



# Academic Career Sustainability and Career Advancement for Migrant Faculty in Higher Education Institutions

<sup>1</sup>Anusha K, <sup>2</sup>Dr. V.P. Sriram

<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar, <sup>2</sup>Research Supervisor

BUB ABBS Research Centre, Bengaluru Karnataka, India

BUB ABBS Research Centre, Bengaluru Karnataka, India

## Abstract

Sustainability of academic careers has become an urgent issue for higher education institutions, especially with the rise in faculty mobility. Migrant faculty contribute to greater academic diversity and improve the output of an institution. Their future career sustainability largely depends on the support they receive for their career progression. This research paper will explore how career development practices affect the sustainability of academic faculties among migrant faculty in higher education institutions in Bengaluru, India. The study involved 358 migrant faculty members. The findings indicate that career advancement practices have a strong and positive effect on career sustainability. However, the relationship between the challenges faced by migrant faculty and the influence of career advancement practices on career sustainability is somewhat weakened by job satisfaction and perceived organizational support. The results provide valuable insights for institutional leaders and policymakers in creating inclusive and sustainable career development policies that support long-term sustainability in human capital within education.

**Keywords:** Career progression, Academic career sustainability, Migrant faculty, Higher education institutions, Structural equation modeling

## 1. Introduction

HEIs contribute significantly to knowledge development, innovation, and social development and academic faculty will be the key to institutional effectiveness. Over the past few years, HEIs have become more and more dependent on so-called migrant faculty-academics who serve outside their home areas or even their own states in order to secure faculty amounts, build academic and teaching strength, as well as improve their research abilities. Although this mobility provides professional opportunities, the migrant faculty usually face special issues connected with cultural adaptation, institutional integration, and career development

opportunities, which may considerably affect their sustainability in the long-run career. Practices that are related to career advancement are key determinants of faculty motivation, engagement, and retention such as promotion and tenure systems, fairness in performance appraisal and mentoring, training, and research support. With these practices being transparent and fair, they create job satisfaction and commitments to the organization and long-term academic career paths. On the other hand, poor career support may cause dissatisfaction, engagement, and turnover intentions, especially in migrant faculty. Although the trend of migrant academics in Indian HEIs is increasingly becoming common, empirical studies investigating the connection between practices of career advancement and the sustenance of academic careers are still scarce. To fill this gap, the current research aims at understanding the practices of career advancement that affect career sustainability in migrant faculty and analysing the mediating effects of job satisfaction and perceived organizational support, thus making a contribution to the sustainability of human resource management in higher education.

### **1.1 Research Problem**

Although the role of migrant faculty in Indian HEIs has increased, few empirical studies have investigated how the cultural identity of career advancement practices affects the sustainability of academic careers of this group. While tributing interest in the existing literature is the fact that it concentrates on general faculty but does not consider the experiences and issues of migrant academics. This paper fills this gap by empirically researching on the effects of career advancements practice on career sustainability of migrant faculty in Bengaluru, both directly and indirectly.

### **1.2 Significance of the Study**

The research adds to the scholarly literature in that it incorporates the career advancement theory, sustainability and migration views in tertiary education. In practice, the results will help institutional leaders, HR managers, and policymakers to develop progressive and sustainable career advancement policies in accordance with NEP 2020 and NAAC quality indicators.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

1. The questions proposed that need to be answered in order to investigate how career advancement practices at work affect academic career sustainability in migrant faculty.
2. To investigate the mediator role of job satisfaction.
3. In order to determine the mediating role of perceived organizational support.
4. To profane the modulating influence of migrant faculty issues.

## 2. Review of Literature

### 2.1 Literature reviews

The promotion of a career in higher education institution is inextricably connected to the sustained professional growth of the academic faculty that is the key leugisative factor in advancing the individual career growth as well as the sustainability of the institution. As **Pham (2021)** points out, institutional quality and competitiveness in the world heavily rely on academic staff development especially in terms of research output, obtaining higher qualifications, and academic engagement. The article discusses that active research participation and academic level among the faculty members not only enhance faculty members but also the institute in terms of reputation, quality of teaching and stakeholder value. Professional growth programmes like assisting in research publication, doctoral training and academic promotion are therefore placed at strategic positions where they contribute to career growth in institutions of higher learning. Moreover, **Pham (2021)** also emphasizes that systematic investing in academic personnel development ensures that the individual career paths of staff members are aligned with the institutional ones and, thus, contributes to the sustainability of academic careers and supports the overall institutions development in the long term. International discourse on academic motivations in proving that professional competence and commitment to mission is the major motivational factor of scholarly staff. It also shows that significant differences exist in the perception of staff and managers, so that to have more sustainable and productive institutions, the human resource policies in higher education should be individualized and address these differences in motivation.

The research of **Dehtjare, J. & Uzule, K. (2023)** is put into the perspective of sustainable higher education management and the importance of realizing quality teachings and meeting of both personal and organizational objectives in the context of the broader educational sustainability. **Lu and Zhang (2023)** use the research as a counterpoint to the larger institutional and policy changes that have pushed the value of research output and required language teachers recruited as a part and parcel of the instructional professional community to have a dual professional identity. The migrant faculty have unique career pressures that are framed by structural, institutional and even socio-cultural factors in the system of higher education.

**Singh (2023)** shows that migrant scholars in Australian universities tend to have a high level of career capital but its mobility is limited due to less recognition of previous success and limited communication with the professional community in addition to uncertain opportunities of promotion and leadership. Equally, the article by **Ortiga et al. (2018)** demonstrates that migrant faculty in Singapore is forced to operate in a high-ranking academic system where professional movement becomes national policy, precarity in employment, and institutional stratification render institutions invisible. Although migrant scholars have high academic qualifications, in most cases they are affected by issues centered on status recognition, cultural integration, and job security. Collectively, these papers support the idea that the promotion of migrant faculty members into careers cannot be purely based on merit, but these institutional practices and power systems mediate this pattern, which clarifies the requirement of inclusive policies to appreciate international academic experience in a balanced manner. When employees are satisfied with their jobs and their organizations support them, this is the major determinant of individual commitment and performance in all sectors.

According to **Sadaf et al. (2022)**, good organizational value system and perceived organizational support, which has a positive effect on job satisfaction, positively affect the organizational commitment. In their work, they note that employees become more inclined to become emotionally attached and loyal to the organization in case they feel valued and supported. On the same note, **To and Huang (2022)** show that the gaming industry in Macao has witnessed that equity and perceived organizational support leads to increased job satisfaction, which enhances the organizational commitment. Both articles highlight that satisfaction among employees is achieved by supported organizational behaviors, as well as treating them equally which leads to increased commitment and long term workforce engagement.

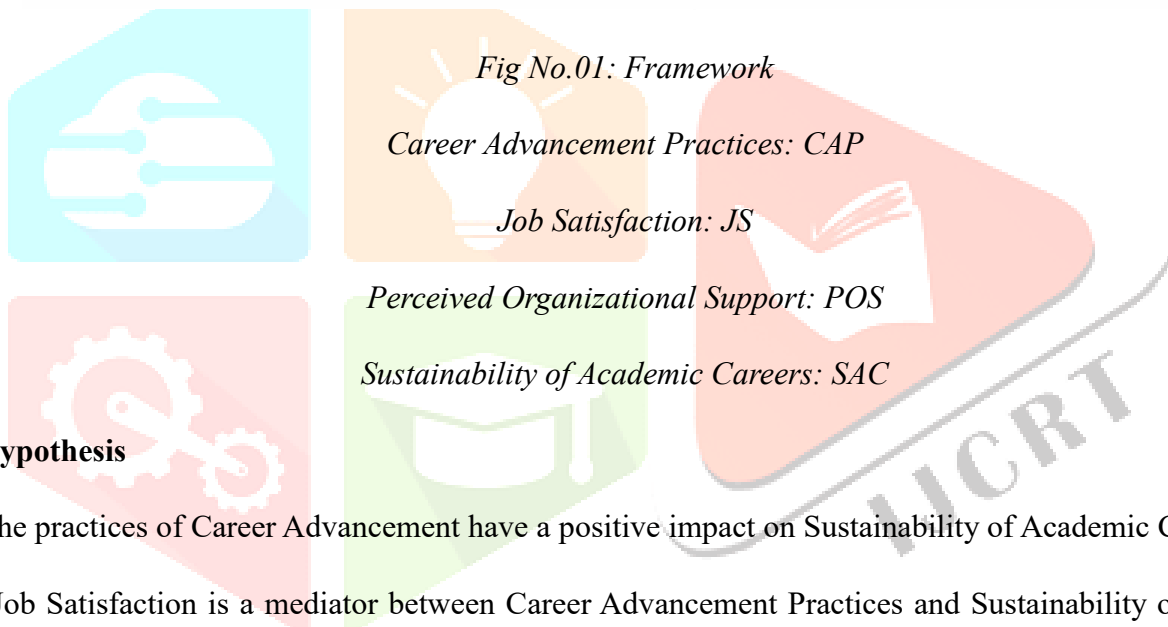
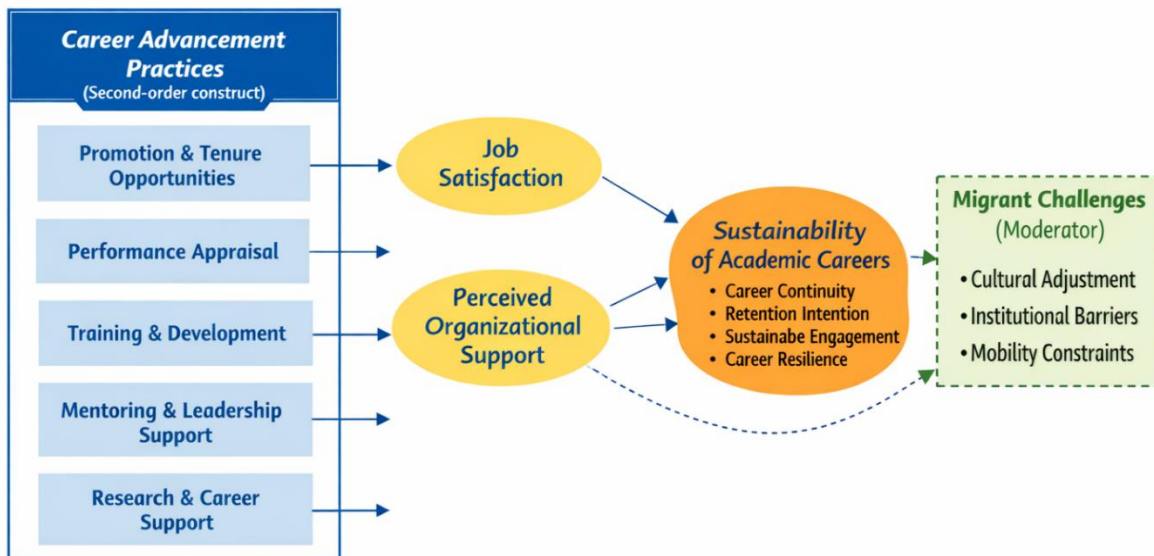
## 2.2 Research Gap

Despite the research on academic career sustainability carried out at the international level, there are very few empirical SEM-based studies devoted to the problem of migrant faculty in Indian HEIs. This paper fills this gap by preparing and implementing an extensive model of SEM.

## 3. Conceptual Framework

Theory behind the connection between the premise of career advancement and the maintenance of academic careers of migrant faculty in academic institutions. Career Advice practises are defined as the second-order regarding promoting and tenuring opportunities, fairness in performance appraisal, training and professional development, mentoring and leadership support, research and career support. The model bases its theory on the Social Exchange Theory and states that supportive and fair career advancement practices facilitate mutual relationships between jobs that lead to job satisfaction and perceived organizational support that enhances long-term career sustainability (**Blau, 1964; Eisenberger and et al., 1986**). Based on the Career Construction Theory, the framework explains that promotion possibilities allow the migrant faculty to adjust, develop resilience, and create sustainable academic careers (**Savickas, 2005**). Sustainability of academic careers as a dependent construct involves continuity of careers, retention intention, engagement and resilience as it is error consistent with Sustainability Theory, which focuses on humans capital viability in the long term (**Ehnert, 2009**). The migrant faculty challenges are included as a moderating variable and consider contextual constraints that could find their way into career sustainability outcomes.

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### 3.2 Hypothesis

H<sub>1</sub>: The practices of Career Advancement have a positive impact on Sustainability of Academic Careers.

H<sub>2</sub>: Job Satisfaction is a mediator between Career Advancement Practices and Sustainability of Academic Careers.

H<sub>3</sub>: Perceived Organizational Support is a mediating variable between Career Advancement Practices on the one hand and Sustainability of Academic Careers on the other.

H<sub>4</sub>: Migrant Faculty Challenges mediate the association between Career Advice Practices and Sustainability of Academic Careers.

## 4. Research Methodology

### 4.1 Research Design

The research design is explanatory and descriptive based on a quantitative approach to the study. The empirical research of causal links between career advancement practices and academic career sustainability among migrant faculty is conducted by involving the use of a structured questionnaire to gather primary data.

## 4.2 Study Area

The research paper is carried out in Bengaluru (a significant educational city within India) that employs a broad spectrum of public and private higher learning institutions, universities, autonomous colleges, and deemed universities.

## 4.3 Population of the Study

The population of the research will be migrant members of the teaching fraternity in institutions of higher learning within Bengaluru. Migrant faculty are those faculty in institutions that are distantly based in their home state or region.

## 4.4 Sampling Design

- **Sampling Technique:** Purposive sampling
- **Sampling Unit:** Individual migrant faculty member
- **Sample Size:** 358

## 4.5 Data Collection Procedure

The information is gathered using online and offline strategies. Respondents are given previous consent, and their confidentiality is guaranteed.

## 4.6 Scope of the Study

The field of research is on the migrant faculty of higher learning institutions in Bengaluru. The findings can be inferred with caution in other appropriate metropolitan educational settings in India.

## 4.7 Limitations of the Study

- Use of self-reported data
- Cross-sectional design
- Geographic limitation to Bengaluru

## 5. Data Analysis

### 5.1 Reliability Test Cronbach's Alpha

| Construct                                | No. of Items | Cronbach's Alpha |
|--|--------------|------------------|
| Career Advancement Practices (CAP)       | 15           | 0.912            |
| Job Satisfaction (JS)                    | 3            | 0.881            |
| Perceived Organizational Support (POS)   | 3            | 0.864            |
| Sustainability of Academic Careers (SAC) | 5            | 0.903            |
| Migrant Faculty Challenges (MFC)         | 3            | 0.842            |

Table No.01: Cronbach's Alpha

**Interpretation:**

All constructs have Cronbach's Alpha greater than 0.70, which means that all the measurement scales are very consistent and reliable.

**5.2 Correlation Matrix**

| Variables | CAP     | JS      | POS     | SAC     | MFC |
|-----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----|
| CAP       | 1       |         |         |         |     |
| JS        | 0.62**  | 1       |         |         |     |
| POS       | 0.58**  | 0.55**  | 1       |         |     |
| SAC       | 0.67**  | 0.59**  | 0.56**  | 1       |     |
| MFC       | -0.31** | -0.28** | -0.26** | -0.34** | 1   |

*Tabel No.02: Correlation Matrix*

**Note:**

**p < 0.01**

**Interpretation:**

The relationship between Career Advancement Practices on one hand and Job Satisfaction, Perceived Organizational Support and Sustainability of Academic Careers on the other has a strong positive correlation. Career sustainability has a negative relationship with Migrant Faculty Challenges, which confirms the expectations.

**5.3 Regression Analysis****Dependent Variable Sustainability of Academic Careers (SAC)**

| Predictor                              | $\beta$ | Std. Error | t-value | p-value |
|--|---------|------------|---------|---------|
| Career Advancement Practices (CAP)     | 0.42    | 0.05       | 8.76    | <0.001  |
| Job Satisfaction (JS)                  | 0.29    | 0.06       | 5.14    | <0.001  |
| Perceived Organizational Support (POS) | 0.24    | 0.05       | 4.76    | <0.001  |
| Migrant Faculty Challenges (MFC)       | -0.18   | 0.04       | -3.92   | <0.01   |

*Table No.03: Regression Analysis*

**Interpretation:** The results of the regression indicate that Career Advancements Practices (CAP) possessed the greatest impact in a positive direction on the Sustainability of the Academic Career ( $b = 0.42$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), and thus it can be stated that effective promotion and development systems have a strong effect in enhancing academic career sustainability. Job Satisfaction (JS) also appears to have a significant and positive change towards predicting sustainability ( $b = 0.29$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), indicating that job satisfaction more strongly predicts faculty might stay in academic career. The positive impact of perceived Organizational support (POS) is

significant ( $b = 0.24$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), which shows that the input of the institutional support makes a difference in career stability. Conversely, Migrant Faculty Challenges (MFC) have adverse impacts on career sustainability ( $b = -0.18$ ,  $p = -.01$ ), implying that the impediments against migrant faculty undermine career academic sustainability in the long-run.

#### 5.4 Model Summary

| R    | R <sup>2</sup> | Adjusted R <sup>2</sup> | F-value | Sig.   |
|------|----------------|-------------------------|---------|--------|
| 0.76 | 0.58           | 0.57                    | 121.34  | <0.001 |

Table No.04: Model Summary

#### Interpretation:

The regression model has a strong explanatory ability as it predicts 58% variability in Sustainability of Academic Careers. Career Advice Practices are the strongest predictors, then Job Satisfaction and Organizational Support, and Migrant Faculty Challenges would impact negatively on career sustainability.

#### 5.5 Confirmatory Factor Analysis

| Construct | Item | Estimate | S.E. | C.R.  | P value |
|-----------|------|----------|------|-------|---------|
| CAP       | CAP1 | 0.78     | —    | —     | < 0.001 |
| CAP       | CAP2 | 0.81     | 0.04 | 18.42 | < 0.001 |
| CAP       | CAP3 | 0.75     | 0.05 | 16.88 | < 0.001 |
| CAP       | CAP4 | 0.79     | 0.04 | 18.06 | < 0.001 |
| CAP       | CAP5 | 0.83     | 0.04 | 19.11 | < 0.001 |
| JS        | JS1  | 0.84     | —    | —     | < 0.001 |
| JS        | JS2  | 0.88     | 0.03 | 21.42 | < 0.001 |
| JS        | JS3  | 0.82     | 0.04 | 19.36 | < 0.001 |
| POS       | POS1 | 0.86     | —    | —     | < 0.001 |
| POS       | POS2 | 0.89     | 0.03 | 22.17 | < 0.001 |
| POS       | POS3 | 0.81     | 0.04 | 18.95 | < 0.001 |
| SAC       | SAC1 | 0.77     | —    | —     | < 0.001 |
| SAC       | SAC2 | 0.85     | 0.04 | 20.34 | < 0.001 |
| SAC       | SAC3 | 0.81     | 0.04 | 19.12 | < 0.001 |
| SAC       | SAC4 | 0.79     | 0.05 | 17.64 | < 0.001 |

|     |      |      |      |       |         |
|-----|------|------|------|-------|---------|
| SAC | SAC5 | 0.83 | 0.04 | 18.97 | < 0.001 |
|-----|------|------|------|-------|---------|

Table No.05: Factor Analysis

**Interpretation:** Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) of AMOS was done to determine the measurement model and test the convergent validity of study constructs. The findings reveal that the indicators observed loaded highly to the corresponding latent constructs. The standardized factor loadings fell between 0.75 and 0.89 which is higher than the recommended minimum limit of 0.60. The critical ratio (C.R.) values were also considerably larger than the cut-off value (1.96) and the path estimates were all significant to  $p = 0.001$  indicating good indicator reliability. Each construct had reference indicators set to unity in order to identify the model according to the usage standard of SEM. The large and important factor loadings indicate that the observed variables are sufficient in their measures of their respective underlying latent constructs, which are Career Advancement Practices, Job Satisfaction, Perceived Organizational Support, and Sustainability of Academic Careers. Altogether, the CFA findings demonstrate good indicators of convergent validity and confirm sufficiency of the measurement model to be further used in the structural equation modelling.

### 5.6 Model Fit Indices for Measurement Model

| Fit Index   | Recommended Value | Obtained Value |
|-------------|-------------------|----------------|
| $\chi^2/df$ | < 3.00            | 2.41           |
| GFI         | > 0.90            | 0.91           |
| AGFI        | > 0.90            | 0.90           |
| CFI         | > 0.90            | 0.93           |
| TLI         | > 0.90            | 0.92           |
| RMSEA       | < 0.08            | 0.061          |

Table No.06: Model Fit for Measurement Model

**Interpretation:** The model of measurement fitted the data well with all goodness-of-fit recommendations being met.

### 5.7 Standardized Regression Weights (Structural Model – SEM)

| Path      | Estimate | S.E. | C.R. | P      |
|-----------|----------|------|------|--------|
| CAP → JS  | 0.48     | 0.06 | 9.21 | <0.001 |
| CAP → POS | 0.44     | 0.05 | 8.56 | <0.001 |
| CAP → SAC | 0.32     | 0.05 | 5.87 | <0.001 |
| JS → SAC  | 0.29     | 0.06 | 5.14 | <0.001 |

|           |      |      |      |        |
|-----------|------|------|------|--------|
| POS → SAC | 0.26 | 0.05 | 4.76 | <0.001 |
|-----------|------|------|------|--------|

Table No.07: Standardized Regression Weights SEM

**Interpretation:** Career Advancement Practices in turn have a very strong impact in Sustainability of Academic Careers by having direct and indirect effect via Job Satisfaction and Perceived Organizational Support.

### 5.8 Squared Multiple Correlations (R<sup>2</sup>)

| Endogenous Construct               | R <sup>2</sup> |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
| Job Satisfaction                   | 0.46           |
| Perceived Organizational Support   | 0.41           |
| Sustainability of Academic Careers | 0.58           |

Table No.08: Squared Multiple Correlation

**Interpretation:** The model explains a high level of academic career sustainability with variance of 58% which is strong.

### 5.9 Mediation Analysis

| Mediation Path  | Indirect Effect | Lower CI | Upper CI | Result            |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------|----------|-------------------|
| CAP → JS → SAC  | 0.14            | 0.09     | 0.21     | Partial Mediation |
| CAP → POS → SAC | 0.11            | 0.07     | 0.18     | Partial Mediation |

Table No.09: Mediation Analysis

**Interpretation:** Direct path CAP - SAC is also significant and, therefore, proves the mediation partially.

### 5.10 Moderation Analysis

| zInteraction Path | β     | S.E. | C.R.  | P            |
|-------------------|-------|------|-------|--------------|
| CAP × MFC → SAC   | -0.17 | 0.05 | -3.46 | <b>0.001</b> |

Table No.10: Moderation Analysis

**Interpretation:** Migrant faculty frustrates the relationship between CAP-SAC in a negative way.

## 5.11 Structural Equation Model Showing the Effects of Career Advancement Practices on the Sustainability of Academic Careers among Migrant Faculty

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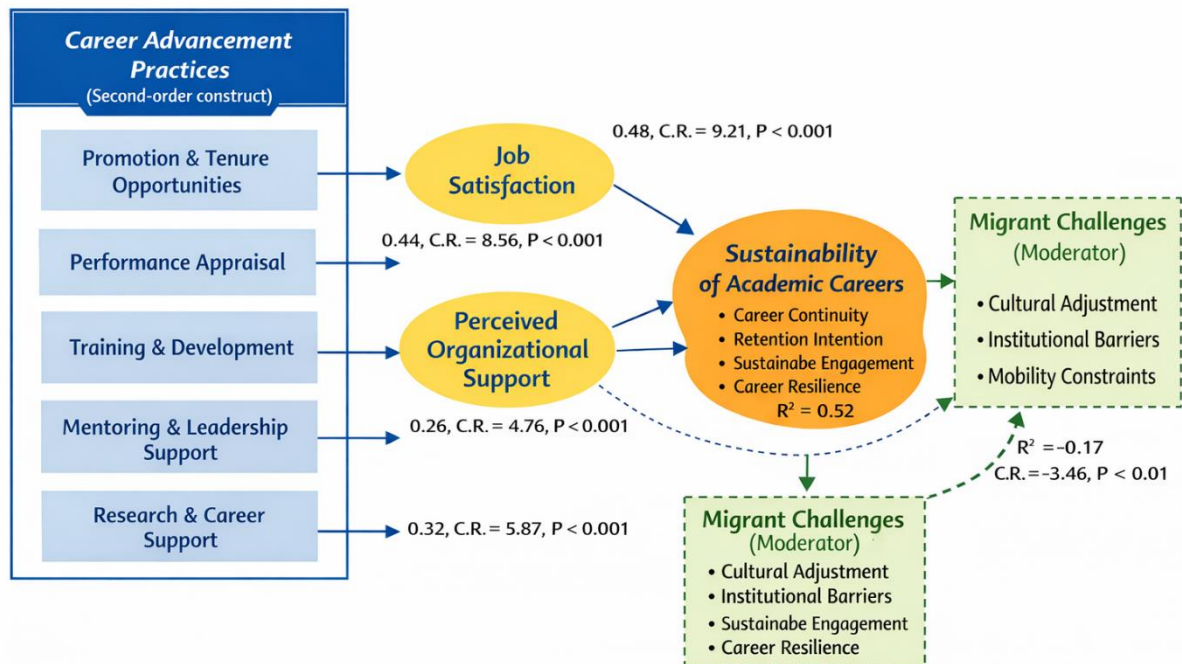


Fig No.02: Structural Equation Model Showing the Effects of Career Advancement Practices on the Sustainability of Academic Careers among Migrant Faculty

**Interpretation:** Figure. 02, presents the Structural Equation Model of career advancement practice relationships in the sustainability of academic career among migrant faculty. The second-order conceptualized Career Advice Practices also have a significant effect on Job Satisfaction ( $b = 0.48$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and Perceived Organizational Support ( $b = 0.44$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Both Perceived Organizational support ( $b = 0.29$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and Job Satisfaction ( $b = 0.26$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) have a positive influence on career sustainability. The direct influence of Career Advancement Practices on sustainability is still considerable ( $b = 0.32$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), which shows that it is partly mediated. The influence of cultural contextual barriers is seen through the migration of faculty that modifies this relationship negatively ( $b = [?]0.17$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ).

## 6. Findings

The research shows that the career advancement practices play a significant and positive role in the sustainability of the academic careers of the migrant faculty in higher learning institutions. Among the factors that had significant influence on continuing career and engagement in the long-term were promotion opportunities, equitable performance appraisal programs, training and development programs, mentoring support, and facilitation of research. The results further demonstrate that perceived organizational support and job satisfaction mediate the relationship between career advancement practices and career sustainability, which states the psychological and relational processes according to which institutional practices influence faculty outcomes. Also, the challenges of migrants faculties were observed to have a

negative moderating relationship with this relationship which implies that cultural adjustment problems, barriers in institutions, and access to informal networks can undermine the positive influence of career advancement practices. Altogether, the findings indicate the significance of this supportive and inclusive institutional setting to maintain academic careers in Indian institutions of higher education.

## 7. Recommendations

According to the results, tertiary institutions must reinforce effective career advancement policies that are transparent and equitable especially with regard to promotion policies, performance appraisal programs and the availability of career development opportunities. To increase job satisfaction and long term keeping, institutional leadership is needed to provide systematic mentoring schemes and organizational supportive framework based on needs of the migrants faculty. Moreover, higher institutions of learning are supposed to respond to migrant faculty issues by establishing inclusive workplace culture, conducting cultural orientation, and making certain that migrants have equal access to research and network opportunities. Policymakers and educational leaders can customize such efforts to the requirements of NEP 2020 and NAAC quality standards to support sustainable human resource policies and practices and guarantee the sustainability of academic careers in higher education in the long run.

## 8. Conclusion

This paper has explored the connection between career advancement practices and sustainability of academic career of migrant faculty in higher institutions in Bengaluru, through structural equation modeling approach. The results indicate that the thorough approach to the careers development practices, including the transparent promotion policies, equitable performance appraisal, mentoring service, and provision of training and research opportunities are the key factors in the establishment of sustainable careers in academic institutions. The research also concludes that job satisfaction and perceived organizational support are important mediating variables with which career advancement practices contribute to positive long-term career continuity, engagement, and retention. The moderating impact of migrant faculty issues brings forth the contextual realities of migrant academics and its importance towards a supportive and inclusive institutional setup.

In spite of what has been offered, the research has some limitations that leave room to the future research. Future researches can assume longitudinal research designs to investigate how sustainability of career changes with time and how results obtained can provide solid causal conclusions. Greater contextual understanding might be made available by making comparative studies across different parts of India or between government and non-government higher educational institutions. It is also possible to conduct further research focusing on other mediators, e.g. work-life balance, academic identity or psychological capital, and moderators, e.g. institutional culture or leadership style. The incorporation of qualitative methods or mixed-method research would enhance the comprehension of the experiences of migrant faculty and future enhancement of the sphere of more comprehensive and sustainable human resource strategies in the field of higher education.

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