviews revealed that certain policies such as financial reporting, legal compliance, health and safety procedures (particularly for Chemical Co and Energy Co because of the nature of their products), performance evaluation etc were communicated and controlled directly by the corporate HQ in the parent country. However, another slew of policies such as employee headcount, career development and pay for very senior managers and HIPOs were often (though not always) officially submitted via the regional HQ route. A comparative analysis of the four MNCs studied revealed that beyond this broad delineation of corporate influences on the transfer of employment policies, there were additional subtle differences in the actual implementation process. Home country influences were relatively stronger in Energy Co because of the presence of foreign expatriates while regional influences were stronger in Chemical Co and Beverage Co because of frequent regional pollination and high incidence of business visits across the Asian business area.

The degree of corporate (and regional) HQ influence on each multinational in turn determined the range, nature and directionality of career opportunities available for its managerial staff (as explored in Chapters 6 and 7). The Beverage Co specific example of an intra-company corporate takeover by the Turkish HQ (and the subsequent shift in the source of policies, practices and controls) highlighted how there was the simultaneous creation of career opportunities (by increasing managerial exposure at the regional level) as well as career frustration (i.e. exclusion of new hires who did not qualify for the new talent management and development programmes because of insufficient length of service). Therefore, a range of pressures and changes at the strategic HQ level had a direct and substantial impact on the implementation and
internalization of business and staffing strategies, and thus the organizational career policies and the employees’ career perceptions at the domestic subsidiary level. This particular research project highlighted that MNCs undergoing expansion, diversification, increased global integration, and standardization offered the promise of richer and more varied career opportunities, particularly with regards to international experiences. Subsequently HRM at the subsidiary level became relatively more structured and formal, rather than ad hoc and dynamic, in its approach to managerial development (see for example section 7.3).

However, despite subsidiary responses being influenced by key business and staffing strategies determined at HQ levels, certain distinct characteristics of subsidiaries also had an important organizational impact on the implementation of HRM in general and managerial career development in particular. Younger subsidiaries like Energy Co offered greater developmental and learning opportunities for its managerial employees (because of the ongoing creation of new roles and greater responsibilities in existing roles), while an older operation like Bank Co (which had closed down certain departments) had relatively limited career opportunities. Size of the subsidiary, and the range of products and services offered in the Pakistan market, also had an impact on managers’ career development. For instance, a large entity like Beverage Co and a rapidly expanding and diversifying MNC like Chemical Co both had a positive influence on the career development opportunities offered by the organizations.

A significant finding was that subsidiary characteristics such as age, size and product diversification did not always lead to positive employment outcomes or create equal increases in career opportunities for all employee groups. For instance, Chemical Co was a very small concern but offered extensive career development for its marketing and sales managers at the head office (in comparison to managers from other functions). Secondly, Reiche and Harzing have argued how younger subsidiaries may have issues ‘attracting high-calibre locals… in recently established subsidiaries’ (2011: 194). However, the example of Energy Co highlighted that even though it had only been operating
in Pakistan for a decade; several employees in their interviews predicated their career growth and potential for career development opportunities specifically on the MNC’s young age and ongoing growth. Across all four case study organizations a repeated pattern of duality characterized subsidiary structures to varying degrees, with differential status implications for the different parts of the subsidiary operations. The differences between the national head office and the provincial territories, as evidenced in Chemical Co and Energy Co, highlighted the symbolic and strategic importance accorded to the head office (HO) and the greater career opportunities, learning experiences, and career visibility afforded to managers located at the HO.

However, the picture in Beverage Co and Bank Co was far more complex. Beverage Co comprised of two corporate entities titled the export and the bottlers’ side respectively (see Chapter 4). The export side was a smaller and leaner concern but enjoyed a higher status because of direct links with regional and parent HQs and greater likelihood of regional and international career opportunities for its very senior managers. The bottlers’ side was a much larger organizational setup but with a distinctly national orientation. Therefore, it offered considerable career advancement along greater organizational layers within Pakistan. On the other hand, it also resulted in career frustration for those employees wishing, but unable to achieve internationalization, while being aware of the international career opportunities available for their peers on the export side. Dual organizational identities were also evident in Bank Co between corporate and sales banking. In terms of symbolic importance these two distinct organizational concerns were seen as equal because faster career progression on the sales side was offset by career experience within corporate banking resulting in higher global exposure (at least at the senior management level). However, this dual organizational setup heightened departmental and functional differences beyond these two entities and support functions such as IT, HR, customer services etc had lower strategic importance and conferred status. The stagnant/slow career growth in these auxiliary departments increased employee desire to shift out these functions into the more career lucrative areas of sales or corporate banking (see functional mobility in section 6.4).
Beyond the organizational pressures stemming from subsidiary characteristics or corporate strategies, my research revealed that the country's external business environment also played an important role in shaping these HCN managers’ careers. Employees’ interviews highlighted constant comparisons of industries (and sectors) based on their size, health, potential growth and significance within the national context (see section 5.3). These externalized analyses encompassed Pakistan-specific features such as a large, young, relatively uneducated, primarily rural population, the low rates of economic growth and the impact of the global recession, and increasing political instability. Moreover, all these independent variables were additionally, if differentially, underlined by the dominant cultural values and societal arrangements (as explored in the literature review). Given these demographic features, and the continuing economic predominance of the primary sector, the ELM for managers was relatively small. Furthermore, as a result of pervasive economic disparities, managers who were skilled to Western standards constituted a small social and economic elite. Thus, while the organizations were increasingly subject to the vagaries of economic and political instability, the managerial labour market was relatively protected because of its members’ elite antecedents. This combination of an economically underdeveloped, politically unstable, demographically burgeoning nation with an elite, protected, highly skilled and competitive managerial labour market had interesting implications, both for organizational survival and growth and managerial career development. For example, Chemical Co Pakistan was pursuing an ambitious business plan, growth projections, and product portfolio expansion, predicated on the continuing importance of the country’s large primary sector and differences in agricultural output across the different provinces. Therefore, Chemical Co employees (particularly those based within Pakistan’s head office) were in a position to enjoy not only varied national work experiences but also greater chances of international organizational careers as managers from a large and strategically important subsidiary within the MNC’s international operations and global supply chain. On the other hand, Bank Co Pakistan was positioned in an already small sector (because of the limited customer demand for sophisticated financial services) and subject to additional pressures such as the global recession. Therefore, Bank Co
employees were facing threats of rationalization and cost-cutting rather than
rich, varied, and traditionally stable career opportunities. External influences
on the organizations studied were also evident in Beverage Co’s expansion
plans (and one of the reasons cited behind the Turkish takeover) based on
taking advantage of Pakistan’s large, young and untapped consumer
population. As a result several new employees had been hired and the scope of
responsibilities for existing employees had also expanded.

Finally, this study sought to incorporate the often ignored individual
employees’ perspective in many organizational studies on MNCs. Analysis
revealed that employee potential, career perceptions, and professional
objectives varied based on distinct individual characteristics. Employee career
orientations differed according to age, gender, educational qualifications,
previous work experience, and international exposure (primarily as a result of
studying and/or working abroad) (as explored in Chapters 5 and 7). Employees
exhibited protean career values in terms of career attitudes (and associated
higher commitment to careers over organizational commitment and job
involvement), greater degree of individual self-direction, and employee focus
on cumulative learning over a career lifetime (see section 5.2). Similarly,
employees’ mobility preferences across functions, organizations, industries,
within country and outside Pakistan were studied to understand the possibility
and directionality of psychological and physical mobility patterns (see sections
5.3, 6.5 and 7.2). For example, within the employee cohort studied, a sample
of managers chose to self-limit work movement across foreign multinationals
alone. Another interesting finding was that managers in general management
roles (such as sales and marketing) resisted movement out of their functions
while technical/specialist managers (for e.g. finance, IT and engineering)
actively courted greater cross-functional exposure (see section 6.5).

A key finding of this study was that a specific HR practice such as managerial
career development had to be understood in the context of the differential
impacts of multiple pressures. The figure 8.2 shows how the individual,
organizational, and institutional pressures were all inter-connected and jointly
determined the career development of Pakistani HCN managers. Existing
literature has studied the impact of corporate strategy on subsidiary operations and subsidiary characteristics informing headquarter mandates (Edwards et al 1999). The link between multinationals’ strategies and structures and different national institutional contexts has also been highlighted (Almond and Ferner 2006). This link is often conceptualized in relation to both the direct impact of the external environment on the operational reality of subsidiaries and the implicit influences of national settings on corporate objectives and goals set at the HQ level.

What is often ignored in international HRM is the individual employee perspective and how employee perceptions and orientations may not only influence the extent to which HR practices transferred to subsidiaries are successfully internalized but also lead to specific transmutations and adaptations of these HRM practices. My research highlighted that several inter-linkages need additional attention. Firstly, findings suggested that employee-subsidiary relations followed a two-way traffic pattern. Pakistani managers’ career orientations were implicitly influenced by the organizational characteristics of the subsidiaries they were employed in (Chapters 5-7). Protean, boundaryless and international career orientations were altered and adjusted by individual managers on the basis of their employing subsidiary’s size, organizational structure (and associated status implications) and potential growth. However, individual managers’ dualistic career attitudes and objectives also had an implicit influence on subsidiary staffing and the potential implementation of Western employment policies. Pakistani managers’ realistic and individually-driven expectations from the employment relationship allowed subsidiaries to introduce performance-oriented organizational cultures. On the other hand, Pakistani managers’ focus on self-directed learning and associated willingness to move across boundaries to achieve this learning put organizational pressure on the subsidiaries to accommodate these employee expectations rather than risk losing talent. This is in line with Collings and Mellahi’s argument that organizations alone do not determine careers, rather ‘careers can have organizational effects’ (2009: 308) and ‘new’ career concepts such as boundaryless careers can result in the unacknowledged marginalization of employers (Currie et al, 2006).
Similarly, existing literature has highlighted how multinationals are important players in the process of globalization (Rubery and Grimshaw 2003) and the accompanying convergence in attitudes. Therefore, Pakistani managers’ increased propensity to pursue self-directed careers and entertain greater boundarylessness could in part be attributed to the process of globalization, the advent of MNCs in Pakistan and the subsequent shift in traditional societal and cultural values within the workplace as a result of foreign influences (Khilji 2003b, 2004). However, the fact that this shift in career attitudes should be conceptualized as a two-way phenomenon is often ignored. Based on this particular research it can be hypothesized that certain pockets of the Pakistani managerial ELM exhibited career attitudes and orientations that merited both attention and adaptation at the corporate, strategic level of these foreign organizations. For if these MNCs’ global staffing strategies and business plans did not respond to individual employees’ career orientations, there was a much higher risk of losing valuable talent in an already competitive managerial ELM. Therefore, changes in Pakistani managers’ career orientations required differentiated organizational responses at the national subsidiary level and the strategic HQ level as to which HR policies and practices impacting managerial career development could be transferred (i.e. provision of international opportunities) and which need adaptation (for instance, within country mobility).

This multi-level analysis of managerial career development in particular revealed that employee attitudes and organizational policies were both much more susceptible to Western, foreign influences (despite selective adaptation to institutional/societal pressures) than expected within the Pakistani context. This is similar to Hartmann et al’s research in China which revealed that ‘western MNCs now have the flexibility to introduce relatively unchanged HRM practices from their home country’ (2010: 176). On the basis of results from the four MNCs studied, it can be argued that academic preoccupation with the transfer process of HRM in multinationals might need additional fine tuning. Existing literature highlights the differential impact of home versus host country influences on different HR practices (Rosenweig & Nohria, 1994; Lu & Bjorkman, Tregaskis et al, 2001) and the subsequent possibility of
‘hybrid management models’ in culturally and institutionally distant contexts such as China (Zhu & Dowling, 2002). Undertaking further refinement of these existing theoretical debates reveals that the transfer of a specific HR practice (career development in the case of this thesis) within an MNC might also be internally heterogeneous and dynamic. Therefore, the combined consideration of variations in institutional contexts (i.e. home and host country effects), organizational policies and individual perceptions may highlight very different implementation and internalization processes.

If we are to focus on specific HR practices, and differential outcomes of the transfer process because of variations in all the contextual variables (highlighted in figure 8.2), then the local/global or convergence/divergence debate becomes even more complex. For HCNs from culturally and institutionally distant and distinct economies like Pakistan may be becoming more globalized in their work attitudes while MNCs strive to move away from the widely criticized ethnocentric approaches and respond to local influences. An inherent duality of interests emerges - employees in developing economies may be seeking employment in MNCs specifically to gain a foothold in an internationalized labour market while MNCs are increasingly preoccupied with consolidating subsidiary operations because of pervasive problems of increased employee mobility, turnover, job hopping and talent wars in these economies (Gamble 2008; Demirbag et al 2011; Vo 2009). Therefore, MNCs need to enforce greater standardization of career development policies not simply to achieve previous organizational goals of global integration, coordination and control, but also to satisfy the increasingly Westernized career attitudes and employee demands.

The transfer of HRM is truly a ‘social process’ (Bjorkman & Levik, 2007) and therefore subject to change. Given that managerial career orientations exhibit certain protean and boundaryless characteristics the underlying rationale behind standardized and globalized managerial development shifts from fulfilling organizational considerations alone (Edstrom & Galbraith, 1977) to accommodating individual expectations as well. If MNCs do not fully grasp this subtle alteration in the underlying stimuli for transferring HRM, they
might make the mistake of continuing to tread the cautious, politically correct isomorphic route against greater individual desire for internationalization and integration in global internal and external labour markets.

8.5 Implications for global staffing, international ILMs and global talent management

The literature on global staffing in multinational enterprises has considered international staff composition (Scullion and Collings 2006), parent country national (PCN) flows from the HQ to the subsidiary (Harzing 2001), the choice between PCNs and HCNs (host country nationals) (Reiche and Harzing 2011) and more recently the role of third country nationals (TCNs) (Tarique et al 2006) in great detail. Most of these studies highlight a range of organizational and institutional variables including ‘headquarters, subsidiary, structural, and human resource systems factors… as strong predictors of outward staffing flows’ (Collings et al 2010). However, the employee perspective is often sidelined, the ‘talent’ in talent management is omitted as a significant unit of analysis (Lewis and Heckman 2006), and there is an implicit assumption that individual employees are passive agents of multinationals’ staffing decisions. However, if MNCs are to remain competitive in a rapidly changing global business environment ‘the significance of attitudes and behaviours of the organization’s talent pool’ (Collings and Mellahi 2009: 311) needs explicit consideration. Therefore, this section reflects on the cumulative impact of protean, boundaryless and international career orientations in determining different employees’ desired career trajectories. This consideration of employees’ career perceptions within the MNC context, and their potential impact on global staffing and global talent management, is one of the key areas of contribution of this particular research. Individual managers in my sample exhibited variations in their perceptions and attitudes which translated into very distinct career path preferences. These differentials at the employee level of analysis in turn may be hypothesized to exercise widespread impact not just on multinationals’ international ILMs but also on regional and global ELM flows. Therefore, this thesis attempted to examine employee internalization of the boundaryless and protean career concepts that
have become ‘a standard part of the new career vernacular’ (Briscoe and Hall 2006: 1) within the framework of new ‘lines of inquiry’ (Arthur 2008: 171) that consider careers across increasingly international boundaries and examine their interdependence with the process of globalization (Tams and Arthur 2007).

There is a clear organizational impetus on MNCs to understand these career perceptions of employees in order to respond to new organizational demands. Firstly, in spite of the strategic significance of developing global leaders and managers (Black et al 1999; Stroh and Caligiuri 1998) MNCs face a continuing shortage of this internationally mobile workforce (Tahvanainen et al 2005; Woodall 2011). This in turn might have precipitated increased organizational reliance on the more non-standard international opportunities (such as business trips, self-initiated assignments, short-term assignments, cross-border swaps, multicultural project teams, virtual work etc) (Reiche and Harzing 2011; Collings et al 2007; Forster 2000) as a viable substitute for traditional expatriate assignments. Given these organizational concerns there is a need for MNCs to expand the scope of their international ILMs and consider the previously underutilized managerial talent from emerging and developing host economies like Pakistan. My research sample exhibited differences in employment histories, protean and boundaryless career orientations, and long-term career objectives. The one area of near universal agreement was high international career orientations expressed by a majority of the managers interviewed. However, the conceptualization and subsequent translation of these international career orientations into potential international career paths was very different. Therefore, if HCNs are to be an important potential source of internationally mobile labour that can be deployed across an MNC’s international operations, it is vital to understand the variations inherent within HCNs.

Protean, boundaryless and international career orientations of managerial employees employed in four case-study MNCs, operating in the distinct societal and institutional context of Pakistan were explored in detail in Chapters 5-7. However, if these pre-internationalized HCNs’ different protean,
boundaryless and international career orientations are considered in conjunction, specific employee groups seem to exhibit greater pre-disposition towards particular career trajectories. Therefore, the variety of career paths available for HCNs, employee preference for a specific career trajectory, the dominance of certain career orientations and attitudes within that trajectory, and the associated short and long term employee career goals are important distinctions that need to be highlighted. Given the focus of existing literature on problems associated with dual careers, relocation and settlement issues, expatriate assignment failure, repatriation challenges etc. (Harvey 1998; Reiche and Harzing 2011) it is clear that there needs to be a better fit between multinationals’ staffing strategies and individual managers’ career orientations. If multinationals are able to distinguish between the differing career orientations of employees, and understand the resultant variations in the scope of internationalization envisaged by these employees for themselves, before initiating international assignments, some of the common problems attendant upon international careers may be circumvented. Multinationals will be able to offer the most suitable kind of international work experience (from the traditional expatriate assignments to the newer, non-standard international work) to the most relevant managerial cohort by matching the business objectives of specific international assignments with the most appropriate individual career orientations and associated career trajectory.

Figure 8.3 highlights the three potential internationalized career tracks that HCN managers can take based on dominant individual career orientations and employee responses to organizational career opportunities. Existing literature on multinationals has discussed the traditional expatriate career path offered by organizations in great detail (Dowling and Welch 2004; Collings and Scullion 2006; Debrah and Rees 2011; Woodall 2011). Similarly, the new literature on global boundaryless career has explored examples of individual employees, exhibiting high psychological and physical boundarylessness, self-initiating their global careers (Suutari 2002, 2003; Thorn 2005, 2009). What is missing from these discussions is a comparative understanding of differences in employee career orientations between these traditional versus self-initiated expatriates prior to their international relocation. Moreover, the results of my
research revealed a third, alternative career track beyond these existing international career paths, in which individual employees may seek to pursue what I classified as ‘recurring expatriate careers’ - involving domestic and more short-term, non-standard international work.

**Fig. 8.3: Pre-internationalized HCNs: potential career trajectories**

This particular career path needs additional attention because interviews highlighted how some of the employees on the traditional expatriate and self-initiated career paths had made a self-directed transition to a recurring expatriate career path in direct response to family and societal pressures. Given the likelihood of relatively greater similarities between Pakistan and other emerging economies (on the basis of shared historical, economic, social and political conditions) (Debrah and Budhwar 2001) rather than with Western, developed economies, these notions of family and societal pressures might have more relevance as a career path determinant for HCNs from these untapped labour markets. Thus, the following discussion highlights the
dominant protean, boundaryless and international career orientations of the managerial employees studied and the different career paths these managers aspired to. The significance of differentiating between these three career trajectories lies in trying to understand the underlying differences and interlinkages in protean, boundaryless and international career orientations that encourage different employee groups to desire (and eventually pursue) very different international employment opportunities within and outside their employing organizations.

The expatriate career path is firmly placed within the ambit of traditional organizational careers denoting international movement within the employing organization. These organizational careers have traditionally denoted relatively long term international moves and subsequent relocation from one assignment location to the next (interposed with periods of work in employees’ home country dependent on organizational policy). Managerial employees most likely to aspire to the traditional expatriate career path to internationalization were a) the high performing employees (HIPOs) whose development potential extended beyond the confines of the national subsidiaries and whom organizations actively sought to retain and deploy as part of their global managerial cadre; and b) senior managers placed at the very top hierarchical levels of subsidiary structures whose future career progression necessitated parallel international moves to their organization’s international locations. My research revealed that within the Pakistani context this managerial cohort was limited primarily to very high performing, male employees who had been in their employing organization for at least 3-5 years.

In terms of protean career attitudes, these managers placed a great deal of focus on subjective, personally evaluated, intrinsic career success predicated on enhanced learning opportunities through potential international experience. They exhibited high commitment to their careers (and therefore prioritized diversified learning) alongside high organizational commitment (for e.g. exhibiting interest in building company-specific knowledge), akin to the ‘engaged agents’ (see ‘career commitment’ in section 5.2). As a result, these employees gave greater precedence to long-term career goals such as learning, networking and increasing organizational knowledge rather than relatively
more short-term objectives such as financial rewards, speed of progression and potential country of assignment. Therefore, geographical boundary-crossing was also predicated on the degree of professional development offered by their employing organization (see section 7.2). In terms of potential internationalization these employees often expressed a preference for moves to organizationally and/or strategically important locations such as the regional and corporate headquarters or subsidiaries earmarked for significant business expansion and growth by the organization.

The self-initiated expatriate career path is likely to be pursued by individual employees with a high boundaryless orientation whereby they rely on personal initiative to find international jobs and achieve geographical relocation outside their own country. Managers who expressed the greatest interest (and perceived ability) in this path to internationalization were very young males with low family commitments and personal responsibilities. In terms of protean career attitudes these employees exhibited protean career attitudes similar to the ‘disengaged dressers’ category (see section 5.2), with high commitment to their personal careers and high job involvement but low organizational commitment. Therefore, the focus was on personal development and professional pride validated through individual achievements on the job. Moreover, in terms of international career aspirations specifically, low organizational commitment could be attributed to the lack of international opportunities being offered by their employing organizations. Based on high personal commitment to career development, these managers consciously planned to offset the lack of organizational international opportunities by capitalizing on their work experience in a foreign MNC with a ‘brand name’ that would be recognized and valued in international labour markets. This group with self-initiating global boundarylessness predispositions placed a relatively greater focus on achieving extrinsic career objectives such as financial rewards and a quicker speed of progression. These employees also tended to exhibit high levels of psychological mobility (in terms of achieving geographical relocation) often predicated on previous international exposure, such as foreign educational qualifications and work experience abroad.
This finding supported Tarique and Schuler’s (2008) hypothesis that employee receptivity to international careers was in part determined by work and non-work international experiences. These notions of self-efficacy in achieving internationalization were not unrealistic because Farndale et al (2010) highlight the market for this ‘already-acculturated talent’ from developing countries with work experience in developed economies (p. 164). However, since potential internationalization was self-initiated, in many cases employees preferring this career path expressed a preference for limiting their initial geographical move to specific international locations. For instance, many (but not all) managerial employees with self-initiating boundaryless attitudes identified Dubai and other Arab states as potential relocation sites because of perceived ease of transition, a relatively similar institutional/societal context, and the existence of a large Pakistani expatriate community for social and professional networking.

The recurring path was classified as a separate career trajectory because even though it was an organizational career it denoted a primarily domestic orientation with regular international experience of the non-standard, short-term kind. Therefore, these employees’ career orientations were in line with the organizational impetus (driven by the global financial crisis) for ‘shorter planning horizons with regard to talent management’ (Collings and Mellahi 2009: 308). Certain employees from across my sample indicated a preference for a ‘recurring career’ that was primarily based in Pakistan but offered regular and meaningful, short-term international experience across their employing multinational’s global operations. Three specific groups of employees indicated a preference for this type of internationalization: a) some male and a majority of the female managers with family commitments and life-roles superseding their work-roles, b) older managers who were at the very end of their careers and did not perceive significant career advantages accruing from long-term relocation and c) specialist managers whose only chance of pursuing sustained functional specialization (rather than accepting a realistic transition into general management) was through international experience, participation in international project teams and associated challenging work tasks within their specialist field. Male and female managers with family
responsibilities and older employees did not desire the more long-term traditional expatriate or self-initiated career paths because, despite equally high confidence in their ability to achieve internationalization, they had applied perceptual boundaries (and therefore voluntarily circumscribed potential international mobility).

In terms of protean attitudes these employees derived professional pride from the combined strength of individual achievements and organizationally sanctioned rewards and predicated any potential mobility primarily on professional development. Therefore, their subjective, intrinsic career was more important than objective career markers with a concomitantly greater focus on learning, work-life balance, and working environments/organizational cultures as compared to financial rewards and quicker career progression. Managerial employees in my sample that expressed a desire for recurring careers had an interest in potential internationalization primarily to enhance their learning and development as well as having a wider range of cultural experiences. Since international work experience was sought through formal organizational channels, for professional development purposes, on a short to medium term basis, there was a high degree of flexibility regarding potential geographical locations. This was an interesting group because, like the other career paths, their interest in international work experience and their subjectively evaluated psychological mobility were both high. However, their desired international career track focused on more short-term, non-standard international exposure that would contribute to their professional development and learning without unduly disrupting their personal and family lives.

Linking differences in career orientations to variations in potential global career tracks highlighted another related issue – employee self-conceptualization of internationalization was influenced by a variety of personal, organizational and societal ‘push’ and ‘pull’ factors and hence subject to change over career lifetimes. There were a few examples of managers who had made transitions from self-initiated and expatriate international careers to the recurring career path. Some of these managers had
either found international jobs for themselves after studying abroad or had been sent abroad by a current or previous employer. These employees had then abandoned their global careers and moved back to Pakistan primarily because of family responsibilities and family pressure to assume responsibilities at home. However, all these employees explicitly stated that they had actively sought jobs in foreign MNCs post return, primarily to have higher international exposure (that would complement their previous international experience and keep open future global opportunities). Similarly, some employees (primarily male, functionally specialist managers) in the recurring category indicated present satisfaction with their existing career trajectory but toyed with the potential of a move to self-initiated global boundarylessness because of perceived career frustration in the long term (if their employing organization failed to provide sustained international exposure) and ability to capitalize on their contacts abroad. These movements across different career paths can also be linked to existing literature that highlights the possibility of employees on expatriate assignments becoming localized to the extent of settling in a foreign country (Suutari and Brewster 2000) combined with my own results of employees envisaging eventual settlement in a preferred location (see appendix 4 – table 3.9).

Exploring the inter-connections between protean, boundaryless and international career orientations highlights that in order to develop global managerial talent it is important for MNCs to understand variations in HCNs career attitudes and desired career trajectories. Moreover, multinationals need to be able to delineate between different employee groups and the changing internal and external factors that influence employee movement from one career path to another over their career history. On the one hand, Pakistani managers at MNCs had high international career orientations and MNCs that were unable to offer international career opportunities risked losing valuable managerial talent through employee-initiated international career moves. Therefore, a sizeable majority was interested in achieving internationalization (albeit to varying degrees), underlining the relative strength and availability of managers with globally mobile mindsets in the internal and external labour markets in Pakistan (as discussed in Chapter 7). This has implications from a
global talent management (GTM) perspective because Collings and Mellahi (2009) argued that a strategic talent management system was predicated on employee ability, motivation and opportunity. The Pakistani managers studied had both the ability and the motivation to internationalize, by exhibiting a ‘strong learning orientation’ and ‘global mindsets’ (Beechler and Woodward 2009: 281), and were therefore demanding greater international opportunities from their employing MNCs.

If a similar situation is hypothesized within the context of other developing economies with a similar caliber of elite, highly educated managerial talent, then multinationals’ potential ILM for global leaders becomes exponentially larger. Given the challenges of relocating Western managers to culturally, institutionally and geographically distant emerging economies (Farndale et al 2010; Wagner and Westaby 2009)\textsuperscript{22}, expatriating managers across culturally similar regions could considerably ease shortage issues of globally mobile managers. As Mellahi and Collings have argued, ‘contact between socially and geographically proximate individuals occurs at a higher rate than among socially and geographically distant individuals’ therefore, ‘biases in talent management’ at the HQ level, based on social and geographical distance, need to be redressed (2010: 147). Most importantly, this shift in MNCs sourcing increasingly mobile managerial talent from developing rather than developed host countries can have significant regional implications. In line with global talent management’s advocacy of a regio-centric approach, it makes sense to tailor IHRM activities according to specific geographical regions (Tarique and Schuler 2010). There is strategic and practical value in MNCs capitalizing on the ‘availability of near-nationals’ and employing third country nationals within the same or proximal regional labour markets (Reiche and Harzing 2011).

However, not all managers employed in the four case-study multinationals studied were in a position to take up traditional expatriate careers, despite high

\textsuperscript{22} Adler’s (1986) research on MBA students’ reasons for rejecting international assignments were predicated on whether the country of relocation was poor, ‘politically unstable, “uncivilized”, dangerous, hostile towards expatriates’, had ‘inadequate medical or educational facilities’ or because they did not wish to learn a new language or adapt to a new culture (p. 290).
international career orientations, and preferred ‘recurring’ expatriate careers instead. Multinational companies’ response to issues with traditional, long term expatriation and the current global crisis has been a shift in the kind of international work experiences on offer with a relatively greater focus on exploring the logistically flexible and financially viable non-standard and short-term international assignment options (Farndale et al 2010; Collings and Mellahi 2009). However, given the short-termism inherent in these new types of international assignments, key aspects of international experience such as the creation of ‘global networks and relationships’ (McDonnell et al 2010: 152), and the realization of key organizational objectives such as cross-border coordination and control (Edstrom and Galbraith 1977) through socialization and the deployment of informal networks (Reiche and Harzing 2011) may be lost. This has two broad implications for global staffing in general and global talent management in particular. Firstly, in the context of developing/emerging economies, this informal relationship-building may be salvaged by deploying managerial talent from similar (cultural and institutional) settings who are in the unique position of transferring foreign HQ policies while exhibiting intrinsic cultural sensitivity because of their shared traditional Asian values (Rowley et al 2011). Secondly, international HRM policies need to have differential responses both to these various types of international assignments (Collings et al 2010) and the specific talent pools most willing to accept these assignments. Therefore, it is important to distinguish between specific employee groups with very different career orientations that predispose them towards specific international career trajectories.

This thesis highlights that multinationals’ global staffing strategies not only need to adjust to changing dynamics of their international ILMs but also incorporate greater flexibility by moving away from the current categories of PCNs, TCNs, and HCNs to delineating differences between each employee group. The high international career orientations of the Pakistani HCN managers studied highlights the potential of previously unconsidered labour markets for MNCs when sourcing managerial talent. Given the elite nature of this cohort, and the ‘talent wars’ multinationals have to engage in to recruit and retain managers with ‘learning agility and global mindsets’ (Beechler and
Woodward 2009: 281), global staffing policies have to accommodate the interests of this burgeoning, increasingly internationalized and internationalizable employee group. For if MNCs do not respond to the international career needs of this HCN cohort, they risk losing them either to the international ELM through employee-initiated expatriation or to the national ELM because as McDonnell et al (2010) argue ‘MNEs are competing with each other as well as with indigenous firms for the same talent’ (p. 152). Moreover, this competition intensifies when MNCs status as preferred employers is challenged by newly restructured national organizations (Hartmann et al 2010). Therefore, retaining these HCNs as members of a potential, and relatively untapped, talent pool is an organizational necessity given that ‘organizational commitment strengthens the positive association between effective talent management and organizational performance’ (Collings and Mellahi 2009: 310). Should MNCs fail to retain this potential managerial talent, the long-term organizational implications of this ‘talent flight’ to an expanded ELM are significant talent shortages in subsidiary ILMs. This will make the already difficult deployment of traditional expatriates to these distant, developing economies an even greater necessity; and exacerbate the existing shortage of globally mobile managers and leaders.

8.6 Implications for future research

This research followed a qualitative, in-depth case study approach in order to incorporate the previously unconsidered employee perspective within the study of multinationals as well as highlight the impact of organizational differentials on employees’ internalization of the ‘new’ career concepts. The focus was primarily on building rich data within a limited number of organizational contexts rather than across a larger more generalizable subset. This imposed limitations on the degree of depth to which certain independent variables could be investigated within the scope of this thesis and therefore, establishes additional areas of research pertaining to managerial career development in multinationals. With respect to the organizational level of analysis two key areas merit additional research.
Firstly, the four MNCs studied in this thesis differed in their business strategies, HR policies and practices and staffing orientations (as explored in Chapter 4). However, these variations could not be corroborated at the corporate HQ and regional HQ levels due to access limitations. My findings suggest wider implications for global staffing strategies within MNCs’ international ILMs in general, and regio-centric talent management flows in particular. Therefore, future research on managerial career development needs to incorporate the HQ perspectives and explicitly explore the potentiality of regionalism in terms of employees’ career perceptions and organizations’ career management. Existing research on regional centres and ‘regional clusters of skills and capability’ (Sparrow and Brewster 2006) needs further extension. Would managerial employees favoring recurring expatriate careers, predicated on short-term, non-standard international experience, welcome the relatively easier transitions within their region versus traditional expatriates who can be deployed anywhere in the world? Are regional HQs capable of initiating and sustaining talent management within their business region? Should regional experience be a stepping stone/training ground for eventual membership to the international managerial cadre and will this considered approach reduce the often cited problems associated with expatriation? These questions can only be tackled if interviews are conducted with senior managers and employees at the regional HQ level as well as across subsidiaries within a region – i.e. consideration of employee and organizational perspectives in a range of institutional/societal contexts. Studying the potential role of MNCs’ regional centers can have broader theoretical implications because it may signal a more nuanced approach to the decentralization-global integration debate and a move from the traditional hierarchical organizations to more heterarchical organizations offering subsidiary managers greater local autonomy and more strategic roles (Grimshaw and Rubery 2003; Hedlund 1986). It is important to explore whether the projected significance of regiocentrism in organizational structures, staffing orientations and employee career trajectories is signaling entirely new avenues of research or underlining the increasing relevance of existing literature.
Secondly, my research thesis also revealed that the case-study MNCs’ specific business strategy (for example, expansion versus sales-driven profitability) created invisible distinctions between core and non-core employees within the organizational hierarchy that were further highlighted by the implicit differences in status accorded to different departments/business functions. However, the research sample was restricted to specific consideration of managerial employees who were at least graduates and on permanent employment contracts. Therefore, it can be hypothesized that non-managerial, technical or temporary staff not seen to be occupying strategically important roles (along the implicit status-based ordering of jobs) would be offered very different career opportunities (for example, no international options). More focused consideration of these non-core/non-managerial employees and direct juxtaposition of their career perceptions with those of their managerial counterparts would highlight the relative applicability and directionality of these ‘new’ career concepts across different employee groups. Moreover, GTM literature exhorts that ‘organizational talent’ is not limited to senior managerial positions and talent classifications vary over time depending on ‘changing organizational priorities’ (McDonnell et al 2010: 158). In fact, the GTM research agenda specifically involves identifying ‘pivotal talent pools’ (Boudreau and Ramstad 2005) that are not necessarily high-performing, high-potentials but ‘a broader remit across different levels of staff’ (Farndale et al 2010: 163) most capable of achieving strategic organizational goals (Lewis and Heckman 2006). Therefore, a wider range of employees beyond the managerial cohort within MNCs should be considered in order to widen the net of jobs and employees that can potentially make the incremental strategic impact underlined in global talent management approach.

There are several avenues of additional research that need expansion at the micro and macro levels of analysis. The findings highlighted mobility preferences and trajectories across industries and variations in cross-industry moves across different employee groups. For instance, many managers at Bank Co were less keen on moving out of the financial sector because of their stronger professional identities as ‘bankers’ rather than managers. The findings also highlighted how greater potential mobility in one direction
sometimes limited mobility in other directions and vice versa. Therefore, consideration of managerial employees across a wider range of industries/sectors could be undertaken to test the relative strength of, and relationship between, the industry/sector variable and the professional identity factor in determining overall protean and boundaryless career orientations. Within the context of multinationals, in particular employees working in international law, IT and accountancy firms, management consultancies etc could be considered in order to juxtapose general managers against professional service workers with more specialist expertise and stronger professional identities. Moreover, with respect to physical mobility in general and intended internationalization of careers in particular, differences were visible on the basis of gender and age. While females and older (as opposed to senior) managers exhibited high psychological mobility, many of them predominantly tended to favour the ‘recurring’ expatriate career path. This suggests that these particular employees’ careers required greater sympathetic adaptation to societal pressures such as traditional gender roles and family responsibilities as compared to the younger, male managers. However, the sample size for both these employee cohorts was very small and therefore merits additional research whereby a more in-depth analysis of the nature, extent and direction of societal/institutional pressures can be undertaken.

Finally, analysis of the data revealed that the majority of the managerial employees interviewed desired career internationalization, albeit to varying degrees. Many of the respondents indicated that they had specifically sought employment in MNCs in order to gain invaluable international exposure and increase their chances of eventual international mobility (either self-initiated based on subjective, self-directed attitudes or organizationally mandated as part of the traditional employment relationship). However, this research, in specifically focusing on managerial career development in MNCs, highlights a dilemma. Did these individual employees exhibit self-directed, boundaryless, and internationalized career orientations because of their employment in foreign MNCs (and therefore greater exposure to more Western precepts)? Or would they exhibit similar career orientations independent of their employing context? This issue can be resolved if corresponding research is carried out in
i) comparable national/local organizations with very different antecedents, structures and management cultures and ii) on individual managerial employees with international exposure (through foreign education or work experience) working in domestic organizations with a predominantly national focus.

8.7 Conclusion

This project set out to study the relatively neglected topic of the career orientations of host country nationals (HCNs) and the career opportunities offered at the subsidiary level of analysis, taking the specific case of HCN managers in Pakistan. The main research objective was to understand the application and uptake of protean, boundaryless and international career concepts within MNCs with differing organizational structures and strategies, in the culturally and institutionally distinct and distant context of Pakistan. This pluralistic consideration of the individual, organizational and institutional/societal levels of analysis offered several key insights. Firstly, the combined application of Western and traditional work values in these four MNCs led to a hybridized and contested employment relationship whereby marketization was evident but subject to implicit societal pressures and transmutations. Secondly, Pakistani HCN managers’ career mobility perceptions and patterns highlighted the need to take a more nuanced approach to physical and psychological mobility. The managerial employees studied selectively crossed existing organizational boundaries but also created new boundaries (both physical and perceptual) in order to ensure continued survival in the internal and external labour markets. Finally, the thesis considered the key factors impacting the transfer of HRM in general, and managerial career development policies in particular, in the four case-study MNCs. The results highlighted the importance of recognizing the differential impact of individual, organizational and institutional/societal factors on the transfer, implementation and internalization processes and the implicit and explicit inter-linkages between these factors. Therefore, individual career orientations, multinational subsidiaries’ structural characteristics and HQ/corporate strategies, and the business environment (including societal and
institutional variables) were inter-connected and jointly (if differentially) determined the career development of Pakistani HCN managers.

These results highlight the key theoretical contributions of this research. Firstly, a multi-level analysis of protean and boundaryless careers orientations underlined the need for greater extension and contextualization of the ‘new’ careers literature in previously under-explored organizational and institutional contexts. Secondly, the contrast between relative ‘marketization’ of the employment relationship and the enduring durability of the internal labour markets highlighted the implicit influence of institutional and societal factors in developing, rapidly deinstitutionalizing economies like Pakistan. Existing international HRM literature tends to explore MNCs’ diffusion of HRM by focusing on the relatively static home and host country effects without adequately exploring the complexity and potential of hybridization and negotiation underlying this transfer process in institutionally weak but culturally traditional hosts.

The overall conclusions were that individual employees’ career orientations and subsidiary policies and practices were far more susceptible to Western, globalizing influences than expected in a culturally and institutionally distant country like Pakistan. In practice globalizing forces (such as the exchange of information and technologies, the presence of multinationals and generational differences in normative values – Edwards and Rees 2011) have combined to influence the education system, organizational structures and societal arrangements in Pakistan so as to create a small pocket of educated, elite knowledge workers with dual institutional identities. These dual identities highlighted the centrifugal forces of modern versus traditional values and individualism versus collectivism. Therefore, on the one hand managerial employees identified with the global organizational policies of their employing multinational (Reade 2001) by embracing increased autonomy and a more contingent form of job security (firmly tied to individual performance). On the other hand, the specific institutional context ensured the continued (if implicit) importance of social connections, networking and elitism reminiscent of traditional Pakistani values. In these changed, and constantly changing,
circumstances the sample studied was not only willing to accept, but in certain cases was proactively demanding, the import of Western professionalism and foreign career arrangements. However, this employee willingness needs to be contextualized and accorded a more nuanced consideration. The thesis revealed that societal and institutional pressures were implicit but pervasive across all levels of analysis (i.e. individual employees, organizations and business environment). Therefore, managers’ personal backgrounds as a highly educated, social and economic elite indirectly facilitated the uptake of ‘new’ career concepts. Moreover, organizational culture and intra- and inter-organizational status differentials, accruing from societal preoccupation with status and hierarchy, dissolved or created new boundaries within the workplaces studied. Thus, the relative openness of Pakistan’s business system allowed the permeation of these Western employment practices but these practices were subsequently subject to implicit societal influences.

These theoretical contributions also had wider implications for practice. There is evidence to suggest that foreign influences and economic restructuring have affected a similar process of institutional change in other Asian economies as well (Rowley et al 2011). More importantly, this is a two-way process of change because MNCs also need to respond to these dualities and social transformations by being flexible over which practices they choose to transfer and in what form these practices are eventually implemented in developing host contexts (Vo 2009). So what inferences can be drawn for the study and practice of international HRM? At the subsidiary level individual employees’ increasing ability and desire to adopt foreign HR ideals, such as the ‘new’ career concepts, make them suitable third country alternatives for international assignments. This shift away from traditional home country expatriate managers creates additional career opportunities for mobile managers from developing economies exhibiting high internationalization orientations. Moreover, it could also create labour advantages for MNCs in their international ILMs by opening up the relatively untapped emerging economies’ labour markets for developing the critical and scarce resource of global leaders and managers.
A second practical implication is the need to explicitly address the contradictions inherent in MNCs’ response to a changed and hybridized employment relationship and employees’ career orientations exhibiting certain protean and boundaryless attitudes. On the one hand, they have allowed competitive market forces inside the organization in order to reduce costs associated with the ILM and the provision of traditional organizational careers. On the other hand, they need to offer even more advantageous and stable ILMs and employment contracts in order to attract and retain these managerial elite in accordance with their talent management agendas. Tarique and Schuler (2010) capture this dilemma, and its impact on the larger issue of global talent management, very succinctly when they argue,

Although MNEs recognize the value and need for retaining employees they appear to be encouraging a contradictory policy. This is the policy that encourages employees to be responsible for their own careers and success within organizations… that conceptualizes individual learning and mobility as positive and necessary. The result may be employees leaving an organization and moving to another one, even though the present employer is wholly acceptable, just because the individual is led to think about mobility in very positive career terms…. (MNEs)… need to assess the potential contradictory effects of other IHRM and GTM policies and practices that are actually harmful to the organization…

This study reveals that features of ‘new’ and traditional careers coexist, reflecting both organizational constraints as well the duality of values evident in the specific societal/institutional context of a developing economy like Pakistan. Individually driven career management and greater boundary crossing can have negative (for e.g.: talent wars and job hopping) and positive (i.e. diverse global leadership and alternate ‘recurring’ expatriate career paths) implications for MNCs specifically. Based on the results it can be argued that there is some scope for the transfer and implementation of distinctly Anglo-Saxon management concepts such as ‘new’ careers within the culturally and institutionally distinct setting of Pakistan. However, these HR concepts should be viewed as ‘luxury’ management exports because they can only be deployed by the social and economic elite with greater affinity for Western ideals and greater personal welfare arrangements to bolster the marketized and externalized nature of contemporary career precepts and the employment relationship. This has two broad implications. Firstly, highly skilled
professional/managerial classes in developing countries like Pakistan are not as dissimilar from their Western counterparts as may be hypothesized on the basis of dominant cultural, societal and institutional differences. Secondly, self-initiated, increasingly mobile career attitudes as theoretical concepts may have the greatest scope for application for the highly skilled, highly educated core workers in developing societies like Pakistan. These socio-economic distinctions need explicit attention because self-directed internalization of such flexible, organization-independent, and therefore high-risk careers can only ever be the preserve of the financially and socially stable work groups in developing economies. How individual managerial employees and multinationals (in developing economies in particular) respond to these evolving career concepts, organizational structures and institutional changes can have wide ranging implications at the individual, organizational and institutional levels - with possible spillover effects on regional labour dynamics as well.
Bibliography:


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Website: [http://countrystudies.us/pakistan/42.htm](http://countrystudies.us/pakistan/42.htm) (Accessed: 16-05-2011)


Appendix 1 - Interview guide for employers/senior management

Part A – Pakistani subsidiary’s HRM systems

Job title:
Function/Department:
Length of service with the organization:
How many employees are you managing?
Brief overview of the subsidiary structure (key departments, organizational structure, key business activities, future business plans)

1) Recruitment and selection
   • Educational background of candidates (generalist vs. technical qualifications, foreign qualifications vs. national qualifications, graduate and/or postgraduate qualifications)
   • Work experience (none, with other MNC subsidiaries, with other national organizations, how many years for different managerial positions, in which industries/sectors, foreign vs. local experience)
   • Personal characteristics/traits of candidates (any difference in identification of candidate traits for good ‘fit’ within national subsidiary or potential good ‘fit’ within regional/international organizational operations and culture)

2) Average tenures and mobility
   • Between different departments
   • Between different product/service/business divisions
   • Between different locations within country operations (frequency, employee willingness, directionality of cross-country movement across provinces?)
   • International mobility (length, frequency, potential)
   • Average employee tenures (comparison with industry average)

3) Job quality
   • In financial terms (real wage growth, compensation with respect to industry average – including other multinationals and national organizations, employee benefits, bonuses, status markers)
   • In terms of employability
     ➢ Promotions patterns (upward movement – timelines, organizational career ladders for graduate trainees, HIPOs, senior managers, classic functional line ladder/generalist track/dual career ladder, advancement dependent on tenure/seniority/performance/willingness to make functional, national, international career moves, standardized vs. flexible promotion policies, inside vs. outside hiring – and at which levels within organizational structure)
     ➢ Training (formal and informal, general vs. firm-specific, on-the-job development, role of HQ/regional HQ/other subsidiaries in training and development, local/host influences and national and industry regulations vs. corporate/home country influences on training, training and organizational cultures)
     ➢ International career opportunities (retention of local talent by host subsidiaries vs. creation of international cadre, types of international opportunities – short extended business visits to other subsidiaries, assignments of 3-12 months, secondments of 2-3 years, or ‘truly international roles’, frequency of international mobility, differences across different employee groups/departments)

4) Job security
   • Financial security (regular pay increases, provision of benefits, competitive wage levels, bonuses etc.)
Psychological security (implicit promise of adjusting employees and furthering their careers within the same organization in other subsidiaries/divisions if an operation folds vs. preference for individuals with self-managed careers)

Security with respect to market conditions (growth and competitiveness of product/service markets)

Security in terms of political considerations (both national political environment as well as political clout of national subsidiary within global operations)

**Part B – Staffing orientation of multinational** (based on Perlmutter 1969 and Lorentz et al 1993)

- **Complexity of Organization**
  - Complex in home country and simple in subsidiaries
  - Varied and independent
  - Increasingly complex and interdependent
    (In terms of products and services, organizational concepts, structure and policies)

- **Authority/decision making**
  - High in headquarters
  - Relatively low in headquarters/high in subsidiary
  - Collaborative approach between headquarters and subsidiaries
    (Any differences across business divisions/functions?)

- **Evaluation and control**
  - Home standards applied for personnel and products/service provision
  - Standards determined locally for each national subsidiary
  - Standards are universal and local

- **Rewards/incentives and punishments**
  - High in headquarters and low in subsidiaries
  - Wide variation between different subsidiaries
  - International and local executives are rewarded on the basis of achieving both local and worldwide objectives

- **Communication and information flow**
  - High volume of orders, commands and advice from headquarters to subsidiaries
  - Limited communication with headquarters and other subsidiaries
  - Both between subsidiaries and headquarters and between different subsidiaries

- **Identification**
  - Strong identification with home country values and attitudes
  - Strong identification with host country values and attitudes
  - International company with an amalgamation of global values and organizational culture.

- **Perpetuation (recruiting, staffing, development etc.)**
  - Recruit and develop people of home country for key positions worldwide
  - Develop host country nationals for key positions in their own country
  - Develop talent everywhere for key positions on a global basis
Appendix 2 – Interview guide for managerial employees

1) Biographical information
   • Education (subject/specialization, level of qualification, university)
   • Prior work experience (in which organizations, if any, and reasons for leaving previous employing organizations, reasons for joining this particular organization)
   • Job title and brief job description (department/function, managing any employees?)

2) Tenures and mobility
   • Between different industries
   • Inter-organizational
   • Geographical (national and international)
   • Inter-departmental/between different product and service lines

3) Job quality
   • In financial terms (real wage growth, wage with respect to industry average – including other multinationals and national organizations, employee benefits, bonuses, status markers) [how important are they, are they transferrable across organizations?]
   • In terms of employability
     ➢ Promotions patterns (organizational entry level, time taken for each upward promotion, skipped any levels on organizational career ladders, organizational track – vertical/linear vs. non-linear/lateral, advancement dependent on seniority/individual performance appraisals/personal connections/willingness to moves)
     ➢ Training (organizational - formal and informal, transferrable/generalist and organization/industry specific, any personal training courses, what areas would you like additional training in?)
     ➢ Career opportunities (at national, regional and/or international levels, types of regional/international opportunities – short extended business visits to other subsidiaries, assignments of 3-12 months, secondments of 2-3 years, or ‘truly international roles’)

4) Job security
   • Financial security (regular pay increases, provision of benefits, competitive wage levels etc.)
   • Security from a psychological point of view (expectation of a traditional organizational career vs. self-managed career) [MNCs seen as conduit to international careers and providing increased career opportunities?]
   • Security with respect to market conditions (awareness of market conditions, their potential impact on employees in terms of constant skills upgrading, increased workloads, wider range of responsibilities, layoffs, poaching of employees etc.)
   • Security in terms of political considerations (awareness/acceptance of political factors impacting MNCs continued presence at national level)
Appendix 3 – Questionnaire for individual employee

Individual Career Orientations
(Adler, 1986; Briscoe et al, 2006 and Tarique & Schuler, 2008)

Age (years): _______ Gender (M/F): _______
Marital Status (Single/ Married): ____________
Undergraduate University:
_____________________________________________________
Undergraduate Major: _________________ Undergraduate Minor (if any):
_________________
Postgraduate University:
_____________________________________________________
Postgraduate Speciality: _________________
Previous Work Experience (if any) (years): _______
Organizations employed with (names):
1.
2.
3.
Maximum length of time with any one organization (years): ______

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International Experience</th>
<th>Location(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work Related (years):</td>
<td>1. 2. 3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education (years):</td>
<td>1. 2. 3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal travel (no. of times):</td>
<td>1. 2. 3.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please indicate the extent to which the following statements are true for you. Please circle or place an “X” over the appropriate response

1) I am in charge of my own career

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To little or no extent</th>
<th>To a limited extent</th>
<th>To some extent</th>
<th>To a considerable extent</th>
<th>To a great extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

2) Ultimately, I depend upon myself to move my career forward

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To little or no extent</th>
<th>To a limited extent</th>
<th>To some extent</th>
<th>To a considerable extent</th>
<th>To a great extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
3) I am responsible for the success or failure of my career

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To little or no extent</td>
<td>To a limited extent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a considerable extent</td>
<td>To a considerable extent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a great extent</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

4) In the past, I have relied more upon myself than others to find a new job when necessary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

5) When development opportunities have not been offered by my company, I’ve sought them out on my own

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</table>

6) What I think about what is right in my career is more important to me than what my company thinks

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<tbody>
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<tr>
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</tbody>
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7) What’s most important to me is how I feel about my career, not how other people feel

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<tbody>
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<tr>
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<td>To a considerable extent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a great extent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8) I navigate my own career, based upon my personal priorities, as opposed to my employer’s priorities

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<tbody>
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<td>To a considerable extent</td>
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<tr>
<td>To a great extent</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

9) I like tasks at work that require me to work beyond my own department

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a considerable extent</td>
<td>To a considerable extent</td>
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<tr>
<td>To a great extent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10) I enjoy job assignments that require me to work outside of my organization

<table>
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<th></th>
<th>To little or no extent</th>
<th>To a limited extent</th>
<th>To some extent</th>
<th>To a considerable extent</th>
<th>To a great extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

11) I would enjoy working on projects with people from across many organizations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>To a limited extent</th>
<th>To some extent</th>
<th>To a considerable extent</th>
<th>To a great extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

12) I prefer job assignments that allow me to learn something new

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>To little or no extent</th>
<th>To a limited extent</th>
<th>To some extent</th>
<th>To a considerable extent</th>
<th>To a great extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

13) If my organization provided lifetime employment, I would never desire to seek work in other organizations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>To little or no extent</th>
<th>To a limited extent</th>
<th>To some extent</th>
<th>To a considerable extent</th>
<th>To a great extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

14) In my ideal career, I would work for only one organization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>To little or no extent</th>
<th>To a limited extent</th>
<th>To some extent</th>
<th>To a considerable extent</th>
<th>To a great extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

15) I like the predictability that comes with working continuously for the same organization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>To little or no extent</th>
<th>To a limited extent</th>
<th>To some extent</th>
<th>To a considerable extent</th>
<th>To a great extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

16) I prefer to stay in a company I am familiar with rather than look for employment elsewhere

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>To little or no extent</th>
<th>To a limited extent</th>
<th>To some extent</th>
<th>To a considerable extent</th>
<th>To a great extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
17) I would like an international assignment at some point in my career

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To little or no extent</th>
<th>To a limited extent</th>
<th>To some extent</th>
<th>To a considerable extent</th>
<th>To a great extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

18) International work experience would make my professional life more interesting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To little or no extent</th>
<th>To a limited extent</th>
<th>To some extent</th>
<th>To a considerable extent</th>
<th>To a great extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

19) I view international work experience as a prerequisite for my future career advancement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To little or no extent</th>
<th>To a limited extent</th>
<th>To some extent</th>
<th>To a considerable extent</th>
<th>To a great extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

20) I want an international career which would be a series of international jobs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To little or no extent</th>
<th>To a limited extent</th>
<th>To some extent</th>
<th>To a considerable extent</th>
<th>To a great extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

21) I would be able to earn a higher salary with an international career

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To little or no extent</th>
<th>To a limited extent</th>
<th>To some extent</th>
<th>To a considerable extent</th>
<th>To a great extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

22) An international career would ensure a higher status within my employing organization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To little or no extent</th>
<th>To a limited extent</th>
<th>To some extent</th>
<th>To a considerable extent</th>
<th>To a great extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

23) My potential for career advancement would be higher if I had an international career

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To little or no extent</th>
<th>To a limited extent</th>
<th>To some extent</th>
<th>To a considerable extent</th>
<th>To a great extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
24) I would have a more satisfying personal life if I had an international career

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extent</th>
<th>To little or no extent</th>
<th>To a limited extent</th>
<th>To some extent</th>
<th>To a considerable extent</th>
<th>To a great extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

25) I would eventually want to settle in one country at some point in my international career

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extent</th>
<th>To little or no extent</th>
<th>To a limited extent</th>
<th>To some extent</th>
<th>To a considerable extent</th>
<th>To a great extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

26) Do you expect to be working in the same organization... (please answer for all categories)

1) less than 1 year from now – YES/NO
2) 3 years from now – YES/NO
3) 6 years from now – YES/NO
4) 10 years from now – YES/NO
Appendix 4 – Questionnaire results (n= 58)

1. Protean career orientations

**Table 1.1 I am in charge of my own career (%)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chemical Co</th>
<th>Bank Co</th>
<th>Beverage Co</th>
<th>Energy Co</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To a great extent</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a considerable extent</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a limited extent</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To little or no extent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1.2 Ultimately, I depend upon myself to move my career forward (%)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chemical Co</th>
<th>Bank Co</th>
<th>Beverage Co</th>
<th>Energy Co</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To a great extent</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a considerable extent</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a limited extent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To little or no extent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1.3 I am responsible for the success or failure of my career (%)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chemical Co</th>
<th>Bank Co</th>
<th>Beverage Co</th>
<th>Energy Co</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To a great extent</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a considerable extent</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a limited extent</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To little or no extent</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1.4 In the past, I have relied more upon myself than others to find a new job when necessary (%)**

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Chemical Co</th>
<th>Bank Co</th>
<th>Beverage Co</th>
<th>Energy Co</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>44</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>To a considerable extent</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a limited extent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To little or no extent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1.5 When development opportunities have not been offered by my company, I’ve sought them out on my own (%)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>Energy Co</th>
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<td>19</td>
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<tr>
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<td>44</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>To little or no extent</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>3</td>
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</table>
Table 1.6 What I think about what is right in my career is more important to me than what my company thinks (%)

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<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
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<td>60</td>
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<tr>
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Table 1.7 What’s most important to me is how I feel about my career, not how other people feel (%)

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<td>41</td>
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<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To little or no extent</td>
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</table>

Table 1.8 I navigate my own career, based upon my personal priorities, as opposed to my employer’s priorities (%)

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<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a considerable extent</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a limited extent</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To little or no extent</td>
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<td>8</td>
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</table>
2. Boundaryless career orientations

**Table 2.1 I like tasks at work that require me to work beyond my own department (%)**

<table>
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<th>Bank Co</th>
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<th>Energy Co</th>
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<td>20</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>28</td>
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<tr>
<td>To a considerable extent</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a limited extent</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2.2 I enjoy job assignments that require me to work outside of my organization (%)**

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chemical Co</th>
<th>Bank Co</th>
<th>Beverage Co</th>
<th>Energy Co</th>
<th>All</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
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<td>33</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a considerable extent</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a limited extent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To little or no extent</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2.3 I would enjoy working on projects with people from across many organizations (%)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chemical Co</th>
<th>Bank Co</th>
<th>Beverage Co</th>
<th>Energy Co</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To a great extent</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a considerable extent</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a limited extent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To little or no extent</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2.4 I prefer job assignments that allow me to learn something new (%)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chemical Co</th>
<th>Bank Co</th>
<th>Beverage Co</th>
<th>Energy Co</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To a great extent</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a considerable extent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a limited extent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To little or no extent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2.5 If my organization provided lifetime employment, I would never desire to seek work in other organizations (%)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chemical Co</th>
<th>Bank Co</th>
<th>Beverage Co</th>
<th>Energy Co</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To a great extent</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a considerable extent</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a limited extent</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To little or no extent</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2.6 In my ideal career, I would work for only one organization (%)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chemical Co</th>
<th>Bank Co</th>
<th>Beverage Co</th>
<th>Energy Co</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To a great extent</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a considerable extent</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a limited extent</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To little or no extent</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.7 I like the predictability that comes with working continuously for the same organization (%)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chemical Co</th>
<th>Bank Co</th>
<th>Beverage Co</th>
<th>Energy Co</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To a great extent</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a considerable extent</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a limited extent</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To little or no extent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.8 I prefer to stay in a company I am familiar with rather than look for employment elsewhere (%)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chemical Co</th>
<th>Bank Co</th>
<th>Beverage Co</th>
<th>Energy Co</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To a great extent</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a considerable extent</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a limited extent</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To little or no extent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 3. International career orientations

**Table 3.1 I would like an international assignment at some point in my career (%)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chemical Co</th>
<th>Bank Co</th>
<th>Beverage Co</th>
<th>Energy Co</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To a great extent</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a considerable extent</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a limited extent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To little or no extent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3.2 International work experience would make my professional life more interesting (%)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chemical Co</th>
<th>Bank Co</th>
<th>Beverage Co</th>
<th>Energy Co</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To a great extent</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a considerable extent</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a limited extent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To little or no extent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3.3 I view international work experience as a prerequisite for my future career advancement (%)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chemical Co</th>
<th>Bank Co</th>
<th>Beverage Co</th>
<th>Energy Co</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To a great extent</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a considerable extent</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a limited extent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To little or no extent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3.4 I want an international career which would be a series of international jobs (%)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chemical Co</th>
<th>Bank Co</th>
<th>Beverage Co</th>
<th>Energy Co</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To a great extent</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a considerable extent</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a limited extent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To little or no extent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3.5 I would be able to earn a higher salary with an international career (%)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chemical Co</th>
<th>Bank Co</th>
<th>Beverage Co</th>
<th>Energy Co</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To a great extent</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a considerable extent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a limited extent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To little or no extent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3.6 An international career would ensure a higher status within my employing organization (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chemical Co</th>
<th>Bank Co</th>
<th>Beverage Co</th>
<th>Energy Co</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To a great extent</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a considerable extent</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a limited extent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To little or no extent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.7 My potential for career advancement would be higher if I had an international career (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chemical Co</th>
<th>Bank Co</th>
<th>Beverage Co</th>
<th>Energy Co</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To a great extent</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a considerable extent</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a limited extent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To little or no extent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.8 I would have a more satisfying personal life if I had an international career (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chemical Co</th>
<th>Bank Co</th>
<th>Beverage Co</th>
<th>Energy Co</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To a great extent</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a considerable extent</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a limited extent</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To little or no extent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.9 I would eventually want to settle in one country at some point in my international career (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chemical Co</th>
<th>Bank Co</th>
<th>Beverage Co</th>
<th>Energy Co</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To a great extent</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a considerable extent</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a limited extent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To little or no extent</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Individual employees’ job tenure expectations

Table 4.1 Do you expect to be working in the same organization... (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chemical Co</th>
<th>Bank Co</th>
<th>Beverage Co</th>
<th>Energy Co</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 1 year from now</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 years from now</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 years from now</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 years from now</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 5 – Managerial employee index

**Chemical Co**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employee Code</th>
<th>Job Title</th>
<th>Department/ function</th>
<th>Gender (M/F)</th>
<th>Educational qualification</th>
<th>No. of inter-organizational moves $^{23}$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FC1B3</td>
<td>Brand manager</td>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>2 MBA’s</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FC2B5</td>
<td>Deputy finance manager</td>
<td>Accounting &amp; finance</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Professional accountancy degree</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FC3B6</td>
<td>Assistant safety &amp; administration Manager</td>
<td>Manufacturing plant</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Masters in economics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FC4B8</td>
<td>Chemical engineer</td>
<td>Manufacturing plant</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>BSc in engineering</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FC5B9</td>
<td>Business manager</td>
<td>Sales department</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Masters in agriculture</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FC6B10</td>
<td>HR supervisor</td>
<td>HR &amp; administration Department</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Executive MBA</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FC7B11</td>
<td>Regional business manager</td>
<td>Sales and marketing</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>MBA (marketing)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FC8B13</td>
<td>Sales manager</td>
<td>Sales department</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Masters in agriculture</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FC9B14</td>
<td>Business manager (south region)</td>
<td>Sales department</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Masters in agriculture</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FC10B15</td>
<td>Business manager (Sukkur)</td>
<td>Sales department</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Masters in agriculture</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FC11B16</td>
<td>Zonal manager (Beharee)</td>
<td>Sales department</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Masters in agriculture</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FC12C1</td>
<td>Zonal manager (Punjab)</td>
<td>Sales department</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Masters in agriculture</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FC13C2</td>
<td>Business manager (Sindh)</td>
<td>Sales department</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>2 MBA’s (marketing &amp; finance)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$^{23}$ Inter-organizational moves refer to work experiences prior to joining current organization – i.e. transition to employing organization is not counted in the number of inter-organizational transitions. For graduate recruits/management trainees previous internships are also not counted as inter-organizational mobility.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employee Code</th>
<th>Job Title</th>
<th>Department/ function</th>
<th>Gender (M/F)</th>
<th>Educational qualification</th>
<th>No. of inter-org. moves</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CB1A1</td>
<td>Assistant branch manager</td>
<td>Branch banking</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Masters in finance</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Gender (M/F)</td>
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<td>No. of inter-org. moves</td>
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**Beverage Co**

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## Appendix 6 – Formal training courses: A cross-comparative overview

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<th>Energy Co</th>
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<td><strong>Leadership skills</strong></td>
<td><strong>Strategic planning</strong></td>
<td><strong>Extensive orientation courses (in legal, logistics, finance, engineering, retail &amp; development functions)</strong></td>
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<td>Investment products certification</td>
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<td>Technological developments in agro-chemicals</td>
<td>Lubes training</td>
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<td>Compliance &amp; regulations training</td>
<td>Initiative &amp; entrepreneurship skills</td>
<td>Safety, health &amp; risk services (industrial hygiene, occupational safety, risk assessment)</td>
<td>HSCQ (health &amp; safety training)</td>
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<td>Oil/gas safety standards</td>
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<td>Corporate social responsibility course</td>
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<td>Financial services training</td>
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<td>Credit Control training</td>
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<td>Audit training</td>
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<td>‘5 module’ training</td>
<td>Inter-personal skills</td>
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<td>Cash flow management</td>
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