

# **Career Progression: A Panacea to Organizational Sustainability**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*This study investigates the relationship between career progression, organizational commitment, staff attrition, and organizational productivity in the context of Seven-Up Bottling Company, Benin Plant, and Mouka Foam Industries. Career progression is examined as a critical factor influencing employee satisfaction, retention, and overall productivity. The research adopts a descriptive survey design, collecting data from 80 employees through structured questionnaires and analyzing it using SPSS version 23. Pearson correlation and regression analyses were conducted to explore the relationships between career advancement opportunities, organizational commitment, staff attrition, and productivity. The findings reveal a strong positive correlation ( $r = 0.974$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) between career progression and organizational productivity at Mouka Foam Industries, indicating that employees with clear growth prospects contribute more effectively to organizational performance. Similarly, a significant positive relationship between career progression and organizational commitment was found, suggesting that employees with opportunities for advancement are more likely to remain loyal to their organization. Conversely, limited career progression opportunities are associated with higher attrition rates. The study concludes that fostering career advancement opportunities is vital for enhancing both organizational commitment and productivity while reducing staff turnover. These insights have practical implications for human resource strategies aimed at improving employee retention, performance, and organizational sustainability.*

**Keywords:** *Talent Management, career progression, organizational sustainability*

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## **I. Introduction**

In today's dynamic business environment, companies are increasingly recognizing the value of nurturing and retaining talent as a key driver of organizational success. Historically, organizations sought to harness their internal resources for competitive advantage, focusing on tangible assets like machinery, financial capital, and geographic locations. However, in the present day, organizations depend more on their workforce for sustainable success (Madan & Bhatnagar, 2018). Skilled employees are viewed as a major source of competitive advantage. Talent management, a coordinated human resource process, is essential to attracting, nurturing, and retaining highly skilled workers who can contribute to organizational sustainability.

Career progression refers to the advancement and growth an individual experiences within their professional life, involving promotions, increased responsibilities, and skill development. It plays a crucial role in employee motivation, engagement, and retention, as individuals seek clear pathways to advance their careers within an organization (Smith, 2022). When career progression is well-structured and supported, it leads to greater job satisfaction and organizational commitment, which reduces turnover and enhances workforce stability (Johnson & Lee, 2021). Organizations that prioritize career development foster an environment of continuous learning and improvement, aligning individual growth with corporate objectives, thus contributing to long-term sustainability (Miller, 2020).

Beyond typical people management, talent management emphasizes the abilities and capabilities that individuals provide to a company. Businesses are aware that having the greatest talent is essential to their success in the fiercely competitive and intricate global economy. In addition to realizing how important it is to

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find, nurture, and educate gifted individuals, businesses now operate in a world where corporate operations pose a threat to the environment and society. More significant than any of these problems are the depletion of natural resources and environmental deterioration, which includes drought, desertification, land degradation, freshwater scarcity, and pollution of the air, water, and land. Talent management (TM) is a necessary activity to overcome the aforementioned obstacles. A company can manage, recruit, and retain employees who will assist reduce the damaging effects that business operations have on the environment by using talent management.

The goal of talent management (TM) as a means of career progression was to find qualified candidates for organizational positions. Later, the emphasis shifted to strategically placing the gifted workers in advantageous locations to improve organizational performance (Minbaeva & Collings, 2013). TM is defined as all the processes and activities that include the systematic identification of critical roles that define an organization's competitive advantage, the training of highly capable and productive employees to carry out those responsibilities, and the retention of these employees to ensure their continued employment with the company (Collings & Melalihi, 2009). It has been discovered that TM affects how well employees perform within a company. Identifying and developing high potential employees makes it simpler for a firm to make professional development investments. An organization is concerned about where to make this investment because development necessitates investment decisions towards learning, training, and individual development for growth, succession planning, and performance management; TM merely makes this easier for them (Phillips, 2001).

### **Statement of problem**

The studied organization fails to recognize the extent of value loss attributed to inadequate talent development, retention, and training until it becomes too late. It is evident that the retention of top talents aims to capture the dedication and ingenuity of high-performing individuals who can contribute innovatively, bring added value to the organization, and optimize their efforts. A notable observation at Mouka Foam (Km 12 Benin-Lagos Express Road, Benin City) is a significant challenge of high employee turnover, seemingly linked to job dissatisfaction. This may be attributed to a deficient talent management culture, where insufficient effort is directed toward honing the skills of the workforce through various training processes.

The specific objective is to:

- i. ascertain whether career progression affects organizational sustainability in Mouka Foam industries, Benin City.

### **Concept of Career Progression**

Career progression refers to the advancement or upward movement an individual experiences within an organization over time. It typically encompasses promotions, increased responsibilities, professional development, and opportunities for acquiring new skills and experiences. Career progression can be influenced by several factors, including individual performance, organizational structures, training opportunities, and leadership support. Organizations that actively support career progression through structured development programs, mentorship, and training are likely to foster higher levels of employee engagement, motivation, and commitment, which in turn contribute to their long-term sustainability.

Career progression is seen as a critical element for employee satisfaction and retention. When employees feel they have a clear path for advancement and the opportunity to develop their careers, they are more likely to stay with an organization, reducing turnover rates and retaining talent. Furthermore, it encourages continuous learning and skill enhancement, making employees more adaptable to changes in the industry or within the organization itself.

According to Armstrong (2010), career progression is a lifelong process where employees develop their skills and knowledge in order to advance their career objectives. It often involves a combination of on-the-job experience, formal training, and education, which equips employees with the necessary skills to meet the evolving needs of the organization and industry.

In the context of organizational sustainability, career progression plays a pivotal role as it leads to the retention of top talent, minimizes turnover, and ensures a stable and knowledgeable workforce. Organizations that offer clear career progression pathways are more likely to achieve sustainable growth, as employees are more engaged, motivated, and aligned with the organization's long-term goals. Career progression fosters a sense of loyalty, as employees feel that their personal goals are being met in tandem with the organization's objectives.

Overall, career progression is integral to both individual employee success and the organization's sustainability, as it not only enhances workforce productivity but also ensures the long-term viability of the business.

### **Concept of Talent Management (TM)**

The process of luring, picking, nurturing, and keeping the best workers for critical positions is known as talent management. It entails estimating and making plans to satisfy an organization's need for human resources. It is possible to see talent management as an activity that supports business strategy in order to attain organizational success and prosper in the cutthroat global marketplace. The study measures talent management using factors such as Employer Branding, Talent Attraction, Reputation Management, and Workforce Planning. To draw in the best candidates for important roles, employer branding and reputation management are essential. Planning the workforce is crucial to luring in professionals with specialized competencies. Putting in place a workforce planning system can assist managers in identifying issues and maximizing worker productivity. When a business aligns with the needs and expectations of its talent, talent development becomes critical. Investing in people development can have a favorable impact on a number of organizational outcomes, including improved commitment to leaders, motivation, work satisfaction, and trust. Planning for succession is also essential for building a staff capable of holding important roles.

### **Concepts of Organizational Sustainability**

Without sacrificing the effects on society and the environment, organizations seek to improve already-existing solutions or address unmet requirements. Government initiatives in a number of economies have led to a greater awareness of sustainable practices. Finding, developing, assessing, and seizing opportunities to provide future goods and services that align with sustainable development objectives is the essence of organizational sustainability. Social and environmental entrepreneurship are integrated in research on organizational sustainability, since hybrid businesses use market mechanisms to address social and environmental issues. A sustainable organization prioritizes prosperity and innovation while striking a balance between financial gain and social benefit. The two aspects of organizational sustainability that are examined in this study are environmental sustainability (green product creation) and economic prosperity (profit). Energy-efficient, long-lasting, and frequently requiring little upkeep, green products show how important it is to combine risk-taking skills, creative thinking, attentiveness, and ethical considerations in order to achieve sustainability.

### **Career progression and organizational sustainability**

A person's career progresses throughout their life and is influenced by a variety of elements, including professional development, job responsibilities, compensation, promotions, and career satisfaction. According to research, people are handling career transitions more and more, and performance in this regard is influenced by a variety of criteria, including aptitude, educational achievement, early job mobility, and longer labor force commitment. Career advancement is also impacted by variables like age and gender. Research indicates a favorable correlation between educational attainment and judgments of promotability, income progression, and managerial advancement, indicating a persistent relationship between education levels and professional growth.

## **THEORETICAL REVIEW**

### **Human capital theory**

The Human Capital Theory (HCT), first presented by Theodore W. Schultz in 1961, contends that a person's productivity and workforce sustainability are positively impacted by their level of education. It motivates managers to spend money on staff development and training in order to increase productivity and sustainability. In order to increase performance, the theory highlights the significance of proactively luring and hiring qualified workers for organizational roles. It does not, however, address other facets of an employee's knowledge and abilities, such as locating a setting in which they may use their capabilities within an organization.

### **Social exchange theory**

According to Thibaut and Kelly's social exchange theory, people engage in exchanges when they think they will obtain value at a reasonable price, which leads to social behavior. Employers can encourage employees to contribute to the goals of the company by using HRM techniques to foster a reciprocal desire in them. HR departments are strategically important in finding, luring, nurturing, and keeping exceptional workers who show their appreciation by delivering better work. The idea does, however, also draw attention to potential roadblocks that can endanger relationships, like perceived injustices or disparities that are thought to be a source of conflict.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This study is anchored in the social exchange theory, suggesting that when employees feel cared for, valued, and nurtured by their organization, they naturally feel compelled to reciprocate. This reciprocation may manifest through increased commitment, enhanced performance, and longer service. Employees are likely to feel indebted to exhibit desirable behavior that positively impacts organizational performance. Employee

commitment plays a crucial role in retaining talented individuals within an organization, addressing the third variable, talent retention.

**Empirical Studies**

2015 saw the completion of a study by Nzewi, Chiekeze, and Ogbeta titled "Talent Management and Employees Performance in selected Commercial Banks in Asaba, Delta State." Using a descriptive survey approach, the study sought to determine how talent management and employee performance related to specific commercial banks in Asaba, Delta State. Employee information was gathered from Guaranteed Trust Bank, Plc and First Bank of Nigeria, Plc via a standardized questionnaire with a 5-point Likert scale. Regression analysis was used in the study for data analysis, and the Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient was used to evaluate the hypothesis. The results showed that there is a substantial correlation between talent management and employee performance, indicating that talent management positively affects employee performance. The authors suggested that banks and business organizations emphasize the important role that bright people play in enhancing job contents and offering growth chances in order to retain top personnel.

A 2015 study by Augustus and Jaja examined "Talent Management and Corporate Survival of the Nigerian Banking Industry." 132 managerial employees of licensed banks in Rivers State participated in the study, which used a cross-sectional survey approach. A standardized questionnaire was utilized to gather data, and talent management was operationalized into two aspects: talent acquisition and talent planning. Eighteen factors were used to evaluate corporate survivability. The Spearman rank order correlation coefficient was used in the study to test two null hypotheses, and both times the results showed significant connections. The results showed a strong correlation between firm survival and both talent management characteristics. According to the respondents, talent management strategies are essential to the survival and further growth of businesses. The study suggested concentrating on regulations associated with effective personnel planning and recruitment.

In 2012, Pam conducted a critical evaluation of "The Impact of Talent Management on Employee Sustainability in the Nigerian Public Sector." A survey inquiry method was used to gather data from 349 top, middle, and lower-level management staff members from five public sector firms in Nigeria. Data research using the Kruskal-Wallis test statistic showed that effective talent management procedures had a major impact on employee sustainability. According to the study's findings, talent management strategies have a big impact on employee sustainability in Nigerian public companies. The advice placed a strong emphasis on the necessity of teaching and training all actors in scientific approaches of talent management.

Wuim-Pam (2014) investigated "The Impact of Effective Talent Management on Employee Core Competencies in Plateau State University, Bokkos." Using a non-empirical approach, the study revealed that employees' skills, knowledge, and abilities impact job descriptions and performance management. The conclusion emphasized the win-win proposition of tying core competencies with talent management, providing organizations with a means of upgrading and retaining their valuable workforce. The recommendation includes identifying high-performing behaviors.

**II. METHODOLOGY**

The study used quantitative research. Quantitative research relies on deductive reasoning or deduction (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). The target population was 150 employees (Mouka Foam Industries). Stratified random sampling was used. The Primary data in this study was gathered using a well-structured questionnaire. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23 was used to analyse data collected. Mean, frequency and standard deviation were used for result presentation/

**Table 1 Correlation**

		<b>Career Progr</b>	<b>Orgprod</b>
Carprog	Pearson correlation	1	.974**
	Sig. (2 tailed)		.000
	N	80	80
OrgProd	Pearson correlation	.974**	1
	Sig. (2 tailed)	.000	
	N	80	80

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2 tailed)

**Source: SPSS version 23**

The correlation result of hypothesis two is shown in Table 1 above. A correlation coefficient of .974, significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed) test (p-value <0.05), is displayed in the table's result. According to the decision rule, the study hypothesis should be accepted if the p-value is less than 0.05; if not, it should be rejected. As a result, the research hypothesis is accepted. Using the same interpretation rule, which states that a

very strong correlation exists if the correlation coefficient is between .70 and 1.00, we can conclude that career advancement and organizational sustainability are highly positively correlated.

### **III. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

The study aimed to empirically analyze and test the relationship between career progression and organizational sustainability using Pearson's product-moment correlation. The results confirmed an important positive connection between career progression and organizational sustainability, on a .97 coefficient. This suggests that an increase in career progression is associated with an increase in overall organizational sustainability. This finding aligns with a study by Al Ariss et al. (2014), which explored the relationship between factors such as employee commitment, talent recognition, leadership support and talent development.

### **IV. CONCLUSION**

Based on the findings, the survey suggested that employers give their staff members a safe, secure, and comfortable work environment. Lastly, in order to foster employee loyalty and boost sustainability, positions held by staff members ought to correspond with their level of education.

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