

A changing career world? An empirical analysis on job mobility among managers and professionals in Germany

Ralph Kattenbach¹, Janine Lücke¹, Florian Schramm¹,
Markus Latzke², Bernadette Loacker², Wolfgang Mayrhofer², Thomas M. Schneidhofer²

¹University of Hamburg, Germany

²WU Vienna University of Economics and Business, Austria

Herbstworkshop der wissenschaftlichen Kommission Personal

Outline

- 1** Boundaryless and protean career and their critiques
- 2** Hypotheses and study description
- 3** Results and Discussion

1 Starting point

“the present is always an exciting, challenging time to be contrasted with a stable past” (Collin, 1998)

- **On-going discussion on the extent of changes in career paths**
 - Bureaucratic modes of regulation are still part of post-bureaucratic work regimes
 - Structural factors like labour-market situation are neglected in agency-based concepts
 - New-career concepts are developed in the Anglo-American context
 - Rather theoretical than empirical contributions in literature
- **Aims of our study**
 - Providing empirical evidence for the German case
 - showing the impact of time effects and economic cyclical effects



2 Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: The change towards a post-fordistic regime has not lead to a general increase of job mobility among managers and professionals in Germany

- 1a: The last 25 years have neither resulted in increasing external nor decreasing internal job changes among managers and professionals
- 1b: Job mobility is rather an effect of the business cycle than a trend over time

Hypothesis 2: The change towards a post-fordistic regime has not changed the structural effect of age on career transitions

- 2a: Job mobility among managers and professionals decreases with age
- 2b: The age effect remains constant over time



2 Analysis with the German Socio-Economic Panel

GSOEP

- a longitudinal panel survey with more than 20,000 participants
- weighting factors allow generalisations on the German labour market

Sample: Managers and Professionals in Germany (private sector)

- period from 1984 to 2009
- accumulated sample size ranges from $N_{85-89} = 2108$ to $N_{05-09} = 8952$

Dependent measures

- Internal job-to-job transitions
- External job-to-job transitions

Explaining variables

- Year
- Gross domestic product growth rate in real terms (GDP)
- Age



3 Descriptive results

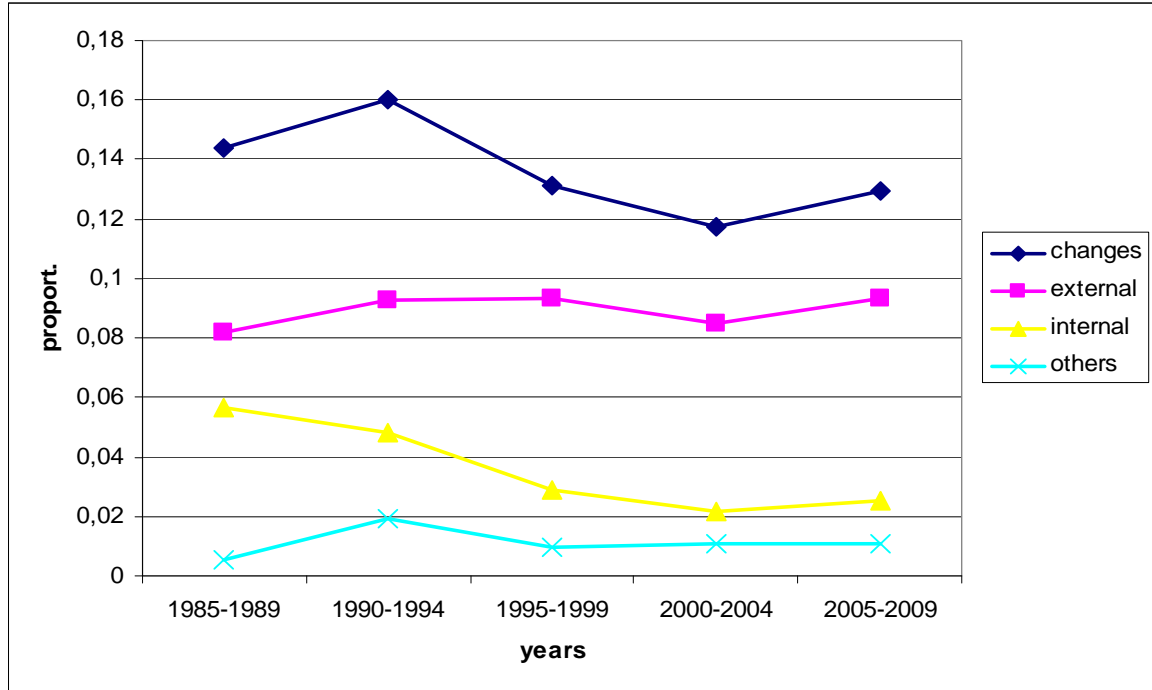
Table 1: Descriptive statistics for the professionals and manager sample.

years	N_{occ}	$\bar{N}_{diff}/$ year	average age	the sample among clericals	Proportion of			
					women	juniors, < 33 years	middle aged	seniors, > 50 years
1985-1989	2108	2 293 278	42.43	24	.20	.24	.49	.27
1990-1994	4328	4 266 688	41.71	33	.20	.27	.48	.25
1995-1999	4564	4 675 726	42.48	36	.19	.24	.51	.25
2000-2004	9345	4 694 569	43.03	34	.24	.19	.56	.26
2005-2009	8952	4 930 607	43.12	33	.31	.20	.55	.26

data of pooled cross-sectional analysis



3 Results: Job Changes from 1985 to 2009

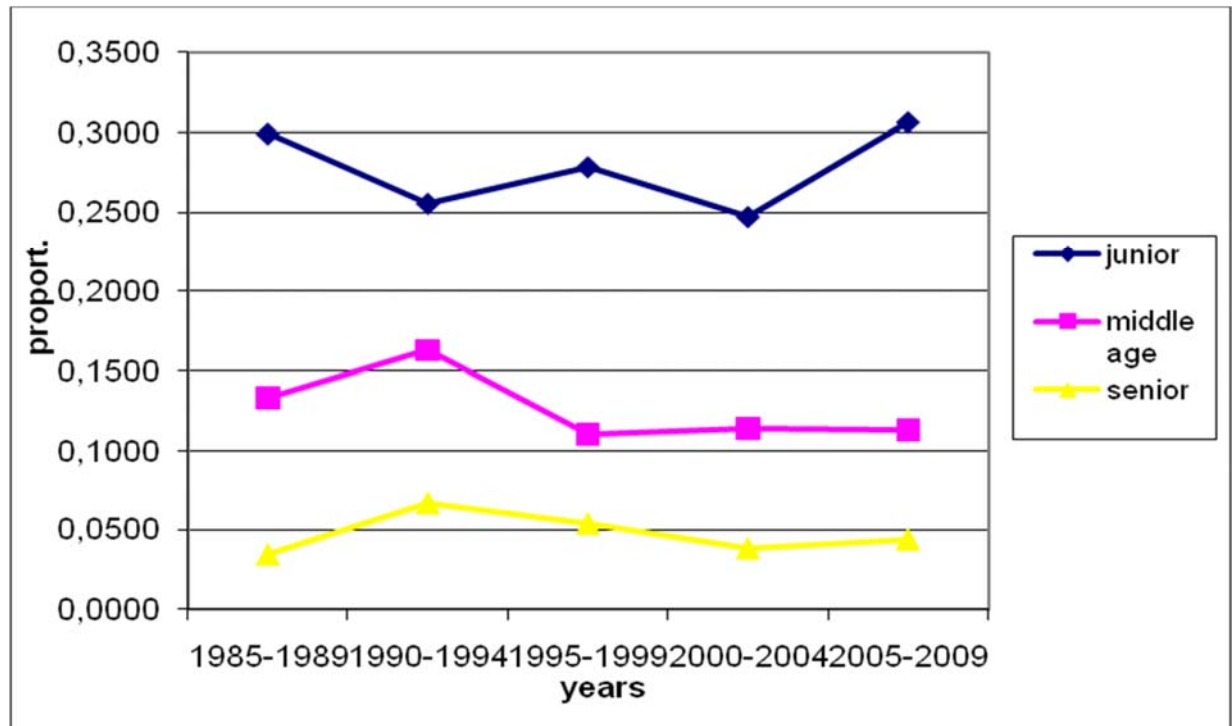


3 Regression Table

	<i>regression model 1</i>	<i>lagged model</i>	<i>internal changes</i>	<i>external changes</i>
	β	β	β	β
Time (years)	.00	-	-.0016***	.0009*
GDP	.013***	.010**	.0024	.0055*
Lagged GDP	-	.006	-	-
constant	.108***	.104***	.052***	.064***
F	8.08**	11.18***	15.23***	3.92*
R2	.41	.50	.26	.58
Adj. R2	.36	.46	.20	.54

*model 1 and lagged model are based on N = 26; others: N = 25; *p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001*

3 Proportion of job changes in age groups



3 Job Changes of Managers/Professionals in Germany

H1: no general increase of job mobility ✓

H1a: neither increasing external ✓ nor decreasing internal job changes ✗

H1b: job transitions are not affected by time effects but by cyclical effects ✓

H2: no general effect of time on the impact of age ✓

H2a: job mobility decreases with age ✓

H2b: the age effect remains constant over the time period analysed ✓

3 Discussion

- **No radical change in job mobility in Germany**
 - A critical view on the taken-for-grantedness of an increased change
 - Supports that traditional and post-fordistic characteristics co-exist
- **Structural boundaries remain relevant in explaining careers**
 - call for more country-comparative research in careers
 - adds to the critique of overemphasizing agency over structure
- **The overall number of changes is on a low level**
 - boundaryless careers are rather elitist and subgroup specific



3 Discussion

- **Proportion of internal changes declines**
 - ... an indicator for a factual reduction of internal changes?
 - fewer job opportunities due to shrinking internal labour markets (delaying, downsizing)
 - ... or a changing interpretation of internal job changes?
 - How many job conditions have to change before you can call it a change?



3 Conclusions

- Context factors like the economic cycle are (still) highly relevant to career developments
- stasis instead of change, and even counter-intuitive results dominate
- **Limitation: secondary data analyses with all operational limitations**
- **Further research on individual and longitudinal level**
 - focus on individual differences, especially for different age groups
 - Comparisons between groups of employees and between countries
 - the explanatory power of economic growth for different age groups



Thank you !



3 Correlation Table

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Year	1									
GDP	-.33	1								
changes	-.21	.64***	1							
internal changes ¹	-.74***	.46*	.65***	1						
external changes ¹	.23	.34	.48*	-.11	1					
tenure	-.51	.13	.15	.37	-.37	1				
other changes ¹	.27	-.08	.08	-.35	-.07	-.50	1			
young changers	.08	.31	.63***	.37	.60**	-.11	-.16	1		
middle-aged	-.22	.60**	.89***	.53**	.3	.13	.23	.30	1	
senior changers	-.01	.44*	.63***	.29	.29	.18	.04	.27	.45*	1

¹ N= 25; all other variables: N = 26; *p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001

