

Analysis of *Career Plateau* Profile toward Professor

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Abstract. This article aims to inform analysis result about *career plateau profile* in the lecturer community who have achieved peak functional duty in education area, namely function of professor. *Career plateau* is a *stagnant* condition in career progress to be better in the similar or different job. *Career plateau* is different one individual to another individual, although with relatively similar experience and achievement reach because of so many factors influencing on individual career plateau. But *career plateau* can analyzes based on function like professor functional. The profile analysis result of this *career plateau* becomes *external feedback* for many professors, becomes institution foundation and related personnel for more effectively human resources management. Career plateau could be explained furthermore the substance and appearance based on the theoretical framework, namely social exchanges theory.

Keywords: Analysis, career plateau, professor

1 Introduction

Professor was highest functional function for lecturer who still teach in milieu of high school unit (Republic of Indonesia Laws Number 14, Year 2005, Chapter I, Paragraph 1, Article 3.). Functional duty as professor has moral either responsibility to empower lecturer with lower academic level that has been achieved from expert assistance up to lector and chief lector academic level. Beside that, professor was weighted more valid obligation on each semester, to teach and to educate student, conducting research related to its expertise, disseminating ideas to university community and extended community. In laws of Republic of Indonesia Number 14 Year 2005, Chapter I, Paragraf 49, Article 1,2,3, were proposed that professor was highest academic function on high school unit which had right to guide doctoral candidate; professor had specific obligation to write text book and article as well as disseminating its ideas to empower their society [11]. The professor task description above is not easy to perform, moreover professor owning so excellent scholarly paper or monumental work in his area and obtaining international admintance, named pure professor.

A lecturer's career journey to achieve professor functional function is enough long journey, needing seriousness, and diligence. This professor functional function can generally be said to be achieved on age of about 50 years with work experience more or less 25 years and/or over. This working period was a working period and age including as maintenance working period. According to Morrow and McElray (1987) as proposed by Noordin et al in International Journal of Business and Social Sciences, career phases were divided on age less

than 31 years old (namely trying out phase), age 31 – 44 years old (namely stable phase); and age more than 44 years old (namely maintenance phase) career.

According to Allen and Meyer (1993), Morrow and McElroy (1987), Mount (1984), Stumpf and Rabinowitz (1981), and Goul and Hawkins (1987), proposed by Noordin et al (1987), that viewed from working period factor (not age), then working period more than 10 years was maintenance time. It was seemed that professor's age forecasts and working period in Indonesia, were included on maintenance phase of working world, although there are often professors achieving his functional professor about on the age of 60 years old or over, and who had already achieved doctoral education, but not achieving professor, because already got retired time of state official [10].

Departure from career phase classification and working period above, thus professor function is career maintenance phase, which meant that professor career is careering period which has to be still kept, maintained achieving so well. For this, professor has to be got rid of *career plateauing*, because chronic *career plateauing* (namely continuously going on, in too long time period do not rise) affects bad to some psychological variables, although still solveable. For example, *career plateau* influences significantly toward organization commitment and so lower work productivity.

Viewed from age generally when lecturer achieves professor functional function especially in Indonesia, then professor that is starting age about 50 years old, is still in highly working motivation times. But at time of starting age 63 years old, seems to have approximated the existence of *career plateau*. At the age of about 60 or 63 years old was forecasted professor has the working period 33 up to 35 years old, namely a working period on point of feeling boring, feeling career as a routine, monotonous, although professor can still do the particularly new innovations toward absolutely function of three high school obligations. *Career plateauing* can be happened on part of and/or on a whole *area plateauing*. This article analysed *career plateauing* problem toward lecturerer who achieves functional professor.

The goal analyzing lecturer's *career plateauing* with this professor functional level achievement is to enhance, to reinforce, to empower lecturer who has or has not experienced chronic and light career plateauing. The available benefit covers three things as follows: (1) Becoming *feedback* for lecturer who has achieved professor function in order to be resilience in performing his task, to get on retired time, (2) To be one of valuable source for lecturer who do not achieve professor functional function yet, in his career journey dynamic, (3) To be valuable source for institution and leader in building lecturer's career, maintaining conducive working atmosfer, and surviving as well as promoting the institutional productivity in accordance with vision and mission.

2 Research Method

This article is produced from literatures study. Literatures study presents about comprehension, causal factor, impact, and handling over lecturer's *career plateau* with professor functional function reach.

3 Results and Discussion

3.1 Definition of *Career Plateau*

Career is position sequence occupied. *Career* is all occupation owned by anyone and performed during career life (Handoko, 1998) [3]. *Plateau* meant a grade without progress experienced by individual (Menanti et al, 2023a; 2023b; Mataro, 2021) [9]. *Career plateau* is grade experienced by individu/lecturer/clerk/worker/and others who evaluates his self experiencing handicafé or no opportunity to progress in career. *Career plateau* is a situation in a working institution, having opportunity to achieve particular career phase vertically almost not at all (stagnant). Referring to the view substance of Ference *et al* (1977) *career plateau* could be explained as a condition in an individual career *where the likelihood of additional promotion was categorized very low*) (Yang, W.N., Niven, K. and Johnson, S. 2019) [12].

Departure from definition of *career plateau* above, if the definition is placed on lecturer context who has achieved professor functional job, then professor's *career plateau* can be meant as a grade experienced by professor who considers himself not obtaining chance to change toward a better career progress, either vertically or horizontally, so that professor feels his function as a routine, monotonous, boring function.

3.2 Professor's *Career Plateau* Type

Professor probably faces particularly *plateau* type, of two type *plateaus*. Those plateau types were proposed by Veiga, 1981; Bardwick, 1986; Feldman & Weitz, 1988 (in Yang, W.N., Niven, K. and Johnson, S. 2019) [12], namely *hierarchical ones* (*a lack promotion in organization*) and *job content* (stagnant, not accept responsibility or challenge job). *A lack promotion* in high school institution, can be opportunity finding and/or increasing the structural function, becoming particular activity head in institution or in faculty, or other challenge and interesting activities, almost not achieved. This thus professor is concentrated on routine function obligatory to meet Lecturer's Performance Weight implementing three high school obligations (in teaching, researching, doing public services). These high school three obligations were considered by professor related to, no more challenges. On the other hand, professor is experiencing *career plateau* type *job content*.

Other opinion proposed that there are two types of *career plateau*, namely plateau in *structural* and *content*. In *plateauing structural*, Worker individually becoming unable to increase further toward organizational pyramide structure, penambahan promosi hierarchial promotion addition, highly slow. At *content-plateaued*, clerk/worker feels irresistible, not interesting in their occupation, and feels unable to be achieved (career.inresearchnet.com/career-development/career-plateau/). *Career plateau* can also be viewed from gender. Research result conducted by Djamilah (2023) toward 173 persons as research samples, averagely age 26,44 years old, working period between 1-10 year, indicated that man and woman workers's were not different. When placed on professor, then man professor and woman professor were probably similar experiencing *career plateauing* or contrarily not experiencing *career plateauing* [2].

Henderson and Milstein (2003) elaborated *plateauing area* to be three areas, namely *content area*, *structure area*, and *life area*. *Content area* was to consider function as a routine; *structure area* was insight that organization/institution do not provide opportunity to grow

further and function and duty promotion. *Life area* was feeling that life was so easy to predict and unfulfilled [4].

Yang, WN; Niken, K and Johnshon (2019) had conducted systematic review toward number of literatures about career plateau that had been recognized since 1970s. There were founded 72 literatures. The systematic review showed that individual's career plateau individuals holistically report undesirable affective results (e.g. less of satisfaction and well being) including other unexpected work results (less of work performance and organization commitment and enhanced turnover intentions), and that these results can be described by the fact plateaued individuals perceives a lack of motivation from their organization. In detail, the systematic review recommended that the impacts of career plateaued are moderated by several determinant factors, namely: the extent to which individuals the both sides between organization and member collaboratively apply accurately strategies to counteract the plateau. Also the extent to which individuals care on what is being promoted. Contextually on factors causing it, proactivity and additional responsibilities provided by related organization negative toward career plateau. Based on those research findings, Reviews conducted by Yang et al on scientific literatures since 1970 up to now adays offered managerial implications and recommendations about the future research direction on career plateau [12].

3.3 Discussion

Plateau condition experienced by professor should be had attitude positively bu professor by watching achievements reached during this time and professor could play role as professional and resilience educator model primarily for younger lecturer and educator. Beside that, professors initiated professor communities in order to achieve more exelency than before to achieve the peak performance namely world class professor.

There are three causal factors of *career plateauing*, namely demographic factors such as working period in organization, education, age, gender; personal orientation factor like desire to learn, career exploration, career planing, and working involvement; and working area perception factor such as peak management support, employer's support, and colleague's support (Allen *et al*, 1999 in Djamilah, 2021) [2]. It can be explained with some examples following: Usually age approximating older age more appears *career plateau* than age with still highly working productivity. Undesire to learn, but must learn extending skill in order to be able to perform function, then appearing *career plateauing*. If management support is good, employer's support is high, and colleague supports, then *career plateauing* decreases or not happened.

The professor cause is experiencing *career plateau*, it is able to have source from internal and external factors. The factor sourcing from profesor's internal was differentiated of coming from work world and related to work world. Coming from *life plateau* such as broken home life, other party's involvement in order to disturb household harmonization, inconvenience home, these three examples appear *career plateauing*. Factor having a source from working world, coming from institution/organization, such as institutional rule highly tends to institution, organization culture is created bad, employer's leadership is unfair.

Internal and external factors causing the appearance of *career plateauing* toward professor can be described in details as follows:

- a. Internal factor of professor:
 1. Professor was feeling tired and bored, so *career plateau* occurred, although he/she likes the done work. This condition was occurred after professor through enough long and heavy journey to achieve professor's functional duty, moreover because of before that, they had worked hard to complete doctoral program education. But this journey and reaction appeared alternative following:
 - a) Professor feels tired and bored, then *stagnant* in career occurred.
 - b) Although feeling tired, professor feels satisfied because of achieving his hope peak career. This work satisfaction reinforced work motivation energy and stronger working behaviour. On the other words, it does not appear *plateauing* in career.
 - c) Professor feeling satisfied on his career expectation, was probably not motivated to perform more extended, challenge career, because desiring relaxation in performing his work obligatory duty and in his daily life, so it is not enough to occur *plateau*. It is necessary to propose that right now to achieve professor functional duty, lecturer must has doctoral education and through lecturer functional duty (rank III/c – III/d), then increasing to rank classification IV/a, IV/b, IV/c (chief lecturer), and its peak achieves professor functional duty (rank IV/d – IV/e). Meanwhile viewed from achievement of professor functional duty, professor has to fulfill a number of three duty works in campus in accordance with available rule and to indicate highly self-integrity.
 2. Professor has been viewing no other interesting, available, work opportunities in institution.
 3. No designed opportunity served by institution to reach for the job desired by professor.
 4. Professor does not have certain expertise required to perform available task or task offered by employer.
 5. Professor feels insuitable to employer's leadership style.
 6. Professor is not motivated because of considering their income as professor has been enough.
 7. Professor experiences body endurance decrease, so this physic condition becomes trouble to do activities like in time of younger age and minimize motive for achievement further. Based on life cycle phase, professor is individual including in middle age (age 40-60 year) to older years old (age 60 over) (Jahja, 2011) [6]. Hurlock (1980) divided life span on earlier lengthened age (between age 60 – 70 years) and lengthened age (starting age 70 years – death). To madya age, there was trend judging them already too old to study new skill (Hurlock, 1980) [5], not only physic problem. This can disturbs professor's involvement that makes him to be has to collaborate with younger lecturer. For example, in skill to empower the working technology in the office.
- b. Factors sourcing from outside of professor, among them:
 1. Institution/high school does not apply rotation system. Rotation was usually done after working in the same place during about 5 year.
 2. Institution/high school does not has high working structure level, so unable to prepare extended occupation choices.

3. Professor is offered to career insuitable with his expertise
4. Professor is offered on career insuitable to his achievement reach.
5. Professor feels as *out group*, in order to not appear working conveniece.
6. Task demands to meet the rule, are so many (not efficient). Forintances in official administration report and academic activity administration report.
7. Professor does not have enough time to develop himself, such as studying new literature, because of administration responsibility demand (see 6).
8. Professor does not finds family support.

Career plateau is often associated to impact negative, although it is really to imply positive impact as well. Possitive impact of *career plateau* among it is:

- a. *Career plateau* experience becomes reflection that will stimulates to change self to be more resilience personal, easy to move on from difficulty or pressure/suffering situations.
- b. *Career plateau* experience will reinforces self-control so that professor is not trapped in longterm *career plateau* situation.

Meanwhile *career plateau* negative impact bases on some experts opinions can be identified as follows:

- a. Decreasing working moral
- b. Minimizing work satisfaction
- c. Experiencing stress
- d. Weakening career development activities
- e. Decreasing loyalty
- f. Increasing absence.
- g. Self retirement psychologically and/or physically of occupation.
- h. Decreasing performance
- i. Decreasing product quality and work productivity
- j. Disturbing health

Impact direction of *career plateauing* defends upon working goal. Professor working as soul call, so its *career plateau condition* is not going on too long time period time, and bouncing back to be resilience self. When professor stronger orients to welfare (salary), then *career plateau* is facilitated so well because of the fulfilment of relatively big welfare founded by professor. But on the contrary, this large welfare can probably minimizes motivation for work and work better. Satisfaction feeling on income causes not liking to work hard like before achieving the status of professor.

Based on elaboration on part 'impact of *career plateau* to professor' above, writer concluded that *career plateau* condition impacts negatively on individu in this chance namely professor, and impact on organization/institution. This negative impact exceeds positive impact. Hereby to minimize or to loose *career plateau* needs professor's effort and institution, employer as well as human resources staff. This can be described that professor as individuals in an organization university have to be creative to perform his job description that will provide valuable contributions for the university and on the other side, employer collaboratively appreciates all professor efforts by giving certain valuable rewards for their life. This condition will appears more meaningfull life for professor and their families.

To cope with *career plateau*, it is started by identifying earlier individu/clerk/official's indication that has or has not impacted negatively *career plateau*, then determining causal

factor, and next to decide solving effort. Lecturer experiencing *career plateau* can be observed among them from the existence of trapped feeling in duty and position, continuously boring, did not find job satisfaction, and working productivity decreases. So many phenomenons in career life showing individuals experiencing career plateau. Those phenomenons is absolutely interesting to study in depth and in details.

On this limited space, directly analysis focussing on effort to minimize/cope with *career plateau* experienced by professor. This effort covers anything that can be done by professor, and institution or employer parties.

- a. Professor's efforts: First, professor reinforces and directs satisfied feeling on achievement reach to positive direction as professor. Able to be done with grateful on founded reach. Be grateful becomes working energy to be resilience self, namely, which in the process of coping with, changing, identifying trouble by the way of handling trouble situation with healthy intellectual function and good social support (Richardson, 2002); self owning ability to be resilience (move on) back successfully, although risk exposure strong (Krovetz, 1999); self owning ability to evaluate, to cope with, to change unavoidable life sufferings (Grotberg, 2004). Second, professor efforts to like available jobs or provided by institution/employer. It can be growth by watching interesting things of task/duty. Third, professor extended new skill in accordance with technology and scientific development, in order to be able to hand over available task/job or provided by institution/employer. Fourth, professor innovated self in order to adaptable to rule erected by institution. Fiveth, professor efforts to adapt self to work colleague and employer's character, so this will appears support and increases work resilience to achieve the achievement furthermore. Sixth, professor reaches the full achievement not only to working world, but also completing it to the other domains like more involving with family, building relaxing interests such as living milieu lovers group, and following community activities such as cycling community, health cardiovascular sport community, travelling, and following the entertaining other recreation activities.
- b. Institution employer's some effort: First, institution applies job rotation system. Second, employer did *job enlargement*, and to add quality as well as professor's job complexity (*job enrichment*). This way will loose the feeling of working routinely and monotonously. Third, employer applies accurately leadership style for professor's age and working period, so professorship pride is maintained. Fourth, employer places on task division for professor as it should be, so there are not happened self-esteem disturbance between professors and younger lecturers, structural lecturers, and employer. Fivth, employer creates comfortable working atmosfer, strengthens working relationship and harmounize family relationship in the working professionalism edge. For example through informal coversations for institutional and all civitas academica progress. *coffee morning*, *breakfast* together, sport with employers, social gathering in campus, and so on. Sixth, with employer, employer provides distributed career opportunity to a part of persons/groups, and fair, although this was often difficult to do in practice, because subordinat's desires extends available chances, so disturbing policy and employer' policies. Seventh, employer increases professor's attachment toward institution by the way like:
- c. Strengthening that professor's position is highly needed by institution, by judgement that professor has already had their knowledge and skill expertise so well, indicated by achievement of doctoral education level, and working period about 25-35 years.

1. Involving in critical decision making
2. Asking, also requiring professors to present constructive idea/opinion
3. Signing specific advantage and each professor's achievement, then appreciating them.
4. Providing attention to professor performing high *organizational citizenship behavior*.
5. Employer uncovers objective data (fact) to know professor's self descriptions related to job for a task, decision.

It was very interesting to watch the conclusions drawn by Yang, WN, Niven K (2019) in their scientific reviews of theoretical framework that the regularly review during 40 years of research on career plateau and reflects what has been investigated in the field and where further investigation is needed. Refer to social exchange theory, it could take benefit to express how career plateau (focussed on hierarchial and job content plateaus) connects to work job performance results such as job satisfaction, psychological well being, institutional commitment, turn over intentions and work performance. On the next era, previously review results offered clarification for the impact of career plateau, and highlighting necessary conditions under which these impacts are reinforced or minimized, including nothing factors that hypothesizes career plateau. Referring to the review's results, reviewer motivated experts to focus on investigating other features of career plateau, to find out variables of other potential mediators and moderators, and to probe other variables that might facilitate clarify the relationships between related factors and career plateau.

4 Conclusions

- a. Condition of *career plateauing* can and cannot happens toward lecturer with professor functional function achievement. Thus also timeframe if happened *career plateauing*. *Career plateauing* can occurs in range of quick time, enough long, and chronic.
- b. Condition of *career plateauing* must be responded and efforted its solving by related to professor, employer, and institution, as well as work colleagues. This all parties work as an effective working system, which becomes professor as resilience personal model.
- c. The solution of *career plateauing* watches *plateau* time (quick, enough long, chronic); plateau area (*structure area*, *content area*, and *life area*), age (madya age about 40 up to 50 years, and older age about 51 up to over).
- d. The solution of *career plateauing* involves institutional rule, watching on employer's prudent, applying disseminating strategy, judging fairness, and maintaining professor's pride.
- e. Employer's decision is done based on factual data, professor's moral integrity, and professor's competence appropriateness, for kind of all civitas academica, and maintaining harmonize working atmosphere, and academic university climate.
- f. Professor develops self consistently and continuously in responding scientific challenge and newest technology, in order to find admittance up to right now. Infact, self development on these activities is to challenge, interesting, and often needing innovations (not often monotonous) although limited to functional duty.

- g. Lecturer with professor functional achievement has wise attitude to respond psychological and experienced physic dynamic, that can causes *career plateauing*. Striking to stay becoming resilient personal is important example for younger lecturers, and for whom do not achieve professor functional duty yet.
- h. Institution employer reinforces institutional rule and applying the accurately leadership style, in accordance with factors which causes the appearance of *career plateauing*.
- i. Causal factors of *career plateauing* toward professor, can be same and different, although it can generally be categorized . Thus, response to this *career plateauing* involves generally causal factor and not ignore individual character.
- j. It is necessary to discuss about solution of lecturer's administrative duties, with hope so that lecturer has much more time to develop, to update, and finally for institution and society progress.

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