

Why does Talent Leave Organizations? Talent Retention of Trainee Program Graduates

Pavel Král, Martina Richterová and Věra Králová

Faculty of Management, Prague University of Economics and Business, Prague, Czech Republic

pavel.kral@vse.cz

martina.ric@seznam.cz

vera.kralova@vse.cz

Abstract: Organizations fight for talent, and talent management has become an integral part of human resource management. Trainee programs are a part of talent management, which allows organizations to attract primarily university graduates with high potential. Trainee programs are highly selective and require high investment. However, much of the talent successfully finishing trainee programs (i.e. trainee program graduates) leave the organization before they can return the investment to the organization. The literature on talent management is centered around the process of attraction and development of talent but stays silent about talent retention. Thus, this research identifies and explores the reasons why trainee program graduates leave organizations. The study draws on a qualitative case study of the largest car producer in the Czech Republic with an established and highly developed trainee program. Data comprises of four sources: First, the interviews with the trainee program graduates, both who remained or left the organization after finishing the trainee program. Second, extensive internal talent management documentation related to the trainee program. Third, the consultations with human resource management specialists. Fourth, field notes from employee's non-participant observation. Grounded theory analysis was used to analyze the data. The findings reveal three overarching factors that determine the turnover of trainee program graduates: the sense of uniqueness, instantaneity, and privilege. These factors represent expectations that are set by the organization but are not achieved by the trainee program graduates. These factors uncover the underlying paradoxical nature of trainee programs, which is highlighted by two trainee program paradoxes: focus paradox and prestige paradox. The research has several theoretical contributions. In the first place, the findings expand talent management literature by identifying critical issues that may lead to talent drainage instead of talent retention. This research also contributes to generational cohort theory. Practical implications provide suggestions on how to integrate trainee programs into human resource management practices to achieve expected and desired benefits of talent management for organizations.

Keywords: trainee program, talent management, expectation management, talent retention, trainee program paradox

1. Introduction

One of the recent important organizational challenges is attracting and retaining young talent with a potential for high development (Cesário and Chambel, 2017; Gallardo-Gallardo, Thunnissen and Scullion, 2020). The competition for talent is so intensive that the situation has been labelled as a “war for talent” (Beechler and Woodward, 2009; Kwon and Jang, 2022). The predictions even suggest that artificial intelligence recruiting tools and other modern developments will intensify the competition for human capital, and the war for talent will become a permanent state (Black and van Esch, 2021). Organizations use various practices through which they manage talent from predictions of their need through their attraction and selection to the development and career management of the talent (Cappelli, 2008; Cappelli and Keller, 2014). Effective talent management improves organizational financial performance, increases employee engagement, and results in better organizational overall performance (Bethke-Langenegger, Mahler and Staffebach, 2011). As a result, talent management has become an integral part of human resource management.

However, the organizations are often unable to retain their talent, and thus they lose both their financial investments and valuable human capital. The literature on talent management is centred around the process of attraction and development of talent, but much less is known about talent retention. The factors of talent retention do not go beyond general constructs, such as employee engagement or job satisfaction (Fletcher, Alfes and Robinson, 2018; Presbitero, Roxas and Chadee, 2016). In addition, with Generation Y and Z, the problems of retaining talent have become more apparent, as younger generations are more likely to leave their employers even if they are satisfied (Deloitte, 2020). Thus, the retention of younger talent will be a crucial challenge for organizations.

Therefore, this study explores the factors of young talent retention. Particularly, this research poses the question of *why trainee program graduates leave organizations*. The trainee programs were chosen for three reasons.

First, trainee programs are particularly focused on young talent. Second, trainee programs are distinctive organizational practices that can be distinguished from other organizational practices, while other talent management practices may overlap with other strategic HR practices. And third, trainee programs are a global phenomenon (Cesário and Chambel, 2017; Tákcacs, Gjorevska and Meretei, 2018; Vaiginiene, et al., 2018). The study draws on a qualitative case study of the largest car producer in the Czech Republic. The organization has a long-established, prestigious, and highly developed trainee program, which, however, also suffers from low retention rates. A unique set of data comprise interviews with the trainee program graduates and HR specialists, internal documentation and non-participant observation.

2. Literature review and the research framework

Trainee programs emerged as an innovative talent management practice in the 1980s (Windolf, 1986), and currently, trainee programs have become a prominent organizational practice. Trainee programs are intensive learning and developmental programs, which are aimed primarily at university graduates with high developmental potential (Breugh, 2013; Cesário and Chambel, 2017). Trainee programs are prevalent not only in multi-national corporations and large companies but have become a new norm for mid-size and even smaller organizations in most parts of the world (Tákcacs, Gjorevska and Meretei, 2018; Vaiginiene, et al., 2018). Despite the prevalence of trainee programs in organizational practices, they are surprisingly neglected in academic management literature.

So far, we found only a handful of management studies dealing with trainee programs. Cesário and Chambel (2017) tested whether graduates recruited through a trainee programme have higher affective commitment and lower intention to leave than graduates not recruited through a trainee programme. To their surprise, they did not find significant differences between the two groups, but they indicate that there is a possible effect of perceived HRM practices, which are often distinctive in trainee programs. Jonsson and Thorgren (2017) showed that well-designed trainee programs may lead to the psychological contract reciprocity during and after the program, but the factors accounting for the reciprocity vary. Latukha (2011) studied the differences in reasons for intentions to leave of graduate program trainees in Western European and Russian companies. She found a great difference between Russian and European trainees regarding their expectations from the trainee programs, which indicates that there is no universal solution for designing a trainee program. This brief analysis demonstrates that our knowledge of trainee programs is limited and further investigation in trainee programs is needed.

A useful framework for the trainee programs may be developed by an adjustment of the general talent management process. The process has three stages. The first stage is the attraction and identification stage. The literature concurs that having a developed trainee program increases organizational attractiveness, which, in turn, brings more potential job candidates. The presence of a trainee program improves the employer brand (Chapman, et al., 2005; Ehrhart and Ziegert, 2005) and is also a signal to potential candidates of a higher opportunity for their development, which is an important criterion for university graduates' decision-making (Breugh, 2013; Held and Bader, 2018). This stage is usually at the center of managerial attention, and employers allocate the most resources to this stage (Holland, Sheehan and De Cieri, 2007).

The second stage is the learning and development stage. Although learning and development are pertinent throughout an entire career, this stage is distinctive in trainee programs for two reasons. First, during trainee programs, the intensity of learning and development is higher than in standard talent management programs or in regular job positions (Cesário and Chambel, 2017; Tákcacs, Gjorevska and Meretei, 2018). Second, trainee programs are framed within a fixed period, while standard talent management is rather continuous (Latukha, 2011). Talent management literature provides good evidence that learning and development have significant positive effects on many individual outcomes, such as employee commitment (Weng, et al., 2010), engagement (Bethke-Langenegger, Mahler and Staffelbach, 2011; Fletcher, Alfes and Robinson, 2018), or productivity (Claus, 2019). However, we are not sure what the effect is of such a limited period on the given outcomes.

The third stage is the retention of trainee program graduates. Trainee programs require high investments, and organizations expect that the talent will be able to return the investments (Latukha, 2011). However, low trainee program retention is a key issue connected with trainee programs. Narrative reviews of empirical evidence from human resource managers and specialists shows that more than half of trainee program graduates leave organizations. Considering wages, education and other costs for the typical length of trainee programs between

12 and 18 months, such an investment vanishes if a graduate leaves the organization. Empirical findings suggest that employers give issues related to talent retention, such as follow-up training, future job design, career management, or team building much less attention and allocate them significantly fewer resources (Holland, Sheehan and De Cieri, 2007; Meyers, et al., 2020). Retention is often regarded as taken-for-granted or a black box outside the control of managers (Thunnissen, 2016). Thus, we have only a limited knowledge of factors that decide whether a trainee program graduate leaves or stays in the organization.

From the talent's perspective, the first stage occurs before they enter the trainee program and attracts them to the organization. The second stage proceeds during the trainee program and is directly associated with their learning and development activities. The third stage follows the trainee program as trainees move to their regular job position after finishing the trainee program. Transitions among the stages can be a factor with possible effects, and thus are a part of the framework.

3. Methods

We undertook a qualitative single case study to explore heretofore the poorly understood phenomena of *why trainee program graduates leave organizations* in a real life context. The case study design allows us to explore such nascent phenomena and provide a deep understanding of the causes that lead to such phenomena (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007). A case study enables in-depth analysis of such a complex setting where boundaries between phenomenon and context are not evident (Yin, 1994). The process followed suggestions about theory building from case studies (Cornelissen, 2017; Eisenhardt, 1989; Gioia, Corley and Hamilton, 2013).

Theoretical sampling was employed by selecting Skoda Auto, which is the largest car producer in the Czech Republic and in which the focal phenomenon occurred (Yin, 2003). Skoda Auto has a well-established and highly developed trainee program for university graduates. The Skoda Trainee Program is designed for the adaptation and development of talented university graduates with the potential for quick progression to lower and middle managerial positions. The Skoda Trainee Program represents the unit of analysis in our case study. Despite the Skoda Trainee Program's attractiveness and high selectiveness, the retention rate of its graduates is not satisfactory for the organization. Internal data show that more than 37% of graduates leave during the first year after the trainee program graduation and within three years after the trainee program graduation, 70% of graduates leave the organization.

Case studies rely on the combination of data collection methods (Eisenhardt, 1989), and thus we draw on four types of data to triangulate different perspectives and to provide more accurate information and results (Yin, 2003). First, we conducted semi-structured interviews with 26 Skoda Trainee program graduates out of 50 participants in the course of the Skoda Trainee Program. Data were collected from trainee program graduates, both from those who remained in the organization in regular positions and from those who left the organization after finishing the trainee program. Second, we collected organizational documentation related to the formalized processes of the trainee program and the human resources documentation related to the acquiring and maintenance of talent in the organizations. Such data allows us to get insight into the core intention for such trainee program design as well as to capture the contingencies of the trainee program within the entire organization. Moreover, one of the researchers was allowed to be a part of the coordinating team of the Skoda Trainee Program with access to trainee personal documentation. Third, field notes from non-participant observation during the trainee program were collected during one term of the trainee program. The observations enabled us to see and hear non-formal discussions, and trainee interactions with co-workers, or the trainee program coordinator. Fourth, the semi-structured interviews with human resource management specialists and the trainee program coordinator provided internal information about the trainee program and the process of adaptation in the organization, which provided the link between the formalized documentation and the interview-based information provided by the graduates.

The data analysis utilized grounded theory as a tool to analyze the data obtained from all sources. Data analysis involved four main phases. First, the preparation phase is related to organizing and identifying evidence within a common database accessible to the three researchers (Yin, 2003). All three researchers repeatedly read all the collected documentation, field notes and transcribed interviews to get familiarized with the case. Second, the first-order coding process relied on discovering themes and emerging patterns based on the initial open coding (Cornelissen, 2017). From this stage, the memos were written down by each researcher to grasp insights, ideas, and potential links among emerging constructs (Corbin and Strauss, 1990; Saldaña, 2015). After the first order

coding process, the emerging patterns as concepts together with memos were jointly discussed and the potential variances were verified. Third, the second-order coding moved to a more abstract level of analysis by iteration back and forth between the data and the emerging patterns. The first major theme – *Sense of Uniqueness* – emerged early in the process of the second-order coding. Further analysis allowed us to reveal *Instantaneity* and *Sound voice* as two further major themes. Fourth, the theoretical level of analysis further questioned the discovered themes for the possibility of deeper theoretical meaning as the aggregate dimensions. We searched for potential theoretical dimensions by asking how these themes can help us explain the researched phenomenon of the high turnover rate of trainee graduates in the first years of working in regular positions (Gioia, Corley and Hamilton, 2013). As we compared the themes with the literature and the data, we identified two theoretical dimensions that capture two paradoxes that influence the trainee transition from the trainee program to regular position. *The Focus Paradox* and *The Prestige Paradox* provide explanation to the research question of why trainee program graduates leave organizations. Figure 1 introduces the results of data analysis leading to the aggregate dimensions as two trainee program paradoxes, 2nd order themes as retention factors shaped by the 1st order concepts.

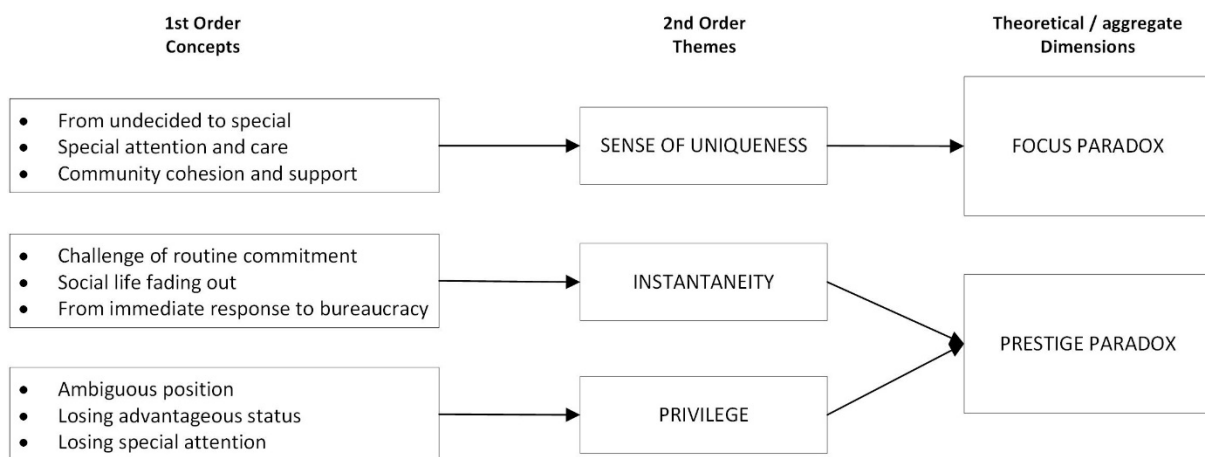


Figure 1: Result of the data analysis

4. Findings

The analysis revealed three overarching factors that determine the turnover of trainee program graduates: the *sense of uniqueness*, *instantaneity*, and *privilege*. However, contrary to expectations, the factors are not negative attributes of the trainee program. These factors rather represent high expectations set by the organization before and during the trainee program, but these expectations are not met by the trainee program graduates in their subsequent careers in regular positions. As a respondent gave a picture of the change in expectations by pointing out:

‘When a person finishes the program they often have exaggerated expectations... We were often told that we were a sort of elite, and all of a sudden we found that it is not like that and eventually you have the same, but often worse position than people that did not go through the program.’

These factors uncover the underlying paradoxical nature of trainee programs because seemingly positive features of trainee programs may lead to future disillusion and leaving the organization. The occurrence of such paradoxes determines that trainee program graduates leave organizations even though the trainee program is well designed and trainees express positive opinions about the trainee program. *Sense of uniqueness* results in *focus paradox*, while *instantaneity* and *sound voice* jointly cause *prestige paradox*. Figure 2 presents the model of trainee program paradoxes.

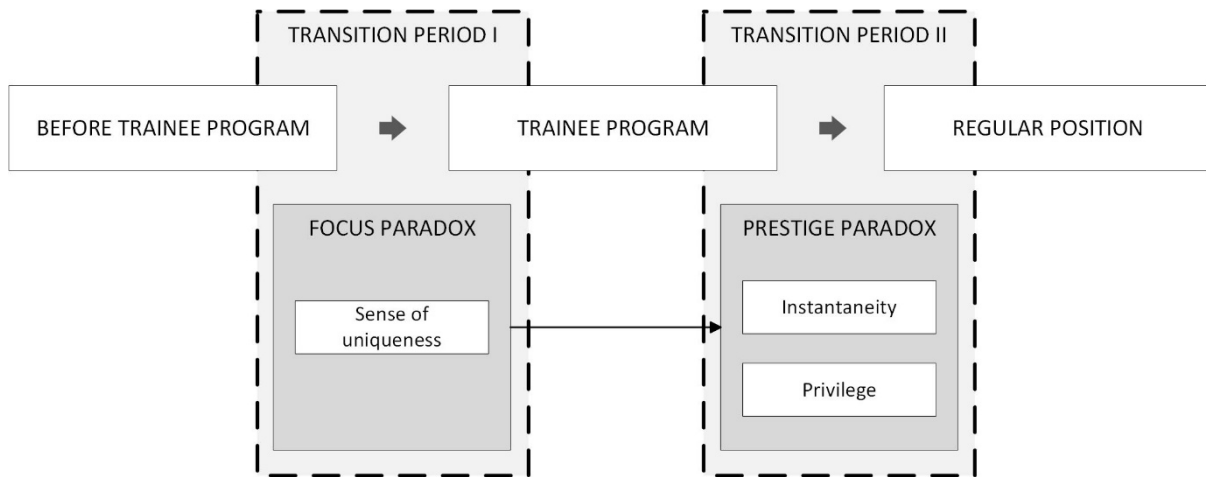


Figure 2: Model of trainee program paradoxes

4.1 Focus paradox

The *focus paradox* explains how excessive attention to talented individuals may backfire. The *sense of uniqueness* is the primary factor of the *focus paradox*. The *sense of uniqueness* emerges early in the trainee program in the phase we term the Transition Period I. This period occurs during the transition from university to the trainee program. Most university graduates enter the program right after university graduation or after a short period of their previous working experience with doubts or with a vague vision of their future career. Instead, they perceive the trainee program as an opportunity to try different positions and as a chance to decide later. They also reflected that they were aware of the low chance of obtaining a managerial or expert position with their limited experience. Thus, their self-esteem is relatively low in the beginning.

Trainee program selectivity, as the trainees pass several rounds of selection procedures, starts to build the *sense of uniqueness*. Their talent, specialty, and unique opportunity is often emphasized by their mentors, trainee program coordinator, and educators. Trainees enthusiastically told, for example:

'I am treated as a special employee and they count on me' or 'Trainee program is presented as exclusive thing, and it is exclusive'.

The trainees receive special attention, they complete an extensive number of courses designed especially for them, and they are aware of some advantages they have in comparison with regular positions in the organization. The uniqueness is enhanced by the strong community cohesion of the trainees. The trainees support themselves in their views and meet regularly even during non-working opportunities. As a result, the trainees perceive themselves as the centre of attention and they work in an environment, in which the organizational processes are centered around them. This perception is reflected in their evaluation of their activities in the organization. They evaluate activities from the perspective of "how did this activity contribute to my development?" instead of "how did this activity contribute to the organization?" In subsequent organizational careers, previous trainees are suddenly not the center of attention and they have to fight for their place again.

4.2 Prestige paradox

The *prestige paradox* explains how perfect care and personal development may backfire. Two factors of this paradox: *instantaneity* and *privilege*. These factors are a consequence of the special care during the trainee program, but in contrast to the sense of uniqueness, both of these factors emerge during the transition from the trainee program to regular working positions, which we term the Transition Period II. The factors refer to the loss of the features that trainees subconsciously exploited during the trainee program, but were not aware of them until they were lost.

The first factor is *instantaneity*. During the trainee program, trainees experience high variability of activities, job rotation, and different challenges. After entering a regular position, this variability often vanishes. Most of the regular job positions are highly specialized, less complex and provide more routine activities. Program graduates in regular positions said:

'I must feel I am developing myself. I want to learn new things, and when I do the same thing repeatedly, I don't feel satisfied' or 'What I miss the most is the freedom to attend any event that develops me...now they [such events] are often restricted only for certain departments or positions'

Social life also changes. Meeting with peers from trainee programs shrinks to occasional planned events. Since the social life during the trainee program is exceptionally rich, the lack of social life is not substituted by the social life at the regular workplace, which summarizes the ex-trainee saying:

'Our community of ex-trainees does not hold together too much.'

Finally, participants of the trainee program hit the "wall of bureaucracy". The agile approach to problem-solving during the trainee program is replaced by formal procedures that are part of the regular organizational processes, and every decision or solution takes noticeably more time. As a trainee program graduate noted:

'The bureaucracy is dreadful and it slows down the entire organization' or 'Even changing a single thing is unreal'.

The loss of interestingness, instantaneousness, and variability lowers their engagement.

The second factor is termed *privilege*. Many of the trainees experience disillusion, as they are not recognized as talent anymore. Rather, they experience the ambiguity of their reception by their new managers and colleagues. They describe their position as 'neither juniors nor experts'. They also suddenly lose some of their advantages. A trainee graduate noted:

'Just overnight, I became a regular employee. I do not have any advantage any more.'

Some of them referred to "unfair pay", as they were paid less than their peers who entered the organization after a similar experience in different organizations. Education opportunities also shrink. Finally, the trainees lost regular access to their mentors and trainee program coordinator.

Overall, the higher are set the expectations, the deeper might be the fall after the period of a trainee program.

5. Discussion

The research has several theoretical contributions. In the first place, the findings expand talent management literature by identifying critical issues that may lead to talent drainage instead of talent retention. So far, talent management was perceived as a necessary – or at least a highly desirable – organizational practice. Well-designed talent management programs should result in competitive advantage (Cesário and Chambel, 2017; Gallardo-Gallardo, Thunnissen and Scullion, 2020). In contrast, our findings show that even well-established and highly developed trainee programs may have paradoxical outcomes since they attract talent who leave the organization soon after completion of the trainee program. The paradox emerges from a period of excessive attention to talent, which sets the talent's expectations higher than organizational practices may be able to meet. This study contributes to talent management literature by introducing two paradoxes: the focus paradox and the prestige paradox. These paradoxes also offer a mechanism for how employee and organizational perceptions, evaluations, and values may clash (Khoreva, Vaiman and Van Zalk, 2017; Thunnissen, 2016). The paradoxes also provide a further explanation of a complicated nature of the factors that influence trainee graduates psychological contract reciprocity or intention to leave, as revealed in previous studies (Cesário and Chambel, 2017; Jonsson and Thorgren, 2017; Latukha, 2011).

This research also contributes to research on generations at the workplace and generational cohort theory. Previous studies showed higher levels of self-esteem and narcissism among generations Y and Z compared to generation X and Baby boomers (Twenge, et al., 2010; Weber, 2017; Wood, Borja and Hoke, 2021). This study indirectly supports high levels of narcissism among these generations. But more importantly, the findings corroborate the negative consequences of narcissism, such as impatience to succeed and high expectations for pay and promotions (Luna-Arocas, Danvila-Del Valle and Lara, 2020; Ng, Schweitzer and Lyons, 2010). The paradoxes revealed in this study may be an indirect consequence of higher narcissism.

5.1 Practical implications

The findings offer some practical implications for organizations. First of all, we suggest implementing expectation management into trainee programs. Our findings show that exaggerated trainee expectations lead to the sense of uniqueness, which cannot be preserved in subsequent regular job positions after the trainee program is complete. Exaggerated expectations often start with marketing and promoting the program and are constantly built during the program by emphasizing uniqueness, instantaneity, and privilege. These factors from the trainee programs are lost with the transition to a regular position. As biased communication is the cause, the remedy lies in communication, which should be more realistic and modest. Also mentors who are aware of the paradoxes may shape the expectation according to future positions. Incorporating mentoring, strategic leadership, and knowledge sharing into their talent management strategy is a recommended strategy for Generation Y and Z employees in general (Naim and Lenka, 2018). In the case of trainees, mentors are crucially important during the period of transition to the regular job position. On the other hand, leaders' sense of uniqueness is a factor that helps leaders to be perceived as authentic by their followers (Zheng, et al., 2020). Thus, a sense of uniqueness is a double-edged sword, which needs to be balanced.

Second, paradoxes occur because trainee programs are not fully integrated into human resource management practices. Trainee programs in large companies are sometimes too isolated from regular human resource and organizational processes. Trainees in these programs form a unique subculture with weak links to regular organizational life. Integrating the aspects of talent management into general human resource management practices but also integrating the trainees among regular workers could facilitate the excessive sense of uniqueness. Another effective, but not easy-to-implement, solution is inclusive leadership (Randel, et al., 2018). Inclusive leaders are able to develop team belongingness together with maintaining the perception of individual uniqueness within the group through a set of behaviors, such as promoting individuals' diverse contribution or helping individuals fully provide their perspective.

5.2 Limitations and future research

Of course, as is the case with any single case study, our contributions must be considered within the given boundaries. While our study provides a deep insight into the trainee programs and uncovers new phenomena in the paradoxes, further empirical scrutiny should follow to enable empirical generalizability (Yin, 1994). We also need to acknowledge that we explored a well-designed trainee program, and thus we do not cover factors that occur during poorly designed trainee programs. Thus, our research can be perceived as the first probe into this important but neglected area and offers several suggestions for future inquiry. First, future work can empirically verify the occurrence of the paradoxes using a representative sample. A future quantitative study could employ, for example, a personal sense of uniqueness scale (Şimşek and Yalınçetin, 2010), which was adapted for organizational research purposes (Zheng, et al., 2020). Second, ethnographic research design could elaborate more on the emergence of the paradoxes, or action research design could explore how to mitigate the paradoxes and seamlessly integrate the trainee programs into general human resource practices. Finally, future work could empirically examine the effect of a trainee program's individual features on selected organizational characteristics, such as employer brand or organizational attractiveness.

Acknowledgements

This work was supported by the Czech Science Foundation [grant number 19-14484Y].

References

- Beechler, S. and Woodward, I.C., 2009. The global 'war for talent'. *Journal of International Management*, 15(3), pp. 273–285.
- Bethke-Langenegger, P., Mahler, P. and Staffelbach, B., 2011. Effectiveness of talent management strategies. *European Journal of International Management*, 5(5), pp. 524–539.
- Black, J.S. and van Esch, P., 2021. AI-enabled recruiting in the war for talent. *Business Horizons*, 64(4), pp. 513–524.
- Breaugh, J.A., 2013. Employee recruitment. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 64(1), pp. 389–416.
- Cappelli, P., 2008. Talent management for the twenty-first century. *Harvard Business Review*, March 2008, pp. 74–81.
- Cappelli, P. and Keller, J., 2014. Talent management: Conceptual approaches and practical challenges. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 1(1), pp. 305–331.
- Cesário, F. and Chambel, M.J., 2017. A previous trainee experience: does it matter for retention of young graduates? *International Journal of Organizational Analysis*, 25(2), pp. 270–281.
- Chapman, D.S., Uggerslev, K.L., Carroll, S.A., Piasentin, K.A. and Jones, D.A., 2005. Applicant attraction to organizations and job choice: A meta-analytic review of the correlates of recruiting outcomes. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 90(5), pp. 928–944.

- Claus, L., 2019. HR disruption—Time already to reinvent talent management. *BRQ Business Research Quarterly*, 22(3), pp. 207–215.
- Corbin, J.M. and Strauss, A., 1990. Grounded theory research: Procedures, canons, and evaluative criteria. *Qualitative Sociology*, 13(1), pp. 3–21.
- Cornelissen, J.P., 2017. Preserving theoretical divergence in management research: Why the explanatory potential of qualitative research should be harnessed rather than suppressed. *Journal of Management Studies*, 54(3), pp. 368–383.
- Deloitte., 2020. *The Deloitte Global Millennial Survey 2020 Millennials and Gen Zs Hold the Key to Creating a “Better Normal”* [online] Available at: <<https://www2.deloitte.com/global/en/pages/about-deloitte/articles/millennialsurvey.html>>
- Ehrhart, K.H. and Ziegert, J.C., 2005. Why are individuals attracted to organizations? *Journal of Management*, 31(6), pp. 901–919.
- Eisenhardt, K.M., 1989. Building theories from case study research. *Academy of Management Review*, 14(4), pp. 532–550.
- Eisenhardt, K.M. and Graebner, M.E., 2007. Theory building from cases: Opportunities and challenges. *Academy of Management Journal*, 50(1), pp. 25–32.
- Fletcher, L., Alfes, K. and Robinson, D., 2018. The relationship between perceived training and development and employee retention: the mediating role of work attitudes. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 29(18), pp. 2701–2728.
- Gallardo-Gallardo, E., Thunnissen, M. and Scullion, H., 2020. Talent management: context matters. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 31(4), pp. 457–473.
- Gioia, D.A., Corley, K.G. and Hamilton, A.L., 2013. Seeking qualitative rigor in inductive research. *Organizational Research Methods*, 16(1), pp. 15–31.
- Held, K. and Bader, B., 2018. The influence of images on organizational attractiveness: Comparing Chinese, Russian and US companies in Germany. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 29(3), pp. 510–548.
- Holland, P., Sheehan, C. and De Cieri, H., 2007. Attracting and retaining talent: exploring human resources development trends in Australia. *Human Resource Development International*, 10(3), pp. 247–262.
- Jonsson, L. and Thorgren, S., 2017. Trainee programs: An emerging model on psychological contract reciprocity. *Personnel Review*, 46(8), pp. 1738–1754
- Khoreva, V., Vaiman, V. and Van Zalk, M., 2017. Talent management practice effectiveness: investigating employee perspective. *Employee Relations*, 39(1), pp. 19–33.
- Kwon, K. and Jang, S., 2022. There is no good war for talent: a critical review of the literature on talent management. *Employee Relations*, 44(1), pp. 94–120.
- Latukha, M., 2011. To stay or leave: Motives behind the decisions of graduate programs’ trainees’ in European and Russian companies. *Journal of East European Management Studies*, 16(2), pp. 140–161.
- Luna-Arocas, R., Danvila-Del Valle, I. and Lara, F.J., 2020. Talent management and organizational commitment: the partial mediating role of pay satisfaction. *Employee Relations*, 42(4), pp. 863–881.
- Meyers, M.C., van Woerkom, M., Paauwe, J. and Dries, N., 2020. HR managers’ talent philosophies: Prevalence and relationships with perceived talent management practices. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 31(4), pp. 562–588.
- Naim, M.F. and Lenka, U., 2018. Development and retention of Generation Y employees: A conceptual framework. *Employee Relations*, 40(2), pp. 433–455.
- Ng, E.S.W., Schweitzer, L. and Lyons, S.T., 2010. New generation, great expectations: A field study of the millennial generation. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 25(2), pp. 281–292.
- Presbitero, A., Roxas, B. and Chadee, D., 2016. Looking beyond HRM practices in enhancing employee retention in BPOs: focus on employee–organisation value fit. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 27(6), pp. 635–652.
- Randel, A.E., Galvin, B.M., Shore, L.M., Ehrhart, K.H., Chung, B.G., Dean, M.A. and Kedharnath, U., 2018. Inclusive leadership: Realizing positive outcomes through belongingness and being valued for uniqueness. *Human Resource Management Review*, 28(2), pp. 190–203.
- Saldaña, J., 2015. *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. 3rd ed. London: Sage.
- Şimşek, Ö.F. and Yalınçetin, B., 2010. I feel unique, therefore I am: The development and preliminary validation of the personal sense of uniqueness (PSU) scale. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 49(6), pp. 576–581.
- Tákacs, S., Gjorevska, N. and Meretei, B., 2018. Management and leadership development needs: The case of Hungary. In: D. Purg, A. Braček Lalić and J.A. Pope, eds. *Business and society: Making management education relevant for the 21st century*. Cham: Springer. pp. 67–85.
- Thunnissen, M., 2016. Talent management: For what, how and how well? An empirical exploration of talent management in practice. *Employee Relations*, 38(1), pp. 57–72.
- Twenge, J.M., Campbell, S.M., Hoffman, B.J. and Lance, C.E., 2010. Generational differences in work values: Leisure and extrinsic values increasing, social and intrinsic values decreasing. *Journal of Management*, 36 (5), pp. 1117–1142.
- Vaiginienė, E., Alonderienė, R., Pilkiene, M., Ramonienė, L., Savanevičienė, A. and Stankevičiute, Ž., 2018. Management and leadership development needs: The Case of Lithuania. In: D. Purg, A. Braček Lalić and J.A. Pope, eds. *Business and society: Making management education relevant for the 21st Century*. Cham: Springer. pp. 115–135.
- Weber, J., 2017. Discovering the millennials’ personal values orientation: A comparison to two managerial populations. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 143(3), pp. 517–529.

- Weng, Q., McElroy, J.C., Morrow, P.C. and Liu, R., 2010. The relationship between career growth and organizational commitment. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 77(3), pp. 391–400.
- Windolf, P., 1986. Recruitment, selection, and internal labour markets in Britain and Germany. *Organization Studies*, 7(3), pp. 235–254.
- Wood, A.D., Borja, K. and Hoke, L., 2021. Narcissism for fun and profit: An empirical examination of narcissism and its determinants in a sample of Generation Z business college students. *Journal of Management Education*, 45(6), pp. 916–952.
- Yin, R.K., 1994. *Case study research: Design and methods*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Yin, R.K., 2003. *Case study research: Design and methods*. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Zheng, M.X., Yuan, Y., van Dijke, M., De Cremer, D. and Van Hiel, A., 2020. The interactive effect of a leader's sense of uniqueness and sense of belongingness on followers' perceptions of leader authenticity. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 164(3), pp. 515–533.