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Research Article

Challenges of Learning Postgraduate Class with No Prior Work Experience: A Phenomenological Study

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The main purpose of this research was to explore the lived experience of students who learn postgraduate classes without having prior work experience. To achieve the intended objective, the team of researchers used a qualitative research approach. The phenomenological research design was used to have the real lived experience of novice scholarship students. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, focus group discussion, and unstructured participant observation. The participants were ten postgraduate students who enrolled in the College of Education and Behavioural Sciences at Bahir Dar University. Data analysis was guided by Smith's Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, and we construct themes based on data we obtain from participants. The study revealed that postgraduate students with no prior work experience have both good and bad experiences. The good experiences were related to the opportunity they have to learn at a young age, and the bad experiences were the challenges they faced as a result of being novices in the work environment. They faced psychological challenges, economic challenges, language-related challenges, lack of information about the world of work, sexual harassment, and other challenges. At the end of the research, we infer implications based on the findings of the research.

1. Introduction

Postgraduate courses are educational courses that students take after their bachelor's or university degree. Having prior work experience plays a great role to minimize challenges faced during postgraduate studies. Work experience appears to confer benefits; access to experiences may be affected by "unseen" student characteristics [1–3]. Having prior work experience also gives the chance to test theories learnt in postgraduate class by discussing own prior office experiences. Evaluating graduate class students' experience is important not only for improving teaching quality but also for giving opportunities to alumni to continue after graduation to be reflective practitioners [4–6]. Taking prior work experience as a prerequisite and accepting novice postgraduate learners is a paradox. This may happen due to the difference in understanding of the role of previous work experience in academic achievement. Integration of work experience and learning is not only considered as a critical

component of institutional agendas to improve graduates' job preparedness, but also as a strategy for institutions to project themselves in the competitive international education market [7–10].

Prior work experience shows direction on how to solve the challenges faced during postgraduate classes. For this reason, many universities recognize the role of prior work experience by taking it as a prerequisite to joining postgraduate classes. Most of the time, universities set a minimum prior work experience standard to join the postgraduate class. Exceptionally, Bahir Dar University (hereafter, BDU) began to recruit postgraduate candidates with no prior work experience by scholarship programs in Master of Arts (MA) and Master of Sciences (MSc) Programs. The program aimed to help newly graduated jobless citizens to have additional MA/MSc degrees at a young age and to get a job. BDU encompasses more than 8 institutions and more than 100 postgraduate programs. Specifically, the College of Education and Behavioural Sciences (i.e., one of

the BDU institutions) has more than 8 MA and 12 PhD programs. In addition to opening programs, the university began to recruit new bachelor's graduates as postgraduate learners by providing scholarship opportunities with no tuition fee as part of community service since the 2017/18 academic year [11].

Is prior work experience important for the postgraduate class or not? Students with no prior work experience, who are learning with those having prior work experience, will better answer this question. There is a controversial academic discourse about the role of prior work experience in postgraduate learning. Some scholars argued that there is no relationship between academic achievement and prior work experience. Sharbatoghlie et al. [12] argued that prior work experience does not result in higher levels of academic achievement. Similarly, Bayerlein [13] revealed that students with limited prior work-experience were more likely to successfully develop cognitive and skill-based learning outcomes than students with extensive prior work-experience. The idea that prior job experience correlates with greater academic success has little support [14–17].

On the other hand, we can find research findings stating the role of prior work experience for successful completion of postgraduate class. Lack of work experience and career support was identified as the main area with which international students feel dissatisfied in UK [10, 18, 19]. Lack of institutional habitus brings negative impacts on students' educational experiences, including low quality of work-integrated learning or even worse, the absence of work-integrated learning experience [10, 20, 21].

However, the scenario at Bahir Dar University is different, scholarship students are not only novices with no prior experience, but they are also jobless with no permanent income to lead their life with no financial support from the university. This case makes our research different from the study of other researchers yet. On the contrary, others raised the question of how we define learning if prior experience did not have a role in learning effectiveness. For instance, Hansen [22] stated that learning is a function of experience.

Taking the above arguments into consideration, the researchers believed that it will be better to hear from a direct and first-hand source of data about the above questions regarding learning, academic achievement, and the role played by prior work experience in learning [23]. To do so, we have seen the naturalistic and lived experience of students who are attending their MA program with no prior work experience. Therefore, understanding the role of prior work experience and identifying the major challenges facing scholarship students with no prior work experience in conducting this study became very essential. That is because conducting this study is a timely and sensitive issue to ensure quality education and to support such kinds of students in the challenge. Therefore, the following two research questions were set to guide the focus and direction of the study. These are: How do students who have no prior work experience go through postgraduate classes? What are the major challenges and their root causes facing novice students in postgraduate classes? To this end, the main objective of this study was to explore the experience of postgraduate students with no prior work experience at BDU College of Education and Behavioural Sciences.

2. Theoretical Framework

Over time, extensive theoretical literature has been developed in the academic field of studies [24, 25]. Thus, the theoretical framework of this study build up with relevant literature from adult learners' personal, economical, and sociocultural perspectives. In due course, a sound understanding of how prior work experience and postgraduate learning evolve, how and by which factors these are influenced, allows researchers to describe the necessary conditions which help to design, set up, and discuss the interlinkage between prior work experience and postgraduate learning.

There is a wide choice of theories available in the literature about experience-based learning since this study emphasized it. Accordingly, Kolb's experiential learning theory was used as a framework for analysis [26–29] because the insight was found to be sound with this study scope. It is based on the premise that people learn best by experience. This theory calls the learner to be directly involved in their learning regardless of fearing any hindering challenges. Kolb and Fry [28] pioneered that experiential learning involves doing something and discovering what it is like, how it made the learner feel, and what it meant to the learner; that is, experiential learning is their experience and no one else's. It is, therefore, particularly effective in an all-around educational setting as it addresses the cognitive, emotional, and physical aspects of the learner [30–32].

Moreover, previous literature on experiential learning advocated by Andresen et al. [33] remarked that the experience of the learner occupies a central place in all considerations of teaching and learning. Furthermore, they portrayed major experience-based learning assumptions. These are as follows: (1) experience serves as the foundation for and stimulus for learning; (2) learners actively construct their own experiences; (3) learning is a holistic process; (4) learning is socially and culturally constructed; and (5) learning is influenced by the socioemotional context in which it occurs. [34] suggested that learning from experience is critical for dealing and learning with others, comprehending holistic work processes, and developing a personal vision of one's job and the learning that occurs during its duration.

Students in postgraduate classes experience different challenges in the process of their learning because learning postgraduate classes is different from learning high school or undergraduate courses. It requires higher-order critical thinking, and the way of the teaching-learning process becomes a responsibility of the students, and it resembles being more self-directed. The professors' roles set aside showing direction and giving tasks to students, which helps to learn more about the planned issues [35, 36]. These challenges affect new students' academic achievement, and sometimes they may develop anxiety because of these contests. To understand these and other emerging challenges and to bring solutions, different scholars conducted some

research about challenges facing graduate class students. Beforehand, several study findings displayed different kinds of challenge factors. For instance, Havenga and Sengane [37] indicated that personal challenges, institutional challenges, and research-related challenges are major challenges facing postgraduate students. Other scholars in the field also discussed that university students, in general, confront various challenges including (1) dispositional challenges—students' perceptions and emotions related to their academic activities; (2) situational challenges—financial, family, and time management challenges; (3) institutional challenge——examination-related problems, resources, information technology facilities and infrastructure; and (4) academic challenge like instructors' role, poor communication skills, and curriculum in the study [38–41].

3. Methods and Materials

The goal of this research was to find out how students with no prior job experience perceive postgraduate programs at Bahir Dar University. The voices of students involved are essential to our inquiry. Constructivism was the research paradigm that underlay this study since researchers needed to cooperate with participants to co-construct a subjective reality about their experiences in taking postgraduate classes without prior work experience [42]. Researchers choose phenomenological research design among the constructivism paradigm's research approaches. The goal of this study is to explain a phenomenon based on the participants' actual experiences. Phenomenology, by definition, employs a variety of data analysis techniques. For this research, we use Smith's Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). It employs flexible guidelines to explore, in detail, how participants make sense of their personal and social world and the meanings that particular experiences or events hold for participants [43], and it gives the researcher the best opportunity to understand the innermost deliberation of the lived experiences of research participants [44].

The research participants are students who are experiencing postgraduate classes without having any prior work experience. As to the focus of this investigation, the researchers were considered the interpretivism paradigm advocated [42, 45]. Here, we want to look at the eye of respondents and include our view in the study to create meaning about the role of prior work experience in postgraduate class learning. These meanings are varied and multiple, leading us to look for the complexity of views rather than narrowing meanings into a few categories or ideas. The description of the participant responses guided our analysis of the data. The intentionality of design guides this interactive experience with an emphasis placed on the evolving learning story told by participants. We tried to shed light on how students with no prior work experience are striving in their postgraduate class and to understand the challenges they are facing.

The sample was drawn using the purposive sampling technique. We developed criteria to draw individuals as research participants including (1) being a postgraduate student in Bahir Dar University College of Education and Behavioural Sciences, (2) being a novice learner with no prior work experience and currently no job, and (3) being voluntary to be part of the research. Based on the criteria, we have selected ten students, who are studying MA in the College of Education and Behavioural Sciences.

We believe that making data gathering face-to-face becomes the best way to get accurate data on time. To do so, we developed an interview protocol and an FGD discussion question. As a result, data was collected through interviews and FGD and unstructured participant observation. The FGD was held in a classroom with participants at the end of the class. The interview with each interviewee has lasted 45–65 minutes. A member of the research team was learning postgraduate classes on campus in the same year. During the data gathering procedure, participants' responses were recorded in audio and verbatim transcripts were created [45]. As a result, all respondents' confidentiality was protected by anonymity. Participants' names were labelled as S1, S2, ..., S5. Furthermore, the FGD information was communicated as FGD (there was only single FGD). A detailed description of existing events has emerged in parallel with the data collection process [45]. After the description, the researchers have focused on a few problems for understanding the complexity of the investigated case. Finally, as suggested by Creswell [46], identification of investigated issues within each case and then looking for common themes were considered. Thematic analysis is an appropriate method of analysis for seeking to understand experiences, thoughts, or behaviours across a data set [47]. The data collected through the interview conversation was integrated with the FGD finding in each theme. While conducting data analysis, follow-up questions were developed and second-round data were collected via phone conversation after the graduation of students. We use inductive approach to build themes. Themes were data driven; they did not mirror the exact questions asked of participants and they are not necessarily reflective of the researchers, own interests, or beliefs on the subject of investigation [47]; rather the themes were created based on the information obtained from the lived experience of participants. On the other hand, we have also used deductive reasoning to compare and contrast the themes with previous studies. Therefore, the analyst accomplishes the thematic data analysis, using both the inductive and deductive approaches, concurrently, but with dominancy of the inductive approach [48]. It is this step-by-step process of analysis that is detailed in this article to demonstrate rigor using a hybrid approach to thematic analysis [49].

The researchers duly requested the permission of participants, and they signed a consent form. Team members of this study do not have any conflicts of interest. The anonymity and confidentiality of the study participants are protected, and the report contained only the codes which represent the participants.

4. Results

To enhance the readability of this study's findings, the results section is presented in themes identified based on the

research questions. The first part of the results section revealed the finding regarding the first basic question about how novice students experienced postgraduate class and their general impression of learning postgraduate classes. The second part presented different challenges facing novice postgraduate class students in different subthemes. These are psychological, financial, language challenges, lack of information about the real work environment, sexual harassment, and other challenges.

4.1. Impressions of Students with No Prior Work Experience.
While we ask students about their impressions of the postgraduate class, their feelings were chaotic. Some of them were happy to have the opportunity to learn MA at a young age. S10 stated that learning an MA at a young age is a great opportunity, especially for females. After a while, we will get married and we will have additional responsibilities at home. That will make us too busy to learn MA and even some of us will not back to university after having children. This is a great advantage for us.

This feeling is common among all female respondents (S1, S8, S9, S10, S6, and FGD). Similarly, male participants revealed that getting such an opportunity is a golden chance for us. Hereafter we will have a chance to join higher education institutions as lecturers in universities or college teachers. They also raise the advantage of learning an MA without having detached from campus life. S7 stated that "*we are not experiencing a new environment most of us are graduates of this university and the campus is not new for us this helps us by minimizing our effort for adjustment with the campus environment.*" Life adjustment will be hard if we join a new campus for the MA class (FGD).

However, they have stated the disadvantages of learning postgraduate classes without having prior work experience as well. They have also raised the challenge they were facing while joining the postgraduate class. S8 stated that "*as a first batch for the scholarship program we have faced different challenges. Especially the coast sharing payment occurred after the beginning of the class and it was shocking news for most of us.*" They stated that they were told to pay it out of their plan and the scholarship announcement did not clearly state the presence of coast sharing duty. Initially, we had planned to cover our living coast; however, paying 15,000 ETB once was unexpected, and most of our classmates dropped out of the class, and we remain only 11 students in the class of 21 students who enrolled at the beginning of the semester (FGD, S1, S10, and S7). The researchers' team members have also observed that only 10 students completed among 21 registered students in the adult education and community development program. Among the completers, six of them were those who had prior work experience and only four were novice graduates of the scholarship program. Among the dropouts, all the elevens were scholarship program participants who dropped out as a result of their inability to pay the cost sharing duty of the bachelor class.

4.2. Challenges Facing Students Learning Postgraduate Class without Prior Work Experience.
In general, different challenges were identified from the data collected through FGD, in-depth interviews, and participant observation. The team of researchers classified the challenges into different subthemes. These include psychological challenges, economic challenges, language challenges, lack of experience in inferring implications, sexual harassment, and other administrative challenges. The details of each challenge are presented below.

4.2.1. Psychological Challenges.
As to the data obtained from FGD, most of the students have anxiety about their learning. Anxiety comes for several reasons. They have no prior work, because of a lack of job opportunities. They have a fear of the continuation of the situation. One of the respondents, who has been jobless for 7 years after completing his BA in adult education and community development stated, "I am learning my MA here in BDU because it is better than nothing. But we have no guarantee of work even after holding my MA" (S4). Others stated that if previously graduated students are still jobless, now we are engaged in fruitless challenges (FGD1). One of the respondents stated, "*I am hopeless about the job situation. I know two graduates with no job after having MA in different departments, and if the same works for the adult education department, what will be my response to my family? Answering this question is very difficult to me*" (S2).

Fear of not completing assignments on time is another source of anxiety for them. They are taking more than 15 credits per semester and the method of assessment, which brings all tasks of all courses at the same time, challenging them. From the perspective of S1, one of the respondents, stated, "*We have 12 assignments at a time, which assignment should I do first? I stop working for days to order assignments.*" S1 also noted, "*I have a fear of having lower grades as my expectation is very high; I don't want to score grade which is lower than a minimum standard to compute for university lecturer.*" Furthermore, she stated that scoring grades above the standards of the Ministry of Education of Ethiopia to join a university academic staff is also a solution to joblessness because many universities in the country are opening an adult education and community development department and they need lecturers.

The other psychological problem is fear of not meeting the professors' expectations. Students believe that their professors are expecting a lot from them. However, it is difficult to meet the expectations of professors for them. Meeting with S2 revealed that "some professors advise us to do difficult tasks, even for professors themselves. How can I achieve the expectation to get an excellent grade? Because expectations are very high and professors associate it with grades. Achieving good grades is a function of achieving professors' expectations, which is difficult for us." Similarly, S1 pronounced that "some professors advise us even what they did not do. Some others bring their works as perfect for us and lead us to the view of them. This situation challenges us to decide which idea is better among some professors who gave us different formats to review articles."

Unlike others, most of the respondents in FGD1 argued that experienced students in their class neglected them. As a

result, they are in fear of being isolated in the group, or sometimes they tend to feel small to comparing themselves with other members of the group having prior work experience. Congruent with this, S5 said, "*I often feel so small in the class when I compare myself to my classmates who have many work experiences in their field.*" At this time another respondent stated, "*I feel shame when I listen to the presentation of experienced classmates*" (S3). Taking this in mind, it is possible to conclude that most of them claimed that it is very difficult for them to give examples for different scenarios when professors ask them to give examples for their presentations. Regarding these issues, we believe that experienced students state their ideas by mentioning practical examples of what they know in their work environment, and this situation may force novice students to develop an inferiority complex. In addition to this situation, they try to support and help novice students; receiving support may lead to admitting inferiority. This is the case for them.

4.2.2. Economic Challenges. This is the worst challenge facing jobless scholarship students. The scholarship program covers only the school fee. However, people have basic needs to be satisfied to live. Since they have no job since they graduated earlier after their bachelor's degree, covering the cost of food, housing, stationary, closing, transport cost, and other costs necessary to complete projects, like printing term papers and other paper works to submit for professors, become unthinkable for most of the jobless novice students. Most of the students live by renting a house with their friends or are lonely. Some others are also living with their family and relatives to minimize the cost of living. Once when we talk personally with S3, he described that once upon a time he did not eat for 24 hours because of a lack of money to buy food. Look at how difficult it is to learn for students with no job or previous experience. Here, the issue is not having experience, rather they do not have any job opportunities now to cover their daily expenses. How can people learn before eating? Studying and feeling confident while living in such harsh situations is very challenging. This finding is related to the finding reported by Havenga and Sengane [37], who state that the financial burden when living away from home and studying was explained as follows: "*As a full-time student, I meet financial constraints to cover printing costs, photocopying costs, meals, and all other costs as everything requires money.*" The financial challenge was reported in printing assignments and journal articles that were costly experienced, as explained by a full-time master's student (p. 4).

In addition to this, a discussion with FGD1 remarked that the registrar of Bahir Dar University obliged them to pay the tuition fee for their bachelor's degree. It is a big issue for them. How can they pay more than 15,000 Ethiopian Birr, living in the above-stated situation? This is a regulatory act of the Federal Government of Ethiopia. Every student should have to pay a cost-sharing fee before taking and presenting an official transcript as a precondition for attending a master's degree. However, students cannot pay for it without having a job in the field they study. Furthermore, a respondent, E1, have shared his experience as follows:

"*I remember that in the first month of our class, the total number of students was twenty-one. Ten students leave their class because of the inability to pay for cost-sharing. We are now eleven students attending the class. Even students who pay for cost-sharing cover the cost by borrowing from microfinance institutions by giving the land of their family as collateral for the loan. Some others, (especially females) got from their boyfriends.*"

Here, the scholarship program has a problem of equity; it gives an advantage to the haves. Those who are academically competent, but unable to cover the cost-sharing, have no space in the scholarship program. Even those who are learning now have faced different problems. The other issue related to the financial problem is its impact on the psychological well-being of students. When they cannot wear, like what others do and inability to eat when they want, this can lead to a psychological problem. Particularly, when they are unable to prepare term papers and print them, which has a huge impact on them.

4.2.3. Language-Related Challenges. Most of this study participants raised the issue that the English language proficiency problem is another challenge they are facing. Even though it is common for experienced and non-experienced students, novice students too believe that they are less proficient than those who are experienced. During the FGD meeting, they argued that they scored satisfactory and below because of their poor English language. They cannot express what they know in English because it is not their first language. In addition, they have not been exposed to a working environment, which requires English language skills to communicate. This brought an adverse effect on their academic achievement. Some of them expressed worry about being unable to converse well in English, which becomes a barrier for them, especially during presentations and also when expressing ideas in the classroom. Moreover, they (S1, S4, and S5) stated that most of the professors measured them by what they expressed in English, not by what they know. Therefore, what they know and what they score are not the same. They know more than what they score. The language problem with the method of assessment employed, which requires language skills more than subject matter knowledge, affects the score. In turn, this affects the self-concept and self-confidence of students without prior work experience.

4.2.4. Lack of Information about the World of Work. S5, a participant in this study, stated his feelings by saying, "*In most of our learning projects, we were required to bring the practical implication of the issues we discussed. However, we have no idea about the practice of the issues currently. This is a challenge due to a lack of prior work experience. Experienced students like you can point out implications for every research finding in our area, but I need a reference to talk about the implications. This situation creates a great gap between you and us.*"

Similarly, to this, a meeting with S3 revealed the following:

"*My challenge is different from others. I have been out of the academic world for about seven years. I have forgotten not only the academic issues but also the language and ethical issues of being a student. As a result, I cannot infer implications based on a conclusion made. Moreover, I cannot browse articles via the internet because of forgetting computer usage and I can't type assignments by myself.*"

This indicates that students with no prior experience cannot relate concepts to the real world. This problem is the result of a lack of exposure to the work environment through work-based learning or practical work experience. Most of them argued that the work-based learning opportunity during undergraduate class was very short (i.e., 5–10 days), and it was like a field trip, not work-based learning. This problem has challenged us now; we cannot cope with learning challenges, which require bringing a practical example of the world of work.

4.2.5. Sexual Harassment. One of the respondents stated that "there are teachers and administrative staff of the university who are harassing female students based on their sex" (S6). Furthermore, as per S10, a female student stated that "*they ask for a sexual relationship as collateral to provide the service that we need, although we have the right to get it free.*" Sexual harassment is a frequently stated challenge during our interview with female participants. S8 stated the following:

"*In fact, my experience is different from others, I was learning my MA after becoming a graduate assistant at BDU. Afterwards, while I asked for help from one teacher in our college, he appointed me to his office outside of working hours. I was eager to learn from him. However, after I entered his office, he immediately locked the door of the office, and the situation was difficult to express for me. I was nervous at the time, and I told him that if he did not allow me to leave his office, I will shout louder, and he allowed me to go. It was a frustrating experience. I even have bad emotions when I see him and even in the office.*"

She explained that while teenagers with no experience ask for help, some professors enforce them to have sexual relations for the help they render. This is the experience of many teenage students not only in postgraduate classes but also in undergraduate classes. Similarly, S7 explains that "*one of my professors asked me to have a sexual relationship with him and to make my grade "B." Finally, I reject his proposal and I get a "C" grade for that course.*" The rest of the female participants have stated that they know similar cases with different approaches. However, sentencing was not possible as they have stated. The major challenge is to get evidence for such cases, and the culture of society, as well as the working culture of the university, does not support such cases. Even if a female student reported the case, society considers her as the one who committed the case, and she will be isolated. Besides, the professor will not be punished because no one in the class will collaborate with a student. Teachers will revenge on students who stand against them; as a result, no one will collaborate with them; they are powerless.

S9 explained the following:

"*Even professors did not show our assessment papers in postgraduate class. Therefore, we are afraid to ask anything which is against the will of the professors. Once upon a time, we appeal to our academic advisor regarding sexual harassment committed by one of the well-known professors. However, his response was heart-breaking. She stated that "if you want to get what he has, you have to be what he wants." Means, we must agree to have sexual relations with him without our interest.*"

Such experiences have different implications for such novice female students. They may be demotivated to learn, and even they may fear all men for the rest of their life. The unwillingness of the professors to show comments for each term paper and even for exams was also experienced by the researchers. As a participant-observer who passes through the entire process by learning in the same college as participants, most professors were not ready to show the assessment results of postgraduate class students.

4.2.6. Other Challenges. Other challenges have been raised by postgraduate class students who have no previous work experience before attending their class. This includes the university bureaucracy of the administration system, the university, the lack of resources, knowledge, the peaceful condition of the town, and finally the ability to digest what is being learned. They raised administrative issues and bureaucratic procedures to perform any activity. This challenge is related to institutional challenges, which are discussed by [37]. They argued that academic and institutional challenges relate to the academic workload and time constraints, the structure of contact sessions, subject information, and the assessment process. Most of the participants agree that prior work experience makes postgraduate study easier; especially if the work experience and the field of study are related (S1, S2, S4, S5, and FGD1).

5. Discussion

Generally, the finding of this research indicated that prior work experience is very important for postgraduate classes because of the following reasons. The first one is that having prior work experience means having a source of income to cover personal expenses during the learning time [50, 51]. On the other hand, being a novice is being jobless and learning without having a source of income to cover learning costs. Having a job can solve financial and psychological challenges. The second importance of prior work experience is exposure to the real world of work. If people have prior work experience, they come to class with accumulated experience of work life [52]. This helps them to relate what they are learning to real life and inculcate the learning contents easily. The third importance is that prior work experience helps to identify research problems. Since real-life problems are a source of research problems, students need to become aware of the real work problem to identify the area of their

thesis [53]. What issues to be studied (How? Why? and for how long?) will be answered if they have prior work experience.

The academic discourses about the role of prior work experience have an answer now. Even though it is important to study by including both experienced and novice students, the research finding shows that prior work experience has a great role in postgraduate class learning. As discussed earlier in the literature review, Koh and Frechtling [54] stated that previous work experience did not predict academic achievement. By its different problems, academic achievement is not a good measure of learning for adult learners. Because postgraduate students are adults and they may not be motivated by grade, rather they are intrinsically motivated. A good grade does not mean good learning. Therefore, prior work experiences are of great importance in making postgraduate classes easier and more entertaining for students. Nevertheless, it may or may not predict academic achievement. Academic achievement is not a major issue for adult learners because they evaluate the effectiveness of their learning themselves, by a letter grade given by professors.

Different researchers have found different challenges that may face postgraduate students. Aljubori [55] found the following eight challenges that postgraduate students face in Iraq. These are (1) corruption (manifested by nepotism in admission and political dominance of the education system), (2) low scientific level and the decline of the probity of research, (3) routine infertility, as the standards and procedures for acceptance of applicants, (4) weakness of the level of teaching competencies, (5) lack of educational tools necessary for such postgraduate studies, (6) absence of correlation between the number of students admitted and the absorptive capacity of faculties in all aspects, (7) the neglect of professors, and (8) absence of abroad scholarship. Similarly, Talebloo and Baki [56] remarked that the challenges facing postgraduate students included problems related to facilities, social environment, academic system, and international office programs. These challenges are not like the challenges facing students without prior work experience in BDU. These may occur due to contextual differences.

However, the finding of this research regarding the presence of difference in experiencing postgraduate class as a result of sex is similar to previous research findings. Ezebilo [39] revealed that the challenges facing international students differ from their indigenous counterpart, and the challenges female students face differ from those of the male. Similarly, researchers in the field reveal the presence of sexual harassment among faculty members. The unbalanced students-teachers relationships, the students' vulnerabilities, and the lack of effective controls and balances create an environment that allows misbehaviour to escalate [57]. Similarly, Bondestam and Lundqvist [58] revealed that precarious working conditions, hierarchical organizations, a normalization of gender-based violence, toxic academic masculinities, a culture of silence, and a lack of active leadership are all key characteristics that allow sexual harassment in higher education institutions. The finding of this research regarding sexual harassment among novice

postgraduate class students was the similar to the above-mentioned research findings.

Moreover, the entire finding of this research about the challenges facing postgraduate class students with no prior work experience is similar to previous finding [37]. They revealed that the challenges facing postgraduate class learners include finances, employment, family and accommodation, workload and time constraints, contact sessions, subject information and assessment, information literacy, supervisory relationship, and supervisory structure and process [37]. Furthermore, previous research also confirmed the finding regarding financial constraints. The biggest challenge faced by full-time postgraduate students is challenging within themselves, followed by time, finances, and families [59]. This implies that each category of students requires support specific to their needs. So, challenges that face students without prior work experience differ from challenges faced by their counterparts having experience.

6. Conclusion

This study only includes the voice of novice students. To understand the role of prior work experience, it is important to include the idea of experienced students; also the voice of professors needs to be included. Besides this, based on the finding of this study, learning postgraduate classes is not the same for students with prior work experience and novice students. Experienced students come to class with a different perspective because of their lived experience in the world of work. In postgraduate classes, students are expected to have at least their own perspective to view a certain problem. This requires an understanding of the bureaucratic environment of the workplace. Besides, experience gives confidence to learners, and it also helps them to infer practical implications of theories they are learning in class by relating to their work experience. Giving learning opportunities to the younger generation is investing in their future life and its advantage is undeniable. However, the way we handle them in class needs to be in line with their exposure, and even the approaches of teaching need to be in line with; for example, it is also possible to facilitate internship programs by collaborating with the public service providing organizations.

Scholarship students with no prior work experience are facing challenges in postgraduate classes to achieve the best tomorrow. Novice students are learning in a situation that is difficult for everyone. However, the difficulty is different from student to student. Students from a family with better economic socioeconomic conditions are experiencing better postgraduate learning classes than students from low economic socioeconomic condition. Some others depend on their sex partners. So, it is possible to say that novice students are experiencing postgraduate classes differ depending on the income level of their family, sex, computer skill, and language skill in addition to the challenge they are facing because of their naiveness for the world of work. The challenges facing novice postgraduate class students include psychological challenges, financial challenges, language challenges, lack of information about the real world, sexual harassment, and other personal challenges. Among these

challenges, financial challenges, psychological challenges, and lack of information about the real work environment are common for all students. Sexual harassment is common among female students without prior work experience. Language and personal challenges differ between students. The financial challenge is the worst, and it enforces eleven students to drop out of their class classes.

6.1. Implication for Further Study. Based on this study, we infer the following implication for responsible bodies.

(i) The scholarship program provided by BDU needs to be equitable for the haves and the have-nots. The poor who cannot cover the cost of the cost-sharing agreement are losing also the learning opportunity and their future hope.

(ii) If we render the scholarship for novice students, the scholarship program should have to cover the students living coast. Unless and otherwise, they are exposed to different social and psychological problems. Being able to cover the meal cost is becoming a big deal for them.

(iii) Letting people learn is an excellent opportunity. However, the curriculum should incorporate internship programs to bridge the gap between novice students' inability to infer practical implications of theories in real work life. It may also pave the way to getting a job and solving financial problems faced while learning without a job.

(iv) Professors who are teaching novice students should have to support novice students. They need to allow students to practice their lessons systematically by allowing longer time to practice. They should not provide everything at once.

Data Availability

Data are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors disclose that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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