Bibliometric Analysis of Global Research on Job Content Plateau

¹ Sanjay Kaushik (Professor) ² Sachin Kumar (Research Scholar) University Business School Panjab University Chandigarh

Abstract

The participation of Job Content Plateau is gaining popularity in the business and research domains. A thorough bibliometric study was conducted using R Studio to eliminate duplicates and biblioshiny for data visualization and interpretation.. Current study's objective is to perform a comprehensive review of existing research on Job Content Plateau. In order to achieve this goal, bibliometric analysis techniques were used to examine 82 articles about Job Content Plateau that were indexed in the "Web of Science (WoS) and Scopus" between 1989 and 2024. To perform citation, co-citation, co-authorship, and co-occurrence analysis, the biblioshiny program was utilized. The analysis clarified existing research trends and potential directions for future research while identifying the top nations, organizations, writers, journals, and scholarly publications on the subject. The three leading journals in this field of Job Content Plateau are Journal of Vocational Behavior, Journal of Career Development, Group & Organization Management. Tremblay M, Allen T, Jiang Z etc., are very impactful authors. The findings show that the USA is the most productive nation, HEC Montreal is the most productive organization, Tremblay M. is the most productive author, and "The Journal of Vocational Behavior" is the most productive journal. Lastly, the discussion of contributions, limits, and future research objectives concludes.

Keywords: Job Content Plateau; Career Plateau; Hierarchical Plateau; Bibliometric Analysis.

1. Introduction

Given the drastically rising number of layoffs and downsizing that define today's workplace, it is critical to make sure that able to stay with their employers the finest circumstances for their careers. More than one lakh thirty thousand people lost their employment as a result of one thousand three hundred and seventy nine mass layoffs that took place in June 2024, based on the most recent statistics from the "Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor (2024)". Despite being a long-standing tendency, companies are increasingly flattening, restructuring, or depending on teams and outsourcing (e.g., Noe, 2002). According to Allen et al. (1999), the job content plateau is the moment at which a job becomes monotonous and repetitive, and there is a chance that no more assignments with greater responsibility will be given (Feldman and Weitz, 1988). The career plateau has two dimensions, according to Milliman (1992): the job content plateau and the hierarchical plateau. A period of low levels of challenge, interest, and learning opportunities in the workplace is known as the "job content plateau." Multiple variables affect and moderate the content plateau.

A job content plateau, that can happen when people lose enthusiasm for their work, is more likely to happen the longer someone stays in the same position. Bardwick (1986). According to some theories, most employees become proficient in their positions after three years, at which point they need to be given new challenges if they want their professions to continue to be rewarding. Longer-term assignments in the same role with limited opportunities for future horizontal or vertical (hierarchical) movement within the company may make job content plateau experiences more common (Bardwick, 1986). In fact, "almost everyone who works in an organization will plateau" at some time in their career, according to Bardwick (1986). The majority of studies on plateaus have concentrated on their detrimental effects, such as decreased satisfaction (Chao, 1990), absenteeism (Near, 1985), and voluntary turnover (Veiga, 1981). The idea that sometimes reaching a plateau may have less negative effects and perhaps be beneficial for workers has received less attention, though. In fact, several writers have encouraged scholars to concentrate on the possible advantages connected to hierarchy and job content plateaus (e.g., Allen, Russell, Poteet, & Dobbins, 1999), contending that, depending on the presence of additional elements at work, employees may react more favorably when they experience a job content plateau. Finding the elements that lessen the detrimental impact of plateaus on attitudes toward work could improve theory development and shed light on why some plateaued employees remain productive while others do not (Ference et al., 1977).

Although there is a lot of study on the subject, we decided to concentrate on job content plateaus because they are a unique type of plateauing that hasn't gotten much empirical emphasis (Bardwick, 1986; Feldman, 1988). Moreover, job content

plateaus were linked to more negative attitudes toward work than hierarchical plateaus, according to one of the few empirical studies that looked at both (Allen, Poteet, & Russell, 1998).

2. Literature Review

In the realm of management literature, the idea of the Job Content Plateau has attracted a lot of interest from academics, practitioners, consultants, and companies during the last 36 years. A significant amount of work on Job Content Plateau has consequently surfaced, encompassing books, meta-analyses, critical reviews, and special publication issues. The following is a summary of the main goals and important findings of earlier research on Job Content Plateau which were conducted using bibliometric analysis:

(Ference et al. 1977) carried out the first comprehensive study of plateauing in 1977. According to their methodology, a manager's career was determined by their performance to date and their prospects of advancement. While "solid citizens" are high performers with a low chance of promotion, "stars" (high-potential employees) are high performers with a high chance of promotion, "deadwood" are managers who are below average performers with a limited chance of future promotion, and "learners" (new hires or recently promoted managers who have yet to mastered their job) are low performers with a significant likelihood of being elevated. Since they have no opportunity of advancing in their careers, solid citizens and deadwood are therefore viewed as plateaued personnel. (Ference et al.,1977) claim that most managers in businesses are solid citizens who have successfully reached a hierarchical plateau. These workers, however, rarely receive the attention they deserve; deadwood are offered training or outplacement, stars receive managerial growth, and learners receive evaluation and training (Ference et al., 1977).

Feng, Y., and Cui, J. (2023) investigated the association between high-level medical talent's intentions to leave a major match along with the Job Content Plateau. To manage the Job Content Plateau and lower the intention of high-level medical personnel to leave, it was suggested that steps like project teams and additional academic interaction be implemented.

Yuan, K. (2022) investigated the mediating role of organizational identification in the relationship between career plateau and work engagement, drawing on social identity theory. The goal of Kaur, H. (2021) was to find out if career flexibility affects job results using a job content plateau. The study's research approach, which was based on career construction theory (Savickas, 2005), proposed that employees' psychological meta-capacities (career flexibility) and job content plateau determine their positive employment outcomes, such as job satisfaction and performance. Additionally, the study is the first to look at how proactivity affects the relationship between career flexibility, work content plateau, and employment outcomes. Kaur, H. (2021) investigated whether high-performance work practices (HPWPs) moderated the association between job attitudes (job satisfaction and organizational culture) and job content plateau.

Kaur, H. (2021) investigated whether job attitudes (job satisfaction and organizational commitment) and job content plateau are mediated by high-performance work practices (HPWPs). Using the theories of career formation and work adjustment, Shabeer, S. (2019) suggested that fit perceptions will influence the relationship between career adaptability and plateauing. Jiang, Z. (2016) investigated career flexibility as a prelude to the job content plateau. It examined how the relationship between "career adaptability and the job content plateau" is mediated by person-job fit and person-organization fit, drawing on theories of career construction and person-environment fit. Hurst, C. S. (2017) studied job content plateaus, which happen when workers feel their jobs won't challenge them or give them more responsibility in the future. Few studies have looked at the mediators of these associations, which is an important step in developing a theory, despite prior research showing a correlation between job content plateaus and unfavorable job attitudes and outcomes.

Understanding job content plateaus appears to be especially crucial in the current business environment, despite the fact that the majority of study has concentrated on hierarchical plateaus. For many workers, hierarchical plateauing appears unavoidable when companies reorganize and reduce staff. Moreover, there might be less workable ways to lessen this kind of plateau. On the other hand, lateral promotions, job rotations, and job enrichment are only a few of the numerous possible remedies for job content plateauing. Furthermore, it has been proposed that the majority of workers could become proficient in their positions after just three years (Bardwick, 1986), and that these individuals may be approaching a plateau in job satisfaction if they are not given new challenges. When combined, these results imply that work content plateaus are probably normal but could possibly be practically remedied by organizational interventions.

3. Methodology

3.1 Data Source and Selection

An essential part of the research process is choosing the methods and resources for data analysis. Online databases was used to obtain information on scientific publications. The well-known databases that are frequently utilized in bibliometric research are Medline, Google Scholar, WoS, and Scopus. WoS and Scopus were selected for this study on 31st December, 2024, due

to their thorough coverage of significant scholarly information sources, which ensures access to data of the highest caliber. Once the databases have been selected, the following step is to set up the search parameters. As seen in Table 1, we used document tracking at this point by looking for a certain phrase. The subject area for the search was limited to Business, Management and Accounting, Social Sciences, Psychology and Art and Humanities.

Table 1. The parameters of the search strategy.

Database Scopus & WoS Job Content Plateau Search word

Category Title Document type Article Period time 1989-2024 Language English

Research areas Business, Management and Accounting, Social Sciences,

Psychology and Art and Humanities.

Indexes ALL

Query String TI = ("Job Content Plateau")

Search Date 31st December 2024

3.2 Data Analysis and Visualization

The development of scientific knowledge has advanced significantly in recent years, necessitating a thorough and collaborative review of the literature. In this regard, using bibliometric techniques has become a popular quantitative way for methodically examining bibliographic materials. This approach makes it easier to classify and arrange material according to a variety of factors, such as journals, authors, institutions, and nations. Researchers can obtain a comprehensive understanding of a particular field of study by using bibliometric analysis. The research gathered from the WoS and Scopus databases about Job Content Plateau was statistically examined in this study using bibliometric analysis. By choosing analysis units, such as documents, sources, authors, organizations, nations, cited references, and author keywords, several analyses were carried out, including citation analysis, co-citation analysis, co-author analysis, and co-occurrence analysis. The software programs R Studio and Biblioshiny were utilized to make the process of creating and displaying bibliometric maps easier. This method made it possible to comprehend how the various components of the Job Content Plateau field interrelate with one another.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Number of Publications by Year

Figure 1 summarizes and displays the number of publications over years in the Job Content Plateau in order to examine the development trend of this academic discipline. The first article in this topic was published in 1989, and the number of articles did not exhibit a discernible upward trend until 2006, according to the data gathered. The increasing tendency also suggests that the academic community is paying attention to these issues both now and in the years to come.

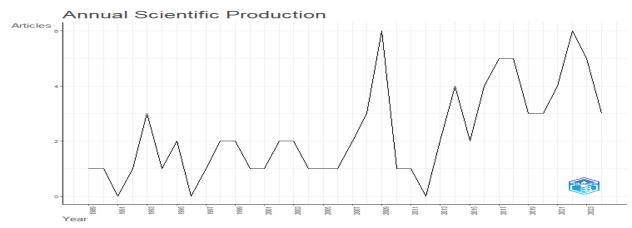


Figure 1. Distribution of publications by year.

4.2 Source of Publication

The distribution of publications from various periodicals is explained in this section. The top five journals with publications published in the Job Content Plateau field are displayed in Table 2. It is discovered that 38 publications published 82 articles on the subject. With 11 articles from the sample that was gathered, the Journal of Vocational Behavior is the most productive journal. It was followed by the Journal of Career Development with seven articles, Group & Organization Management with four articles, Personnel Review with four articles, and Career Development International with three articles. These are high-ranking publishers in the Job Content Plateau field and are anticipated to be the best journals.

Table 2. Journal with the most published articles

Sources	Articles	h_index	g_index	m_index
JOURNAL OF VOCATIONAL BEHAVIOR	11	10	11	0.37037037
JOURNAL OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT	7	7	7	0.411764706
GROUP & ORGANIZATION MANAGEMENT	4	4	4	0.125
PERSONNEL REVIEW	4	4	4	0.363636364
CAREER DEVELOPMENT INTERNATIONAL	3	3	3	0.2
CAREER DEVELOPMENT QUARTERLY	3	3	3	0.096774194
HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW	3	2	3	0.083333333
JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT	3	3	3	0.083333333
JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT &		2	3	0.333333333
ORGANIZATION	3			
AFRICAN JOURNAL OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT	2	2	2	0.125

4.3 Author and co-authorship analysis

A thorough analysis of the 82 articles on Job Content Plateau revealed that 169 authors actively participated. An overview of the writers who have produced noteworthy studies in the field of Job Content Plateau is shown in Figure 2 to provide a better understanding of their research productivity. This chart effectively illustrates the research production trends of multiple authors over time. It uses a combination of bubble size, position, and color intensity to show key metrics. Authors like Jiang Z stand out with recent, impactful publications, while others like Tremblay M and Allen T show longer, more distributed periods of research activity. The visual combination of bubbles and horizontal lines makes it easy to compare authors' output and impact over time.

Bubble size indicates the number of articles published by an author in a given year. Larger bubbles signify a higher number of articles. Horizontal lines represent the period over which each author has been active. Jiang Z had the largest contribution (largest bubble, 2 articles) in recent years (2021–2023), with notable citation intensity. Allen T and Tremblay M had earlier activity spanning multiple years (1995–2005), with steady research output. Chen A published very early in 1995, but no further activity is visible beyond that time. Eby L, Plateau C, and Roger A show focused contributions within short time periods, producing research in only a few consecutive years. Yang W and Azeem M have contributions in more recent years, but with lower numbers of articles and citations.

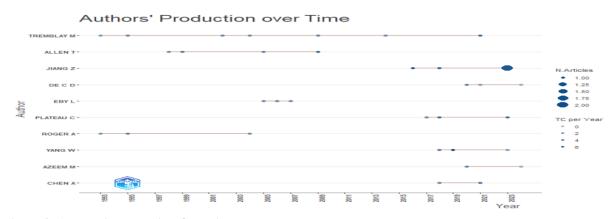


Figure 2. Authors' Production Over time

This network visualization effectively shows the structure and strength of collaborative relationships among authors. Tremblay M emerges as a key player with a large collaborative network, while smaller clusters (e.g., Jiang Z, Yang W) represent focused teams with fewer connections. The color-coded clusters help identify distinct research groups or teams. The nodes represent individual authors, while the connecting lines (edges) signify collaborations between authors, such as coauthorship on research papers. The size and positioning of nodes, as well as their colors, highlight specific aspects of these collaborations.

Tremblay M (Orange Cluster): Tremblay M is a highly central and influential author, as represented by the large node size. This suggests a significant number of collaborations. Allen T and Eby L (Blue Cluster): Allen T and Eby L form a prominent collaboration group, with multiple strong links to other authors like Brimley A and Russell J. Plateau C (Green Cluster): Plateau C has collaborations with authors like Papathomas C and Barker J, forming a cohesive research team. Jiang Z (Pink Cluster): Jiang Z has a smaller collaborative cluster, with limited connections. Yang W (Gray Cluster): Yang W and Johnson S appear as a small but isolated group with no links to other clusters. De C D (Teal Cluster).De C D collaborates with Uhl I in a distinct, independent cluster.

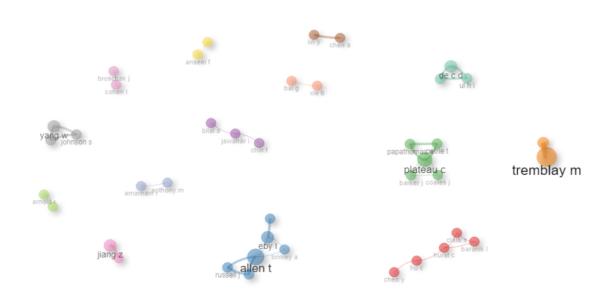


Figure 3. Co-authorship network of researchers.

4.4 Affiliation analysis

Table 3 displays the organization distribution of the 82 JCP articles from the bibliometric analysis. HEC Montreal and Universite de Montréal in Canada are the leaders in the subject with five articles apiece, while the State University System of Florida and the University of South Florida in the US are next with four papers each. It is found that six of the top ten universities are located solely in the United States and Canada, in addition to the other universities listed in Table 3. This may indicate that both those universities and this country place a high emphasis on the Job Content Plateau issue. Table 3. Institutions with most published articles

Affiliation	COUNTRY	Country Articles citations
HEC MONTREAL	CANADA	5
UNIVERSITE DE MONTREAL	CANADA	5
STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA	USA	4
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA	USA	4

ALLIANCE MANCHESTER BUSINESS SCHOOL	ENGLAND	3
BROCK UNIVERSITY	CANADA	3
GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY	AUSTRALIA	3
HARVARD UNIVERSITY	USA	3
KING'S COLLEGE LONDON	UK	3

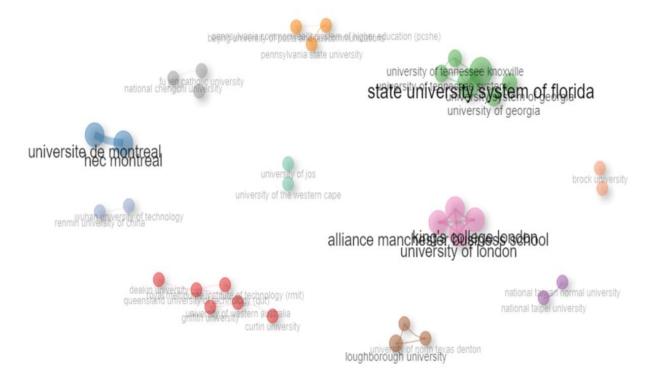


Figure 4. Citation network of institutions.

This visualization effectively highlights the collaborative relationships between academic institutions across different regions in the field of Job Content Plateau. Key institutions, like Université de Montréal, State University System of Florida, and University of London, emerge as highly central players with extensive collaborations. The color-coded clusters provide a clear picture of interconnected research networks and independent institutional groups. Nodes (Institution Names): Each node corresponds to an academic institution. Larger nodes signify institutions with more collaborations or a central role within the network. Edges (Lines between Nodes): Lines between nodes represent collaborative relationships, such as co-authored research or institutional partnerships. Colors: Different clusters of nodes are color-coded to represent distinct collaboration groups. Institutions within the same color group work closely together. Node Size: Larger nodes indicate institutions with a high degree of collaboration or significant influence in the network.

4.5 Country/Region analysis



Figure 5. Country wise Scientific Production

Table 4. The top 10 countries/regions of publications in this field.

	TP		Average Article
Country		TC	Citations
USA	44	1540	64.2
AUSTRALIA	23	195	19.5
CHINA	20	156	19.5
CANADA	15	566	43.5
UK	14	192	24
FRANCE	8	71	35.5
NETHERLANDS	5	408	408
BELGIUM	4	66	33
GERMANY	4	41	41
INDIA	3	5	2.5

Surprisingly, USA, Australia & China have the highest number of publications of 44, 23 and 20 respectively that covers 54% of total dataset collected. Then followed by Canada (15), UK (14) & France (8) which cover 22.9% of total publications in the dataset. The analysis also shows that USA has the first publication in the field in the year 1989 and also has the highest number of publication in the year 2024 ie.44.

It is also noted that the majority of the nations on the list are nearly all well-developed economically. The considerable number of academic institutions, the cultural background, and the active business operations could all be contributing factors (Zemigala, 2015). However, the most rapidly developing nations are those on the list, including South Africa, China, India, and Pakistan.

However, to investigate international collaboration among authors in the subject of Job Content Plateau, a country-based coauthorship analysis was carried out. The resulting network, which is shown in Figure 6, offers a graphic depiction of the collaborative interactions across nations in the Job Content Plateau research.

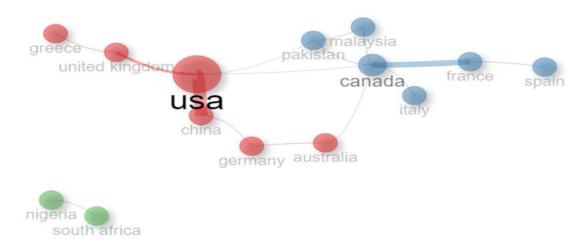


Figure 6. Co-authorship network between countries.

Countries are represented by the circles in Figure 6, and the co-authorship ties are shown by the links connecting them. The number of globally distributed co-authored publications between a country and other nations is represented by the number of links, as shown in Figure 6. It is feasible to identify which nations have a greater number of international co-authorships—a

sign of increased collaboration and co-publication activity—by looking at this interactive network map. Stronger collaborations are shown by thicker ties between the circles, which show the strength of the collaborations.

The study's collaboration network shows that there are 14 nations collaborating, spread over 3 different clusters. The blue cluster, centered on Canada (with 6 links), encompasses 5 contributing nations: Italy, France, Spain, Malaysia and Pakistan. In their studies of the Job Content Plateau, these nations demonstrate a significant level of collaboration. Australia, Germany, China, Greece, and the United Kingdom are the five contributing nations that make up the red cluster, which is centered on the United States and has five links.

These nations take part in important collaborations in Job Content Plateau research. The findings have significance that goes beyond certain nations and groups. This approach helps identify possible research partners, fosters cross-cultural interactions, and advances information sharing by illuminating global connections. These insights can be used by scholars, practitioners, and policymakers to promote cooperation and further Job Content Plateau research globally.

4.6. Keywords Co-Occurrence Analysis of Publication

Insights on the most popular subjects and research patterns in a particular field can be gained by analyzing author keywords. This study involved extracting a set of keywords from 82 publications on Job Content Plateau, doing a systematic analysis using R Studio software, and visually presenting the results using Biblioshiny. Keywords with similar meanings but distinct spellings were combined to guarantee correctness and consistency.

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Keyword co-occurrences

Figure 7. Keyword co-occurrences

Each keyword's frequency is represented by the size of the circles on the network map; larger circles denote higher recurrence rates. The degree of relatedness between the keywords is indicated by the distance between nodes; stronger relationships are indicated by closer nodes. Each term cluster is given a different color to make it easier to distinguish, clearly differentiating

and visualizing the theme data. A network of keyword co-occurrences that illustrates the connections between terms related to "career plateau." This kind of network reveals theme clusters and links within the research literature by highlighting the frequency with which keywords occur together in the same context.

Based on the co-occurrence of terms in scholarly literature or textual datasets, the analysis identifies major themes and sub-concepts. The main emphasis is represented by the central node, "career plateau," while relevant terms are represented by the surrounding nodes. Each node's size corresponds to its frequency, and the intensity of the relationship between terms is demonstrated by the node-to-node edge thickness.

The network is divided into discrete clusters, each of which is symbolized by a distinct color and represents a thematic grouping of linked terms.

Examples of phrases that emphasize aspects of the career plateau concept are "hierarchical plateau" and "job content plateau," which are included in the green cluster. With its emphasis on organizational elements like "career satisfaction" and "organizational commitment," the red cluster illustrates the wider effects of career plateauing on employees and organizations. Emphasizing outcomes such as "job performance" and "career plateau scales," the blue cluster identifies empirical and measurement-focused research. Smaller peripheral clusters (orange, purple, etc.) represent specialist subjects like "identity," "career anchors," or particular case studies and industries.

4.8. Research Gaps and Future Directions

It is essential to identify the main subjects examined as well as any study gaps in order to progress the field of Job Content Plateau studies. The results obtained from the co-occurrence analysis of author keywords highlight particular topics that require more investigation in subsequent research. In addition to advancing academic understanding, this project will have real-world applications for businesses looking to increase employee efficiency and cultivate an engaged culture.

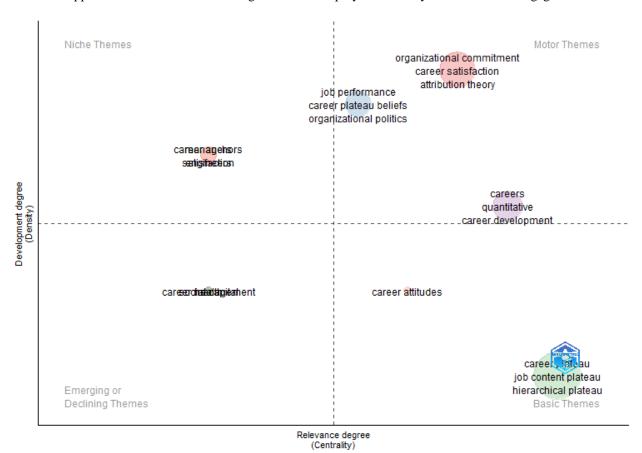


Figure 8. Thematic Classification

A thematic map that groups research topics pertaining to "career plateau" according to their density (development) and centrality (relevance). This categorization makes it easier to see how different topics fit into the area, highlighting their significance and possible lines of inquiry. The four quadrants of the thematic map represent the research themes: Themes for Motors (Top Right Quadrant): These issues are well-developed and very important to the organization and development of the subject. The following themes—"organizational commitment," "career satisfaction," "job performance," and "organizational politics"—appear here, indicating their importance in comprehending the effects of career plateaus on both people and organizations.

These subjects should be further investigated in future studies, especially in relation to "attribution theory" and its wider ramifications in dynamic work settings. Basic Themes (Bottom Right Quadrant): This quadrant contains fundamental but underdeveloped themes including "job content plateau," "hierarchical plateau," and the fundamental "career plateau" idea. These stand for fundamental facets of the area that need more investigation. Theoretical and empirical knowledge of these dimensions, particularly their effects on long-term career trajectories, employee motivation, and professional attitudes, could be the main focus of future research. Niche Themes (Top Left Quadrant): Although highly developed, topics like "career anchors" and "satisfaction" are not as important to the larger conversation.

To better comprehend their specific uses, these specialist themes could be included into more general frameworks. For instance, it may be instructive to look at how career anchors affect workers' views of plateaus in particular fields or positions. Themes that are emerging or declining (bottom left quadrant): "Career development plateau" is one of the neglected and unimportant themes. These could be issues that are losing their relevance or new areas of interest. Future research could revitalize these themes by linking them to more central ideas or exploring their relevance in contemporary work contexts, such as remote work or gig economies. If we see the future prospect we can consider integration across themes, a key direction is to bridge gaps between motor and basic themes, integrating well-established constructs (e.g., organizational commitment) with foundational topics (e.g., hierarchical and job content plateaus) to create a comprehensive framework. Contextual Exploration: Investigating these themes across diverse cultural, industrial, and organizational contexts could enrich understanding and applicability. Longitudinal Studies: Future research should adopt longitudinal designs to study the long-term effects of career plateaus on organizational and individual outcomes. Interdisciplinary Approaches: Collaborating with fields like psychology, sociology, and management could provide novel insights into the underlying mechanisms and interventions for career plateaus. This map serves as a guide for prioritizing future research efforts, emphasizing areas with significant gaps or opportunities for deeper exploration.

5. Conclusion

There has been a growing recognition of the importance of Job Content Plateau as a strategic necessity for multinational enterprises. The 36 years of research on Job Content Plateau are captured in this bibliometric analysis, which also shows what has been studied in the subject and where more research is required. We provided a theoretical framework based on social exchange theory and data visualization to explain the relationship between job content plateaus (with a focus on career and hierarchical plateaus) and work outcomes like job performance, well-being, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions. In addition, we noted elements that predict Job Content Plateau and provided plausible explanations for its impacts, highlighting the circumstances in which these effects are amplified or diminished. In light of the analysis, we urge researchers to focus on examining alternative types of job content plateau, to examine various possible moderators and mediators, as well as to investigate additional elements that could contribute to the explanation of the connections between the Job Content plateau and the antecedents.

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