

SUSTAINABLE GLOBAL TALENT MANAGEMENT

**Workshop presented May 30, 2023 to the
Administrative Sciences Association of Canada Annual Meeting (Virtual)**

Abstract:

This workshop will facilitate a multi-disciplinary multi-national discussion of sustainable Global Talent Management (GTM) that will drive new propositions and directions for future research. Our objective is to build knowledge about the challenges associated with sustainable global talent through an integrated focus on emerging, highly relevant GTM issues. We hope to develop new research partnerships that engage researchers from both Canada and other developing and developed countries.

Workshop Organizers and Discussion Leaders:

Marcia Carvalho de Azevedo, Ph.D.
Professor, Management
Federal University of São Paulo, Brazil
marcia.azevedo@unifesp.br

Deborah McPhee, Ph.D.
Professor of Human Resources
Goodman School of Business,
Brock University, Canada
dmcphee@brocku.ca

Francine Schlosser, Ph.D.
Odette Research Chair and Professor
Odette School of Business,
University of Windsor, Canada
fschloss@uwindsor.ca

Vlad Vaiman, Ph.D.
Associate Dean and Professor
School of Management,
California Lutheran University, U.S.
vvaiman@callutheran.edu

Monika von Bonsdorff, PhD
Associate Professor,
Jyväskylä University School of Business and
Economics
University of Jyväskylä, Finland
monika.e.vonbonsdorff@jyu.fi

Workshop Focus and Relevance

Sustainability is a concept that has developed over time, encapsulating different schools of thought and areas of knowledge. The concept of sustainability is generally defined using social, economic, and environmental perspectives (Purvis, Mao, & Robinson, 2019). The most common visual representation of the three-pillar conceptualization of sustainability places it at the center of three intersecting circles (Barbier, 1987). This conceptualization involves a simultaneous consideration of social, environment and economic aspects, also referred as the “3Ps” of people, planet, and profit (Montiel & Delgado-Ceballos, 2014).

ASAC 2023 Workshop Proposal

The sustainability debate has been growing significantly during the last decades, and organizations are being questioned about their contribution regarding the promotion of a sustainable world from a long-term perspective. Székely and Knirsch (Székely & Knirsch, 2005) related sustainability for business as sustaining and expanding economic growth, shareholder value, prestige, corporate reputation, customer relationships, and the quality of products and services as well as adopting and pursuing ethical business practices, creating sustainable jobs, building value for all stakeholders and attending the needs of the underserved. (p. 628).

The field of HRM (human resource management) is still grappling with understanding the importance and impact of sustainability (Aust, Matthews & Muller-Camen, 2020), even though the discussion about it began in general management in the 1990s (Gladwin, Kennelly, & Krause, 1995). HRM has an important role in a sustainable management perspective as it deals with all workers, and ultimately the decision makers of organization actions. Specifically, the question is about how to successfully use sustainability both to design practices and policies aimed at reaching corporate sustainability objectives, and as outcomes aimed at increasing firm's performance and employee well-being (Ehnert, 2009; Taylor, Osland & Egri, 2012). Furthermore, organizations with an HRM strategy that is aligned with the concept of sustainability will support the management of people while at the same time takes profit (when necessary) and the preservation of the planet into consideration in their daily activities. Recent megatrends, such as global warming, have made clear that a sustainable world depends on the integration of actions from countries all over the world. The COVID-19 pandemic also exposed the limitation of isolated solutions for complex problems, as programs to control the pandemic in specific regions were ineffective. This was due to the global circulation and continuing mutation of SARS-CoV-2; making existing COVID-19 vaccines less effective.

As the world population and the use of natural resources keep growing, it becomes more difficult to use and manage resources in a sustainable way. Qualified professionals are, as are many other resources, valuable and finite, and sustainability is a concept that should be considered in its management. From a global perspective the access to qualified professionals and their knowledge to all countries is a central element for a sustainable world. In the past decade, these qualified professionals have been studied by global talent management (GTM) researchers (Collings & Isichei, 2018). GTM, in the context of this discussion, "refers to the pool of high potential and high performing incumbents that the organization can draw upon to fill pivotal talent positions" (Collings & Mellahi, 2009, p. 307), framed globally. The concept of a global workforce has aroused a growing interest and has been fostered by the dissemination of patterns of organizational processes and standardization of professional training pathways. Qualified professionals from different countries are increasingly prepared to work in a globalized environment, expected to quickly adapt and perform efficiently in foreign countries, with

ASAC 2023 Workshop Proposal

different languages and different cultures (Crowley-Henry & Al Ariss, 2016).

The discussion of sustainable talent management and its value-add has been largely confined to the employee and their organizational context (e.g., Al Aina and Atan 2020; Painter-Morland, Kirk, Deslandes, Tansley 2019), without considering the sustainability of the larger global talent system. There is a need to include sustainability when we discuss talent management from a global perspective, otherwise the global talent management war will act as one more factor to deepen economic inequalities. For example, the adopted country may consider the sustainability of national immigration policies whereas the organization may wonder how to utilize strong GTM practices to capitalize on the prior experience levels of immigrants. We wonder, how host countries and organisations might satisfy their need for immigrant talent, yet stem the actual flow of highly skilled workers from developing nations to more developed countries? Or, how can they develop opportunities for immigrants to become a resource for their country of origin?

Migration can cause “brain drain”, which occurs when the outflow of human capital is higher than the inflow. Developing countries are more prone to face brain drain processes because career opportunities, work and living conditions and wages are usually better in developed countries (Carr, Inkson, & Thorn, 2005; Docquier & Iftikhar, 2019; Latukha, Shagalkina, Mitskevich, & Strogetskaia, 2021). Migration processes are, however, complex phenomena and can also have positive effects for all the stakeholders involved. Alongside brain drain, some researchers are also analyzing possible positive consequences resulting from the migration of talent from developing to developed regions, including concepts as brain gain, brain bank, brain circulation and talent flow in the discussion (Carr et al., 2005; Chand, 2019; Latukha et al., 2021; Lien & Wang, 2005; Singh & Krishna, 2015).

This workshop will include perspectives from many disciplines and cultures which provide a basis for further exploration of sustainable GTM. We will consider socio-political changes related to national and regional policies and the organizational processing of new information and prior knowledge that affect global talent mobility. We will also consider the social and economic impacts of changing global talent attraction and retention strategies that have surfaced during the COVID-19 pandemic and which will likely continue post-pandemic.

There are recruitment and retention challenges with respect to the management of a wide range of important yet mobile sources of talent, including healthcare and other skilled, often high-tech professionals. Varying approaches to pandemic management have increased global competition for essential talent, such as healthcare, and have, in many ways, exacerbated the already stressed economies through a brain drain of highly trained talent. Simultaneously organizations and regional stakeholders have enriched their own talent pools and their economies by attracting and supporting skilled edu-

ASAC 2023 Workshop Proposal

immigrants. GTM involves understanding and coping with a broad range of cross-cultural issues linked to compensating talent that arise in foreign subsidiaries and in global remote working conditions.

Workshop Objectives and Structure:

This workshop will facilitate a multi-disciplinary discussion of sustainable GTM that will drive new propositions and directions for future research. Our objective is to build knowledge about the challenges associated with sustainable global talent through an integrated focus on emerging, highly relevant GTM issues. We hope to develop new research partnerships that engage researchers from both Canada and other developing and developed countries.

The structure of the workshop will include short presentations from all the workshop organizers. After discussion with the group, we intend to identify multiple themes of interest and then split the entire group into discussion roundtables. The discussion leaders will use a variety of techniques to stimulate discussion, and we will document each group's ideas. These ideas will be presented to the entire group with new research directions and potential research partnerships.

Workshop Organizers:

The workshop organizers are actively conducting research in sustainable global talent management. Drs. Azevedo, Schlosser and McPhee are currently exploring the networks of highly skilled Brazilian immigrants to Canada. Dr. von Bonsdorff has been examining the sustainability of healthcare talent systems. Dr. Vaiman is widely regarded as one of the leading international scholars in the field of talent management. Dr. Vaiman has also published seven successful books on managing talent both in organizations and at a country level, as well as academic and practitioner-oriented articles in the areas of talent management and international HRM. We will examine how national policies, international crises, and social changes have influenced the competition for mobile talent and consider global talent sustainability. We hope to engage many more researchers at ASAC in this important discussion. The workshop will not require pre-registration. Many of the workshop organizers have also participated in a recent Emerald volume on Global Talent Management in Times of Uncertainty (eds. Schlosser and McPhee, online 2022, print 2023) which is part of a multi-volume Talent Management series (eds. Vaiman and Collings) published by Emerald and participated in the annual EIASM Talent Management workshops.

References

- Al Aina, R., & Atan, T. (2020). The impact of implementing talent management practices on sustainable organizational performance. *Sustainability*, *12*(20), 8372.
- Aust, I., Matthews, B., & Muller-Camen, M. (2020). Common Good HRM: A paradigm shift in Sustainable HRM? *Human Resource Management Review*, *30* (3).
- Barbier, E. (1987). The Concept of Sustainable Economic Development. *Environmental Conservation*, *14*, 101–110. doi: 10.1017/S0376892900011449
- Carr, S. C., Inkson, K., & Thorn, K. (2005). From global careers to talent flow: Reinterpreting ‘brain drain.’ *Journal of World Business*, *40*(4), 386–398. doi: 10.1016/j.jwb.2005.08.006.
- Chand, M. (2019). Brain Drain, Brain Circulation, and the African Diaspora in the United States. *Journal of African Business*, *20*(1), 6–19. doi: 10.1080/15228916.2018.1440461
- Collings, D. G., & Isichei, M. (2018). The shifting boundaries of global staffing: Integrating global talent management, alternative forms of international assignments and non-employees into the discussion. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *29*(1), 165–187. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2017.1380064>
- Collings, D. G., & Mellahi, K. (2009). Strategic talent management: A review and research agenda. *Human resource management review*, *19*(4), 304–313. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2009.04.001>
- Crowley-Henry, M. & Al Ariss, A. (2018). Talent management of skilled migrants: propositions and an agenda for future research. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *29*(13), 2054–2079, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2016.1262889>
- Docquier, F., & Iftikhar, Z. (2019). Brain drain, informality and inequality: A search-and-matching model for sub-Saharan Africa. *Journal of International Economics*, *120*, 109–125. doi: 10.1016/j.jinteco.2019.05.003
- Ehnert, I. (2009). Sustainable human resource management: A conceptual and exploratory analysis from a paradox perspective. New York, NY: Springer.
- Gladwin, T. N., Kennelly, J. J. & Krause, T. S. 1995. Shifting paradigms for sustainable development: Implications for management theory and research. *Academy of Management Review*, *20* (4), pp. 874-907.
- Latukha, M., Shagalkina, M., Mitskevich, E., & Strogetskaia, E. (2021). From brain drain to brain gain: The agenda for talent management in overcoming talent migration from emerging markets. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 1–30. doi: 10.1080/09585192.2021.1949374

ASAC 2023 Workshop Proposal

- Lien, D., & Wang, Y. (2005). Brain drain or brain gain: A revisit. *Journal of Population Economics*, 18(1), 153–163.
- Mobile Global Talent Management in Times of Uncertainty*. (2022). Eds. Schlosser, F and McPhee, D. Emerald.
- Montiel, I., & Delgado-Ceballos, J. (2014). Defining and Measuring Corporate Sustainability: Are We There Yet? *Organization & Environment*, 27, 113–139. doi: 10.1177/1086026614526413
- Painter-Morland, M., Kirk, S., Deslandes, G., & Tansley, C. (2019). Talent management: The good, the bad, and the possible. *European Management Review*, 16(1), 135-146.
- Purvis, B., Mao, Y., & Robinson, D. (2019). Three pillars of sustainability: In search of conceptual origins. *Sustainability Science*, 14(3), 681–695. doi: 10.1007/s11625-018-0627-5
- Singh, J., & Krishna, V. (2015). Trends in Brain Drain, Gain and Circulation: Indian Experience of Knowledge Workers. *Science Technology & Society*, 20, 300–321. doi: 10.1177/0971721815597132.
- Székely, F., & Knirsch, M. (2005). Responsible Leadership and Corporate Social Responsibility: Metrics for Sustainable Performance. *European Management Journal*, 23(6), 628–647. doi: 10.1016/j.emj.2005.10.009
- Taylor, S., J. Osland, J. & Egri, C. P. 2012. Introduction to HRM's role in sustainability: Systems, strategies, and practices. *Human Resource Management*, 51 (6), pp. 789-798.