

**RESEARCH PAPER****An Investigation of Academic Inbreeding and Professionalism in Pakistani Universities****¹Mehmooda Awan,* ²Mukhtiar Ali Shar and ³Muhammad Imran**

1. PhD Scholar, Department of Education, Lahore College for Women University, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan
2. Master of Laws (LLM) in Judicial Studies, Yong Pung How School of Law, Singapore Management University, Singapore
3. PhD Scholar, Department of Educational Research & Assessment, University of Okara, Punjab, Pakistan

***Corresponding Author**

Mehmooda.tania@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This Quantitative study investigated the university teachers' professionalism based on the inbreeding. For this purpose, 177 university teachers have been selected from four universities (including two universities from the public sector and two from private sector) across Pakistan. The sample was representative of both the males and females as well. For the purpose of data collection, a close-ended five-points Likert's rating scale has been developed by the researcher(s) comprising 26 items under five categories including Effective Teaching Practices; Change and Innovation; Networking and Collaboration; Professional Development & Behavior-focused Strategies. This instrument has been developed by the researcher(s) and validated by taking the experts' opinion. Similarly, it has been pilot-tested for ensuring its reliability. It has scored .90 Cronbach's Alpha which is regarded as highly reliable one. Furthermore, the data have been collected while visiting the teachers in person. The collected data have been analyzed with the help of Descriptive Statistics including Percentage Scores, Mean, Standard Deviation and Independent Sample t-test. The results revealed that Inbred faculty members scored lower than the Non-Inbred Faculty members.

Keywords: Academic Inbreeding, Non-Inbred Teachers, Pakistani Universities, Professionalism, University Teachers

Introduction

The purpose of Higher Education is multi-dimensional in terms of being an institution of discovering, creating and disseminating new knowledge. The transformation of Higher Education in response to the changing social, economic, political and policy imperative has also influenced the academic roles and identities of the teaching faculties, both within and beyond the individual, the department and the institution (Gorelova and Lovakov, 2016). These changes have shaped the academic work as course offerings, curriculum design, assessment standards, and professional development needs (Horta et al., 2021). The best teachers are often those who have created new concepts and worked at the cutting edge of their field. In Pakistan, research and speculation in the area of Higher Education has been growing at a rapid rate (Alipova et al., 2018). There are several studies done on the curriculum design, teaching methodologies, student learning, policy and administration, however, the phenomenon of academic inbreeding which has long been seen as detrimental to scholarly activity, scientific output and the fostering of networks has not been studied yet. Moreover, majority of the prestigious drivers of academic circle in Pakistan are unaware of this term academic inbreeding (Altbach et al., 2015).

Academic Inbreeding refers to the hiring of graduates to teach in the same department from which they obtained their training. It is commonly disapproved but widely practiced (seeber, 2021). The etymology of the word inbreeding suggests that it was adopted

from biology where it means to breed from unions between closely related individuals” and to develop within. Biology studies mainly indicate inbreeding is harmful to the evolution of species (Crişan, 2019).

The corresponding practice of academic inbreeding has also been denounced as detrimental to scholarship and academia as early as the 1900s. Its roots in biological mating practices make academic inbreeding a socially charged concept; however, it is widely used in academia and policy making circles to discuss the recruitment practice where universities hire their own graduates to fill academic staff positions (Torre et al., 2021).

Literature Review

The concept of academic inbreeding (also known as institutional or intellectual inbreeding) has several dimensions leading to different interpretations by different scholars. It can be divided into pure inbred (Inbred faculty that have always spent their learning and academic career in the same university, immobile), secondly, Silver-corded (Academics currently working in the same university where the doctoral degree was awarded, but started the academic career elsewhere after the completion of the doctoral degree and Non-inbreds which means academics working in an university other than the one where the doctoral degree was awarded and worked on several universities during the academic career (Heinze et al., 2009). It is interesting to explore that many studies done on academic inbreeding proposed the negative impact of the phenomenon, however, vast literature supported the silver-corded inbreds to have a positive impact on the universities progress and prestige. The main reason of this is the having an opportunity of mobility which increases the exposure of candidates and they are expected to bring change and innovation to their mother institutions (Tavares, 2019). Authors such as Caplow and McGee (1958) stressed that in opposition to pure inbreds, silver-corded scholars would be highly productive and competitive academics exactly because they proved themselves worthy elsewhere, securing the right to return to their Alma Mater (Horta, 2013).

There are several studies being conducted internationally on the academic inbreeding concept and evaluated it in the light of different situations however, little emphasis is made on the comparison of academic inbreeding in public and private institutions. In China, an analysis of academic inbreeding and its effects on higher education system the author arguments on inbreeding’s advent age with case studies and analyses the long term effect of it on academic institutions and as well as its holistic effect on national academic system (İnanç & Tuncer, 2011). Charles Eliot observed that it seemed “natural, but not wise” for a university to hire its own graduates. Many studies focused on the academic inbreeding in relation to faculty’s scholarly performance and number of publications in different journals. However, among several studies done on academic inbreeding internationally, for example its impact on scientific productivity and scholarly performance, no research is done on the impact of inbreeding on professionalism of the faculty (Horta, 2011).

This study will be focusing on the comparative analysis of inbred and non-inbred faculty’s professionalism in public and private universities. The term professionalism according to the scholarly debate has two versions, portrayed as “old professionalism” and “new professionalism”. These two approaches emerged upon the changing social, political and cultural circumstances (Alipova & Lovakov, 2018). However, these two approaches are not completely opposite to each other. Sachs (2003) who developed this classification differentiates these two approaches as those with old professionalism is concerned with; a) exclusive membership, b) conservative practices, c) self-interest, d) external regulation, e) slow to change, and f) reactive. The characteristics of new professionalism are; a) inclusive membership, b) public ethical code of practice, c) collaborative and collegial, d) activist oriented, e) flexible and progressive, f) responsive to change, g) self-regulating, h) policy active, i) enquiry-oriented and j) knowledge building (Kozikoğlu, 2016). Therefore,

professionalism is a broad term and the professionalism variable used in this study is based on different dimensions including effective teaching skills, change and innovation, networking and collaboration, professional development and behavior focused strategies. This study explored the academic inbreeding through a new lens of professionalism and also focusing on the difference in the level of inbreeding in public and private sectors of Lahore, has not been studied previously.

In academics, inbreeding is a practice of hiring former students of an institution as faculty members. The person would start job responsibilities in a familiar environment, without having any exposure globally. This faculty is called inbred faculty and the knowledge mechanism of such faculty is supposed to be limited. Whereas, non-inbred faculty coming from a different training environment is supposed to be more knowledgeable in regard to their professional competency and therefore, likely to bring change and innovation to the institution (Laufer. 2020) Despite of these drawbacks this practice is widely spread, a few of the studies claim inbred faculty to have strong institutional loyalty. Therefore, a study which investigates inbred and non-inbred faculty over the variable of professionalism will provide some insights to examine this practice from a different angle.

The researcher has undertaken present study to explore one of the strenuously debated criteria for faculty hiring called the academic inbreeding which is commonly being practiced in Pakistani universities, but no visible study is found on the consequences of this practice. This study will not only provide evidence to test the validity of previous research findings on academic inbreeding but will also provide insights to Administration and concerned bodies of Higher Education and private management in regard to the formal and informal hiring practices. As found in different studies done on inbreeding proof this process creating hindrance in terms of bringing “change and innovation” to the institution (Horta 2013, Yudkevich 2014), and the reason to this is inbreds (university’s own graduate teachers) being less mobile and non-inbreds (faculty hired from outside) bring new innovations to the institutions. In several universities of Pakistan, the faculty is not permitted to give visiting lectures in any other university, which make them further immobile however, Dutton (1980) shows that effects of immobility are stronger than inbreeding effects. A few of the studies showed positive effect of inbreeding as inbreds possess stronger institutional loyalty. This study will give prominent evidence and guidelines in order to think upon this practice and to bring change and innovation to institutions and more effective hiring policies.

Operational Definition of Important terms

Academic Inbreeding

The process of hiring former students of an institution as faculty members.

Professionalism

Professionalism is a multi-dimensional structure consisting of one’s attitudes and behavior towards his/her job and it refers to achievement of high level standards. The multi-dimensional model of professionalism used in this study consisted of effective teaching practices, change and innovation, professional development, networking and collaboration and behavior focused strategies (Morichika & Shibayama, 2015).

Inbred Faculty

The faculty which is hired in the same university where they completed their last achieved degree.

Non-Inbred Faculty

The faculty which is hired in any other institution and not the one where they achieved their last degree.

Change and Innovation

The new ways and ideas which teachers show in their professional roles and which they forward to the institution.

Knowledge Stagnation

The circulation of the in-house knowledge in the institution without any new, advanced knowledge.

Historical Background of the term Academic Inbreeding

The Harvard President Charles Eliot warned the institutions regarding academic inbreeding in his famous book *University Administration* (1908) says, it is natural, but not wise, for a college or university to recruit its faculties chiefly from its own graduates- natural, because these graduates are well known to the selecting authorities, since they have been under observation for years; unwise, because inbreeding has grave dangers for a university, and also for technical schools and naval and military academies (Machacek, 2021).

Although Charles Eliot declared academic inbreeding as having grave dangers for the institution but in his book there's no evidence or further explanation of why and how inbreeding is dangerous (Macfarlane & Jefferson, 2021).

Hypothesis

The hypothesis of the study was as under:

H₀: There is no significant difference between the 'Professionalism' of 'Inbred and Non-inbred Faculty' members of public and private universities.

Material and Methods

This was a Quantitative study which has been conducted to investigate the university teachers' professionalism based on the inbreeding. For this purpose, 177 university teachers have been selected from four universities (including two universities from the public sector and two from private sector) across Pakistan. The sample was representative of both the males and females as well. For the purpose of data collection, a close-ended five-points Likert's rating scale has been developed by the researcher(s) comprising 26 items under five categories including *Effective Teaching Practices; Change and Innovation; Networking and Collaboration; Professional Development & Behavior-focused Strategies*. This instrument has been developed by the researcher(s) and validated by taking the experts' opinion. Similarly, it has been pilot-tested for ensuring its reliability. It has scored .90 Cronbach's Alpha which is regarded as highly reliable one. Furthermore, the data have been collected while visiting the teachers in person. The collected data have been analyzed with the help of Descriptive Statistics including Percentage Scores, Mean, Standard Deviation and Independent Sample *t*-test. The detail is as under:

Results and Discussion

Table 1
Participants Perceptions regarding Inbreeding & Professionalism

Sr No.	Item	Disagree %	Slightly Disagree %	Undecided %	Slightly Agree %	Agree %	M	SD
--------	------	------------	---------------------	-------------	------------------	---------	---	----

1.	I believe teaching and curriculum design need to be focused on developing student's critical thinking skills, team-work and communication skills.	5.1	1.7	8.5	31.1	53.7	4.26	1.04
2.	I prefer giving real-life examples during my lectures.	1.1	4.0	10.7	20.3	63.8	4.41	0.91
3.	In order to create meaningful learning environment, I prefer student discussions.	.6	4.5	9.0	30.5	55.4	4.35	0.86
4.	I prefer to listen to students' feedback on my lectures.	.6	4.5	17.5	23.2	54.2	4.25	0.94
5.	I like to perform in a new creative way.	.6	6.2	9.0	33.3	50.8	4.27	0.90
6.	I like to teach in a new and creative way.	.6	7.3	10.2	28.2	53.7	4.27	0.95
7.	If I feel my certain teaching style is not appropriate, I change and improve it.	2.3	4.0	16.9	28.2	48.6	4.16	0.99
8.	I like to put forward new ideas to my organization.	1.7	6.8	15.3	37.3	39.0	4.05	0.98
9.	I like to engage collaborating and networking activities with my colleagues.	1.1	5.1	22.6	26.0	45.2	4.09	0.99
10.	I prefer integrating new technology in my lessons.	2.8	3.4	13.0	38.4	42.4	4.14	0.96
11.	I prefer flexible lectures instead of planned lectures.	6.2	6.8	19.8	33.9	33.3	3.81	1.15
12.	I like to engage in collaborating and networking activities with my colleagues.	4.5	5.6	19.2	33.9	36.7	3.92	1.09
13.	I attend local seminars and conferences regularly.	6.2	7.9	21.5	33.3	31.1	3.75	1.16
14.	I attend international seminars occasionally.	2.8	11.9	16.4	34.5	34.5	3.85	1.10
15.	I reflect on my teaching strategies with my colleagues.	2.3	5.1	16.4	38.4	37.9	4.04	0.97
16.	Sometimes I like to observe my colleagues teaching strategies.	1.7	6.8	10.2	35.6	45.8	4.16	0.97
17.	I regularly follow latest research in my area of inquiry.	.6	10.2	14.1	33.3	41.8	4.05	1.00
18.	I often evaluate my learning during a professional development.	2.8	6.8	13.0	29.9	47.5	4.12	1.05
19.	I believe higher education teachers have more orientation towards research nowadays.	3.4	4.0	14.7	40.7	37.3	4.04	0.99
20.	I integrate teaching and learning, curriculum and assessment in new ways.	4.0	9.6	15.8	32.8	37.9	3.90	1.12
21.	I have delegated specific time to reading and writing on regular basis.	10.2	8.5	16.9	33.3	31.1	3.66	1.27

22.	I have written a good number of publications.	4.0	5.1	14.7	34.5	41.8	4.05	1.06
23.	I am aware of different student learning styles.	6.8	13.6	10.7	38.4	30.5	3.72	1.22
24.	I like to establish specific goals for my performance.	2.3	5.6	15.8	35.6	40.7	4.06	0.99
25.	I make a point to keep a track of how well I am doing at work.	1.7	8.5	14.7	33.9	41.2	4.04	1.02
26.	When I have successfully completed a task, I often reward myself with something I like.	5.1	2.8	24.9	31.1	36.2	3.90	1.08

The results shows that that 53.7% teachers were agreed with the statement “I believe teaching and curriculum design need to be focused on developing student’s critical thinking skills, team-work and communication skills”, whereas 1.7% teachers were slightly disagreed. Similarly, it shown that 63.7% teachers were agreed with the statement “I prefer giving real-life examples during my lectures”, whereas 1.1% teachers were slightly disagreed. On the same pattern, 63.7% teachers were agreed with the statement “In order to create meaningful learning environment, I prefer student discussions”, whereas 0.6% teachers were disagreed. Similarly, 54.2% teachers were agreed with the statement “I prefer to listen to students’ feedback on my lectures”, whereas 0.6% teachers were disagreed. Similarly, 50.8% teachers were agreed with the statement “I like to perform in a new creative way”, whereas 0.6% teachers were disagreed. On the same pattern, 53.7% teachers were agreed with the statement “I like to teach in a new and creative way”, whereas 0.6% teachers were disagreed. Similarly, 48.6% teachers were agreed with the statement “If I feel my certain teaching style is not appropriate, I change and improve it”, whereas 2.3% teachers were disagreed. On the same pattern, 39.0% teachers were agreed with the statement “I like to put forward new ideas to my organization”, whereas 1.7% teachers were disagreed. Similarly, 45.2% teachers were agreed with the statement “I like to engage collaborating and networking activities with my colleagues”, whereas 1.1% teachers were disagreed. On the same pattern, 42.4% teachers were agreed with the statement “I prefer integrating new technology in my lessons”, whereas 2.8% teachers were disagreed. Similarly, 33.9% teachers were slightly agreed with the statement “I prefer flexible lectures instead of planned lectures”, whereas 6.2% teachers were disagreed. Similarly, 33.9% teachers were slightly agreed with the statement “I like to engage in collaborating and networking activities with my colleagues”, whereas 6.2% teachers were disagreed. One the same patter, 33.3% teachers were slightly agreed with the statement “I attend local seminars and conferences regularly”, whereas 6.2% teachers were disagreed. The results further shown that 34.5% teachers were slightly agreed with the statement “I attend international seminars occasionally”, whereas 2.8% teachers were disagreed. Similarly, 38.4% teachers were slightly agreed with the statement “I reflect on my teaching strategies with my colleagues”, whereas 2.3% teachers were disagreed. On the same pattern, 45.8% teachers were agreed with the statement “I reflect on my teaching strategies with my colleagues”, whereas 1.7% teachers were disagreed. Similarly, 41.8% teachers were agreed with the statement “I regularly follow latest research in my area of inquiry”, whereas 0.6% teachers were disagreed. On the same pattern, 47.5% teachers were agreed with the statement “I often evaluate my learning during a professional development”, whereas 2.8% teachers were disagreed. Similarly, 40.7% teachers were slightly agreed with the statement “I believe higher education teachers have more orientation towards research nowadays”, whereas 3.4% teachers were disagreed. The results further revealed that 37.9% teachers were agreed with the statement “I integrate teaching and learning, curriculum and assessment in new ways”, whereas 4.0% teachers were disagreed. Similarly, 33.3% teachers were slightly agreed with the statement “I have delegated specific time to reading and writing on regular basis”, whereas 8.5% teachers were slightly disagreed. On the same pattern, 41.8% teachers

were agreed with the statement “I have written a good number of publications”, whereas 4.0% teachers were disagreed. Similarly, 38.4% teachers were slightly agreed with the statement “I am aware of different student learning styles”, whereas 6.8% teachers were disagreed. It has been further revealed that 40.7% teachers were agreed with the statement “I like to establish specific goals for my performance”, whereas 2.3% teachers were disagreed. Similarly, 41.2% teachers were agreed with the statement “I make a point to keep a track of how well I am doing at work”, whereas 1.7% teachers were disagreed. On the same pattern, 36.2% teachers were agreed with the statement “When I have successfully completed a task, I often reward myself with something I like”, whereas 2.1% teachers were slightly disagreed.

Table 2
Independent Samples t-Test for Professionalism of Inbred and Non-inbred faculty in public and private universities

Variable	Faculty Type	N	M	SD	df	t-value	Sig.
Professionalism	Inbred	72	102.37	16.67	175	2.416	0.02
	Non-Inbred	105	108.01	12.93			

The results of Table 2 shows that Inbred faculty members scored lower than the Non-Inbred Faculty members with $M=102.37$, $SD=16.67$ as compared to Non-inbred faculty members' scores $M=108.01$, $SD=12.93$ whereas $t= 2.416$ and $df=175$ and $p<.05$. Therefore, the H_0 was rejected. Hence, it was concluded that there is a significance difference between the ‘Professionalism’ of ‘Inbred and Non-inbred Faculty’ members of the universities.

Conclusion

This was a Quantitative study which has been conducted to investigate the university teachers' professionalism based on the inbreeding. For this purpose, 177 university teachers have been selected from four universities (including two universities from the public sector and two from private sector) across Pakistan. The sample was representative of both the males and females as well. For the purpose of data collection, a close-ended five-points Likert's rating scale. The data have been collected while visiting the teachers in person. The collected data have been analyzed with the help of Descriptive Statistics including Percentage Scores, Mean, Standard Deviation and Independent Sample *t*-test. It has been concluded based on the results that Inbred faculty members scored lower than the Non-Inbred Faculty members. Hence, it was concluded that there is a significance difference between the ‘Professionalism’ of ‘Inbred and Non-inbred Faculty’ members of the universities.

Recommendations

Based on results, it has been recommended that the ratio of the academic inbreeding should be determined in a way that the overall professionalism of the university may not be affected in case of more inbred teachers.

References

- Alipova, O., & Lovakov, A. (2018). Academic inbreeding and publication activities of Russian faculty. *Tertiary Education and Management*, 24(1), 6682.
- Altbach, P. G., Yudkevich, M., & Rumbley, L. E. (2015). Academic inbreeding: Local challenge, global problem. *Asia Pasific Education Review*, 16, 317–330.
- Crişan, A. N. (2019). Higher education and the challenges of postmodern society. *Journal of Educational Science and Psychology*, 9(2), 10–16.
- De la Torre, E. M., Perez-Esparrells, C., & Romero-Madrid, T. (2021). Academic inbreeding in the Spanish public university system: A review of its institutional and context determinants. *Culture and Education*, 33(2), 229–258.
- Gorelova, O., & Lovakov, A. (2016). Academic inbreeding and research productivity of Russian faculty members. *Tertiary Education and Management*, 22(2), 149–170.
- Heinze, T., Shapira, P., Rogers, J. D., & Senker, J. M. (2009). Organizational and institutional influences on creativity in scientific research. *Research Policy*, 38, 610–623.
- Horta, H. (2013). Deepening our understanding of academic inbreeding effects on research information exchange and scientific output: new insights for academic based research. *Higher Education*, 65, 87–510.
- Horta, H., Meoli, M., & Santos, J. M. (2021). Academic inbreeding and choice of strategic research approaches. *Higher Education Quarterly*, 1–26.
- Horta, H., Sato, M., & Yonezawa, A. (2011). Academic inbreeding: Exploring its characteristics and rationale in Japanese universities using a qualitative perspective. *Asia Pacific Education Review*, 12, 35–44
- İnanç, Ö. & Tuncer, O. (2011). The effects of academic inbreeding on scientific effectiveness. *Scientometrics*, 88, 885–898
- Kozikoğlu, İ. (2016). Academic Inbreeding: A Conceptual Analysis. *International Journal of Social Science*, 49, 349–357
- Laufer, M. (2020). Crossing academic borders: exploring the role of social capital in academic hiring. *Comparative Education*, 56(3), 1–19.
- Macfarlane, B., & Jefferson, A. E. (2021). The closed academy? Guild power and academic social class. *Higher Education Quarterly*, 33, 1–12.
- Machacek, V., Srholec, M., Ferreira, M. R., Robinson-Garcia, & Costas, R. (2021). Researchers' institutional mobility: Bibliometric evidence on academic inbreeding and internationalization. *Science and Public Policy*. 49(1), 85-97.
- Morichika, N., & Shibayama, S. (2015). Impact of inbreeding on scientific productivity: A case study of a Japanese university department. *Research Evaluation*, 24, 146–157
- Seeber, M., & Mampaey, J. (2021). How do university systems' features affect academic inbreeding? Career rules and language requirements in France, Germany, Italy and Spain. *Higher Education Quarterly*, 76(1), 1–16.
- Tavares, O., Sin, C., & Lança, V. (2019). Inbreeding and research productivity among sociology PhD holders in Portugal. *Minerva*, 57, 373–390