



Contemporary Career Theories in the Light of the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Critical Literature Review

Abdulrahman Alshaikhmubarak

Department of Business Administration, College of Business Administration, King Faisal University, Al Ahsa, Saudi Arabia



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ABSTRACT

This paper critically reviews and observes the nature of contemporary careers and the orientation in which careers research has advanced over the past decade. The contemporary concept of career refers to an individual's pursuit of career advancement without being restricted to a single job in a single company. Specifically, career concepts that appeared in the 1990s, including the protean and boundaryless career frameworks, and the next generation of career concept, including integrative frameworks, hybrid careers, and the kaleidoscope career model, are discussed. These models and theories all focus on the change in the concept of career management for individuals. This change occurred because of the developments taking place in this era, including economic aspects, globalization, and technology. This review aims to improve our understanding of careers in today's dynamic work environment, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic and the rapid changes that Saudi Arabia is witnessing at all levels. The challenges facing individuals in career advancement during this period are different from previous ones, so researchers should study the effects of the pandemic on changing the behavior of individuals towards the concept of career management. This review provides a comprehensive discussion of current theories and offers major questions for future research.

KEYWORDS

Boundaryless career, career advancement, career models, career patterns, career success, protean career

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1. Introduction

Saudi Arabia is currently undergoing radical changes in various fields, one of which is the change of the name of the Ministry of Labor to the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development. This change was not only a name change; it was more than that. It is a change in future directions and strategic plans that relates to individual's career management and orientation, in line with the Saudi 2030 vision.

In the past, the general trend was to search for jobs in the public sector for several reasons, the most important of which was job security. However, with the rapid developments that the state is witnessing, the tendency to privatize many government sectors, and the lack of government jobs, there has become a necessity for individuals to change their career attitudes. This transformation requires individuals to take the initiative in managing their careers and increasing their employability. A lifetime job guarantee has become very difficult due to these rapid developments and drastic changes.

The purpose of this article is to provide a critical analysis and deep understanding of major career theories and patterns, as well as key studies that have been conducted in this area during the past fifteen years. The paper begins with an overview of career definitions and traditional career orientation, then focuses on the contemporary career theories that have had an important impact on career research over the past decade. Reviewing these theories, how they measured, and their influence on career success will be discussed. Subsequently, this paper sheds light on the adaptation of these contemporary career orientations considering the Saudi 2030 vision and the repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic. Based on this review and analysis, this paper proposes an agenda for future efforts in the hope that this review inspires further consideration of the contemporary dynamic career processes in the context of rapidly changing working conditions and their repercussions on the labor market. The purpose of this paper is to provide a critical analysis of major career models, theories, and key studies.

2. Definitions of the Term "Career"

The word *career* comes from the Latin word *carrus*, which means a horse-driven chariot or vehicle that was used in races in early Rome (Liebig and Sansonetti, 2004). However, later, the word career has had different meanings. Careers are defined differently by scholars in terms of psychology and sociology (Sullivan and Baruch, 2009). For example, Super (1980) defined a career as the combination and series of responsibilities and work performed by an individual during the path of his or her lifetime. This definition emphasizes that a career is the sum of the job experience that someone has had throughout his or her life. However, this definition does not explain whether one's career is managed by the employer or the individual. Other scholars see a career as "a process of development of the employee along with a path of experience and jobs in one or more organizations" (Baruch and Rosenstein, 1992: 478).

Similarly, Khapova *et al.* (2007) defined a career as a series of an individual's work experiences over time. Hall and Mirvis (1995) and Baruch (2004) explained that a traditional career managed by an organization included vertical progression between positions, holding increasing responsibility and rewards. However, with the rapid change in business, the word career comes to refer to individual "experience" rather than a progression of jobs.

Other researchers argued that the word career had become more individual-oriented rather than employer-oriented. They explained that individuals could set their careers goals and work to achieve these goals, taking into consideration the aspects of flexibility and mobility (Baruch, 2004; McDonald *et al.*, 2005; Sullivan, 1999). Individuals have become more concerned with building their own career success. For example, Sargent and Domberger (2007) emphasized that internal career success is more important than external career success to individuals in terms of career achievement, and this is what many scholars refer to it as contemporary career orientation (Baruch, 2004; Hall, 1976; Sullivan and Baruch, 2009).

Ongoing changes in environment, politics, and economics have changed and affected the traditional concept of the career, which was mainly about the employer-employee relationship (Sullivan and Baruch, 2009).

These changes influenced the relationship between organizations and their employees regarding job security and career development. Since the economic crisis, many organizations have laid off their employees (Sullivan and Baruch, 2009). The same is the case now with the repercussions of the Coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19). As a response to the change in the employer-employee relationship, individuals have developed new patterns in their careers (Akkermans *et al.*, 2020). They are taking more responsibility for developing their careers and making themselves marketable (Hirschi and Koen, 2021). Sullivan and Baruch (2009) defined a career as "an individual's work-related and other relevant experiences, both inside and outside of organizations, that form a unique pattern over the individual's life span" (p. 1543). This definition of career is a great way to understand the new and old notions of a career as it is comprehensive and covers the most important aspects of the concept. This definition gives a comprehensive view of the notion of career, as was described by Sullivan and Baruch (2009):

This definition recognizes both physical movements, such as between levels, jobs, employers, occupations, and industries, as well as the interpretation of the individual, including his or her perceptions of career events (e.g., viewing job loss as failure vs. as an opportunity for a new beginning), career alternatives (e.g., viewing limited vs. unlimited options), and outcomes (e.g., how one defines career success). Moreover, careers do not occur in a vacuum. An individual's career is influenced by many contextual factors, such as national culture, the economy, and the political environment, as well as by personal factors, such as relationships with others (e.g., dual-career marriages) (Sullivan and Baruch, 2009: 1543).

This definition was applied in this research when referring to the concept of career since it covers most aspects that are associated with the notion of career. In addition, such a comprehensive description of career concepts is not only associated with traditional career concepts but is also associated with contemporary career theories that will be discussed in this paper.

The following section will discuss the traditional career concept research that has been conducted in these areas.

3. The Old School of Career: Traditional Viewpoint

The concept of a traditional career refers to the management of employees' professions within their organization. Traditional career theories focus on managing the relationship between employer and employees inside an organizational structure. Thus, the traditional career path is linear, of climbing up the ladder in the hierarchy in a clear and stable organizational structure (Rosenbaum, 1979). Traditional career theory was initially developed from the work of scholars, including Super (1957), who defined a traditional career as the career advancement and upward promotion between one or two organizations, where the attention is on the organization managing career and the interest is focused on extrinsic rewards (Breitenmoser *et al.*, 2018). In the same line, Ackah and Heaton (2004) defined the traditional career as a steady succession of upward progress inside a single firm.

Moreover, Edwards *et al.* (1999) referred to career advancement in traditional theory as a progression that depends on continuous long-term employee commitment with persistent upward moves involving physical mobility. Also, in the traditional career era, certain factors influence individual career advancement. These factors include an employee's ability, effort, and loyalty, and individuals exhibiting such

traits are likely to be rewarded by their organization; this might include training, growth, promotion, and a life-long job (Baruch, 2003; Reitman and Schneer, 2003). In addition to this, seniority is given high consideration in terms of decisions regarding employee rewards (Sullivan and Baruch, 2009).

As a result of the organizational domination of managing careers, the individual's role in managing their careers was limited, and they were less active in taking responsibility for their career advancement. De Vos and Soens (2008) argued that individuals who have a more traditional career attitude tend to exhibit a less active role regarding managing their career and are most likely to follow career progression by the organization. Wilensky (1960) defined the concept of career as "a succession of related jobs, arranged in a hierarchy of prestige, through which persons move in an ordered, predictable sequence" (p. 554). Also, Hind (2005) emphasized that a traditional career was understood as holding a job with organizational boundaries. Accordingly, McDonald *et al.* (2005) described the notion of traditional career progression in terms of "working your way through the ranks," "moving up the hierarchy," or "climbing the ladder," where the success of a career was measured and proven by an increase in financial rewards, responsibility, and rank or status.

Regarding the psychological contract in the traditional career, the relationship between the employer and employees was controlled, based on several mutual benefits (Rousseau, 1989; Sullivan and Baruch, 2009). For example, for the employees to be rewarded, which may include promotion, training, and life-long job security, they have to demonstrate their loyalty, commitment, and trust (Baruch and Rousseau, 2019; Clarke, 2009). Furthermore, employees need to show their ability to perform hard work.

Building on the previous definitions, career progression in traditional career theory is associated with a more bureaucratic perspective since employees need a long time to get promoted and climb the organizational hierarchy. This perspective was acceptable at that time since the organizational structures tended to be vertical and hierarchical.

Traditionally, the focus was on managing the relationship between employer and employee in the context of development and progression inside the organization. The traditional career pathways do not give much attention to the individuals regarding their personal goals and aspirations. Additionally, this was concerned with personal career success at one organization. Mobility within more than one organization would allow individuals to learn from different experiences, gain new skills, and develop their abilities and employability. The fundamental principles of traditional career development would make employees dependent on their employers for career development and advancement. This can be risky, especially when the organization is going through a financial crisis because usually, the preferred option would be to lay off its employees and cut some jobs (Alshaikhmubarak *et al.*, 2020). Also, organizations have been influenced by different environmental changes, including the growth of competition in the global market and rapid technological advancement, and organizations relying more on outsourcing and temporary employees have impacted the traditional relationship between organization and employees (Sullivan and Baruch, 2009). These changes affect individuals' career orientations and contribute to the emergence of contemporary career patterns and attitudes. The following section will highlight these contemporary career patterns.

4. New Career Era

Rapid change has been taking place almost everywhere in the world, including the development of countries, economic growth,

technological advancement, the management of organizational structures, and individuals' lives and habits. The rapid environmental changes that we are witnessing have modified the relationship between employer and employee in terms of career management and development (Baruch and Rousseau, 2019; Hirschi and Koen, 2021; Sullivan and Baruch, 2009). On the one hand, the same organizations no longer provide their employees with life-long time jobs and other traditional career expectations. On the other hand, as a result of this organizational change, individuals have developed new attitudes and taken a more active role in managing and advancing their careers (El Baroudi *et al.*, 2017).

Furthermore, financial crises in recent years have made several organizations lay off their employees causing employees to rethink their career paths (Guan *et al.*, 2019). Those crises have influenced organizational finances and strategies; for example, older employees have been moved from place to place or have been made redundant by their companies in response to organizational changes (Sullivan and Baruch, 2009). This forced many employees to look for different career paths. For example, the concept of "forced entrepreneurship" emerged (Bagdadli and Gianecchini, 2019; Richtel and Wortham, 2009), and individuals became independent of their organizations in terms of employment (De Vos *et al.*, 2011), creating their careers by establishing their own businesses (Sullivan and Baruch, 2009).

Those changes have influenced the concept of the career, making traditional career pathways, including upward career progression and long-term job security, much more difficult than before (Alshaikhmubarak *et al.*, 2020). The changes that impact the employer-employee relationship have also transformed the career system from a linear career orientation to a more multidirectional orientation (Baruch, 2004b). As a result of this type of transition, Smith-Ruig (2008) argued that such traditional career progression perceptions have changed. However, it is not necessarily the same in non-western cultures; for example, in the Gulf countries, traditional career perceptions still exist (Forstenlechner and Baruch, 2013). In Saudi Arabia, this traditional view has gradually begun to disappear, especially with the aspirations of Vision 2030, which aims to privatize state institutions and the contribution of the private sector to the Saudization of jobs to reduce unemployment.

Not only the environmental changes have influenced the careers systems, but also other personal factors have too. Personal factors have also influenced the careers systems. Those factors include, for example, increasing lifespans, changes in family structures, the growing number of dual-career couples, single employed parents, workers with eldercare responsibilities, and the increasing number of individuals aiming to fulfill their needs for education, development, and progression (Hall, 2004).

Those dynamic environmental and individual changes have encouraged scholars and researchers to investigate new career attitudes and systems. As result of the scholars' work and effort, several contemporary careers theories have emerged, including the protean career (Hall, 1996a; Briscoe and Hall, 2006a), the boundaryless career (Arthur and Rousseau, 1996; Sullivan and Arthur, 2006), the post-corporate career (Peiperl and Baruch, 1997), the portfolio career (Briscoe and Hall, 2006a), and the kaleidoscope career (Mainiero and Sullivan, 2005). In the next section, each of these theories will be discussed.

4.1. The Protean Career:

The term "protean career" was first introduced by Hall (1976) but was not widely recognized until 1996, when he published his book, *The Career Is Dead—Long Live the Career* (Wiernik and Kostal, 2019). The concept of a "protean career" originally comes from the

metaphor of the Greek God Proteus, who was capable of changing his shape at will (Briscoe and Hall, 2006b). The concept of a protean career refers to the individual's ability to adjust and improve their skills, knowledge, and abilities to survive in a dynamic working environment and still be employable (Hall, 1976). Unlike the traditional career perceptions, protean career perceptions focus on the individual's initiative rather than the organizations in terms of career management and advancement (McDonald *et al.*, 2005; Sullivan and Baruch, 2009; Wiernik and Kostal, 2019). The term protean career was well defined by Hall (1976). He explained that a "protean career is a process which the person, not the organization, is managing. It consists of all of the person's varied experiences in education, training, work in several organizations . . ." (Hall, 1976: 201).

According to Hall's definition, individuals have become less dependent on their organizations for their career progression path. Additionally, people with protean career attitudes are seeking personal career success rather than external careers success, which, according to traditional career theory, is climbing the organizational hierarchy. This definition of protean career attitudes shifts the responsibility of career management from the organization to individuals as a result of the increasingly uncertain circumstances that may affect organizational strategies regarding the relationship between them and their employees (Hall and Mirvis, 1996; Mirvis and Hall, 1996; Hall, 2002).

Individuals with protean career orientation are more likely to value freedom, have faith in ongoing learning, be more flexible, and pursue subjective and intrinsic rewards from their career (Hall, 1996a; Hall, 1996b). The protean career is therefore based on the individual's attitude to determining their goals, involving the entire life sphere, as well as being motivated by inner success rather than objective success, including salary, rank, or authority (Briscoe and Hall, 2006a).

Protean career attitudes have influenced the assumptions of the psychological contract. For example, Arthur (1994b) stated that new career theories, including protean careers, result in what he called a "new deal", which refers to a new psychological contract where the relationship between the employer and employee no longer involves a promise of long-term job security and stable career development. Hall (2002) argued that if the old contract was between employees and employer, in the protean career, the contract is between employees and themselves.

Additionally, individual autonomy, continuous learning, personal responsibility, and self-awareness have been noted by Hall (2002) as requirements for successful protean careerists. As mentioned above, according to the old career perspective, the responsibility of career management, including upward progression, goal setting and planning, and job security, was part of an organizational function towards their employees. However, this responsibility has shifted in the protean career perspective; protean careerists are self-driven and play proactive roles in managing their career development and advancement (Baruch, 2004a; Briscoe and Hall, 2006a; Cabrera, 2009). This means that individuals should be more proactive to achieve their career success.

This perspective has been supported by Seibert *et al.* (2001a). In their study "What do proactive people do?" they found an indirect relationship between individuals with proactive personalities and career advancement and satisfaction (internal and external career success). Thus, individuals with a protean career orientation have different convictions about their careers goals and plans than individuals with traditional career perspectives. As the work environment changes, protean careerists place less emphasis on traditional career factors such as loyalty and commitment to one

organization (Maguire, 2002).

Briscoe and Hall (2006a) further elucidated the protean career by defining two components: (1) values-driven, in that the person's internal values provide the guidance and measure of success for the individual's career; and (2) self-directed in personal career management—having the ability to be adaptive in terms of performance and learning demands (Briscoe and Hall, 2006a: 8). They argued that individuals could be different in terms of exhibiting high or low levels of values-driven and self-directed attitudes toward career management (Briscoe and Hall, 2006a).

Based on individual differences in the degree of these two dimensions, Briscoe and Hall (2006a) proposed four primary categories of a career as seen from the protean career perspective: dependent, reactive, rigid, and protean. The "dependent" category refers to an individual who is not values-driven or self-directed in career management as they do not have the ability to determine priorities and manage their career. The "reactive" category refers to the individual who is not values-driven but who is self-directed in career management. The third category is "rigid", which refers to individuals who are value-driven but not self-directed. This type of person does not have the ability to adjust to the performance and learning required for their career, so they cannot completely form their career. The last category is "protean" career orientation. The protean career category refers to an individual who is both values-driven in defining their career priorities and identity, as well as self-directed in adjusting to the required performance and learning requirements of their career. This kind of individual can manage their career as well as managing others, and also has the capacity for ongoing learning.

Different scholars have made efforts to develop and validate measures to empirically examine the protean career orientation (Briscoe *et al.*, 2006; Baruch, 2008; Baruch, 2014). For example, Briscoe, Hall, and DeMuth (2006) developed and validated a 14-item scale to measure the two dimensions of the protean career orientation. Another recent effort to develop and validate measures to examine the protean career orientation was provided by Baruch (2014). He developed and validated a 7-item scale considering different cultures samples.

Overall, the idea of the protean career has encouraged organizations to play a significant new role in terms of their relationship with their employees. This new role is to act as a developer of its human capital and to provide the necessary support to its employees in order to empower them to facilitate their career progression and be self-directed regarding their career (Baruch, 2006). The next section will provide a brief review of another widespread new career theory. This theory is known as a boundaryless career.

4.2. The Boundaryless Career:

Another interesting contemporary career theory is that of the boundaryless career (Arthur and Rousseau, 1996; Sullivan and Arthur, 2006). This term emerged as a response to the concept of a "boundaryless organization," which was the theme of the 1993 Academy of Management conference (Sullivan and Baruch, 2009). The concept of a boundaryless career became known after the publication of Arthur and Rousseau's (1996) highly influential book about the term boundaryless career. They clarified that "the term boundaryless distinguishes our concept from the previous one — the 'bounded,' or organizational career. That view saw people in orderly employment arrangements achieved through vertical coordination in mainly large, stable firms" (Arthur and Rousseau, 1996: 3). They see a boundaryless career as the opposite of an organizational career; they believe that a boundaryless career is independent, rather than

dependent on an old organizational career structure, and involves experiences and opportunities that go beyond any single organization and employment (Guan *et al.*, 2019).

Additionally, Arthur and Rousseau (1996) and Arthur (1994b) presented six different meanings that illustrate boundaryless careers. The first meaning is what they called the typical Silicon Valley career, which refers to individuals moving across the boundaries of separate employers. The second meaning refers to those who draw validation and marketability from outside the present employer, such as academics or carpenters. The third meaning refers to real-estate agents, individuals who are sustained by external networks or information. The next meaning refers to individuals who break traditional organizational assumptions about hierarchy and career advancement. The fifth meaning refers to those individuals who reject existing career opportunities for personal or family reasons. The final meaning refers to individuals who perceive a boundaryless future regardless of structural constraints and their perception entirely built on the career actor's interpretation.

Although the definition of the boundaryless career was developed as the opposite of the traditional career, some traditional career values are still present, like the fact that the boundaryless career includes psychological and/or physical progress and mobility inside or outside the organizational boundary. However, it is worth mentioning here that the individual is the one who is responsible for taking the initiative regarding their career progression.

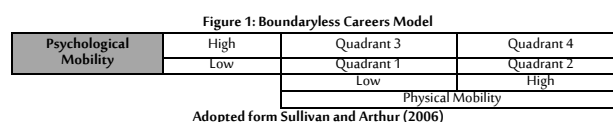
There are three career competencies within the boundaryless career concept: knowing-why, knowing-how, and knowing-whom (DeFillippi and Arthur, 1994; 1996; Arthur *et al.*, 1999; Arthur *et al.*, 2008). According to Arthur *et al.*, (1999), knowing-why refers to an individual's identity and meaning regarding their career motivation and career sense; thus, knowing-why acts as the motivational driver of the individual.

The second competency, knowing-how, is concerned with the individual's career-related skills and work-specific knowledge. These skills are developed through practical experience. The last competency is knowing-whom, which refers to an individual's ability to interact with others and develop contacts. It involves an individual's ability to build up and maintain a network of connections with different experts from several companies who might help in career progression and development.

There are similarities and connections between the concepts of boundaryless careers and protean careers. However, a boundaryless career is more influenced by external factors such as organizational networks, individual-family boundaries that affect career decisions, and a subjective interpretation of their career (Arthur and Rousseau, 2001).

Additionally, boundaryless career orientation includes physical and psychological career mobility (Sullivan and Arthur, 2006). Sullivan and Arthur (2006: 21) defined physical mobility as "actual movement between jobs, firms, occupations, countries." Psychological mobility is defined as "the capacity to move as seen through the mind of the career actor" (Sullivan and Arthur, 2006: 21).

Sullivan and Arthur (2006) developed a model of four main types of boundaryless careers that involves both physical and psychological career mobility (see Fig 1).



The first category is quadrant one and refers to individuals exhibiting low levels of both physical and psychological mobility. According to this

category, individuals tend to remain in the same company with limited mobility, which is assumed to appeal to both employee and employer. This type of boundaryless career may include individuals who have an advanced level of education and highly specialized knowledge that may result in a low level of transferability due to a limited number of employers requiring this type and level of knowledge, for example, astronauts.

The second category is quadrant two. Individuals in this category are expected to exhibit a high level of physical moves but low levels of psychological moves. This type of boundaryless career may include young individuals who want to see the world who may work as a waiter or bartender in a series of temporary jobs. Furthermore, individuals may change their jobs or organizations to move to different geographical locations to stay with their family or follow their spouse's work move.

The third category is quadrant three, which describes individuals who have high levels of psychological mobility but low levels of physical mobility. Those individuals carry high expectations of their employability. They seek personal growth outside their workplace through voluntary work or adult education classes, or inside their workplace, such as by introducing novel ideas into their organization. Those individuals seek to build a respectable reputation for themselves and achieve self-actualization within their career with less desire to change their organizational employers. They might be respected academics, experienced nurses, or qualified management experts.

The final category is quadrant four, which refers to individuals who have high levels of both physical and psychological mobility. Examples in this category might include employees who work for many restaurants where each work experience contributes to developing their skills, knowledge, and self-confidence, which may lead them to open their own restaurant.

In conclusion, a boundaryless career orientation has two main components: physical and psychological mobility. Many studies have been conducted to understand those two dimensions using the measures developed by Briscoe and Hall (2006a). These measures consist of a 13-item scale. Those 13 items are divided into two subscales, of which one subscale includes eight items to measure the individual's attitude to work across organizational boundaries (physical mobility). The second subscale includes five items to measure an individual's organizational mobility preferences (psychological mobility) (Wiernik and Kostal, 2019).

The next section will discuss those newer models of career concepts.

5. The Next Models of Career Concepts

5.1. Post-Corporate Career:

The first model was offered by Peiperl and Baruch (1997). They integrated perceptions from the protean and boundaryless theories into one model that they called the post-corporate career concept. They described post-corporate career individuals as self-directed in terms of the progression of their careers. Post-corporate careerists are most likely to take responsibility and create opportunities regarding their career management and development. They recognize different career choices and are more willing to go beyond boundaries to meet their individual needs, such as career satisfaction and monetary rewards. These individuals are often willing to leave big organizations to engage in multiple alternative employment experiences. For example, they may leave well-recognized organizations to engage in temporary work or do independent consulting. They may also create their own business or work for a small company that focuses on providing specialized services to large companies (Bagdadli and Gianecchini, 2019). This type of career is composed of elements and

dimensions that have been emphasized in the protean or boundaryless career concepts. For instance, post-corporate careerists take responsibility for directing their career (protean career element) and are more willing to make physical and psychological career moves (boundaryless career element).

5.2. Boundaryless Perspective:

Another integrative model was proposed by Greenhaus *et al.* (2008). This model encompasses three major components. The first component is the mobility pattern, which is the opposite of the traditional organizational career arrangement. This refers to the ability to move in any direction and across any boundary and is called a multidirectional career path (Bagdadli and Gianecchini, 2019). This may include practices such as moving between organizations, moving between organizational departments, changing employment forms (e.g., from full-time to part-time or from organizational employment to self-employment), career quitting, and job crafting (individuals changing and redefining their jobs).

The second components of a boundaryless perspective are the career competencies (knowing-why, knowing-how, knowing-whom). These are the three career competencies that were proposed by DeFillippi and Arthur (1994); Arthur and Rousseau (1996). The third components are the protean career attitudes (Briscoe *et al.*, 2006; Briscoe and Hall, 2006a). This model also takes into consideration economic factors, organizational conditions, and personal and family characteristics, in addition to the outcomes of the boundaryless perspective at both individual and organizational level (Baruch and Rousseau, 2019).

5.3. Career Profiles:

A third integrative model was proposed by Briscoe and Hall (2006a). They combined protean and boundaryless career orientation into one model, which results in 16 different career profiles (see Fig3). Each profile represents a career type that is based on the higher or lower level of protean career orientation in terms of its two dimensions (self-directed attitudes and values-driven attitudes) and boundaryless career orientation in terms of its two dimensions (psychological and physical mobility). For example, Briscoe and Hall (2006a) classified individuals exhibiting low self-directed and values-driven attitudes, as well as low physical and psychological mobility in their career management, as trapped or lost. Those individuals according to this profile, have a passive and reactive role regarding their career management although they have ability to cross the multidirectional boundaries.

In contrast, they classified individuals exhibiting high self-directed and values-driven attitudes, along with high physical mobility and psychological mobility in terms of their career management, as having a "Protean Career Architect" profile. Those individuals are more willing to undertake multidirectional psychological and physical movement. Also, they are managing their career by themselves based on their values in order to achieve career success.

5.4. Hybrid Careers:

The concept of hybrid careers has arisen as several researchers have found that individuals prefer and exhibit both traditional and non-traditional elements of careers theories (Gander, 2021; Baruch, 2009). This career orientation explains how individuals may focus on traditional career elements, such as upward career progression and job security, while at the same time exhibiting some elements of both protean and boundaryless theories (Gander, 2019). For example, Skilton and Bravo (2008) found that some employees were exhibiting traditional career elements in terms of climbing up the organizational hierarchy while at the same time experiencing multidirectional

movement between different projects where they had different roles in each project. According to the hybrid careers concept, individuals may enact career decisions and progressions based on their preference of different career orientation factors.

5.5. The Kaleidoscope Career Model:

The kaleidoscope career model (KCM) offers a different careers perspective and was developed independently from the boundaryless or protean careers theories (Ozbilgin, 2020).

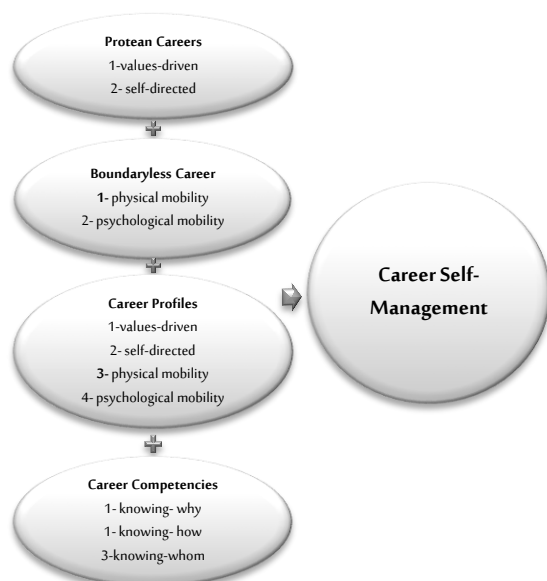
Mainiero and Sullivan (2006) developed KCM based on data collected from more than 3,000 U.S. professional employees, using five different research methods: three surveys, a focus group, and one interview.

The idea of KCM is taken from the kaleidoscope, which makes changing patterns when the tube is rotated and its colored glass pieces turn into new arrangements. KCM in career studies refers to the individual in terms of how they change and shift the pattern of their career based on different aspects of their lives in order to organize their roles and relationships in new ways.

These changes are a result of an individual's internal shift in their thinking and inspiration due to age or external environmental changes that cannot be controlled by individuals, such as being laid off (Sullivan and Baruch, 2009). This model proposes three parameters that individuals focus on when they make career decisions (Cabrera, 2009; Sullivan and Baruch, 2009). Those parameters or motivators are authenticity, balance, and challenge.

The first parameter, authenticity, refers to making career decisions based on being true to oneself and enables individuals to have appropriate work that matches their values. The second parameter, balance, refers to the aspiration and desire to achieve a balance between the demands of work and life outside of work. The last parameter, challenge, refers to the individual's desire for inspiring work and includes autonomy, responsibility, learning, career development, and advancement. The KCM suggests that individuals may focus on one of these parameters over the others, depending on the stage of their work lifespan. We note from previous reviews that many factors have an impact on the attitudes of individuals and their decisions regarding their career. The subject of career management has become more complex than in the past.

Figure 5: Components of concepts



As shown above, all these concepts and theories, regardless of their details, agree that the contemporary career concept depends on career self-management. This includes individuals taking the initiative in managing their careers, progressing their careers through self-reliance in developing skills, relationships, and multidirectional career moves to achieve career development and success.

6. COVID-19 and Contemporary Careers

There is no doubt that the public and private sectors have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Many companies have resorted to laying off employees due to the repercussions of the pandemic, and this provides an opportunity for contemporary individuals to use career-management principles to overcome this shock and survive in maintaining a career.

Since early May 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has infected more than 3.5 million people around the world, with over 250,000 dying as a consequence (Akkermans *et al.*, 2020). There is no doubt that the pandemic has had an impact on the economies of countries, which in turn has affected many people's lives. As a direct result, individual career experiences and orientations, in both the short- and long-term, will be affected. Healthcare and other frontline workers, for example, work around the clock to provide relevant and dedicated support services, while others have been compelled to work from home and must adjust to online and virtual work arrangements (Akkermans *et al.*, 2020; Parry *et al.*, 2021). Others are suffering immediate or impending job losses as businesses reduce service offerings and client demand falls (Akkermans *et al.*, 2020). This has an impact on rising unemployment rates and a decrease in wage rates, which puts many individuals in the situation of having to take the initiative in managing their careers.

During the pandemic, this proactive self-management of career orientation has appeared to be critical. As self-management of careers has been recognized as beneficial for managing career shocks (Seibert *et al.*, 2013), we can see the emergence of new trends in individuals' career orientations.

7. Practical Implications

This review has several important implications for people management in government agencies related to Human Resource Management, as well as for job seekers and those managing their careers. Specifically, if the Ministry of Human Resources wants to relieve pressure on itself, it may encourage job seekers to take the lead in creating their jobs and career management. In terms of individuals, career success is more likely while adopting these concepts and working with their principles.

8. Theoretical Implications

At the theoretical level, this study has provided an extensive review that has broadened the understanding of the implications of career theories with regard to the changes and transformations that are reflected in the world of business and career, taking into account technological development and economic crises. In addition, this research challenges these theories and their implications in light of the exceptional circumstances the world is witnessing from the repercussions of COVID-19 pandemic. These career orientations and conceptions may need to be re-conceptualized to be more suitable for the post-COVID-19 world.

Researchers may focus their efforts to consider the appropriateness of these concepts to eastern societies, specifically the countries of the Middle East. Thus far, traditional career orientations may be prevalent among individuals despite the lack of government jobs and job

insecurity in the private sector. This research contributes to expanding our understanding of the implications of these concepts under different circumstances, exceptional crises, and different societies. During these exceptional times, it is likely that new models related to career management for individuals and organizations will emerge.

9. Limitations

Conceptually, this study adopted a general review methodology to examine the evolution of the concept of a career rather than a systematic review. Therefore, the review may be limited. In addition, we cannot compare differences in these concepts regarding applications and practices across nations and cultures.

10. Conclusion and Future Research

With diminished stability and predictability due to the rapid changes in the business world, scholars realized that traditional career models no longer adequately explained the realities for many individuals, and new dynamic theories arose (Alshaikhmubarak *et al.*, 2020). These theories reflected the transition from individuals who depend on organizations for career development to individuals taking responsibility for their own career management and employability (Gander, 2019).

This review bridges the gap to understand the shift that has occurred in career management in response to the changing circumstances we are witnessing today. In this review, we have examined and clarified the established concepts, as well as the contemporary concepts and models that have been developed over the past decade. Although many researchers have examined these new concepts, there is a lack of such studies in the eastern regions. Additional investigation of how the COVID-19 pandemic has prompted a rethink of many practices, such as remote working, reduced working hours, and other concepts related to career management, might be necessary to reconceptualize contemporary career theories and models.

We hope that this review will contribute to a deeper understanding of career orientations, offer insight into careers literature, and inspire further investigations into the shifting nature of careers. Perhaps, through this review, it becomes clear that there is a need to develop a more flexible model for managing careers in relation to the current situation and the rapid and unexpected changes that we are witnessing now.

Biography

Abdulrahman Alshaikhmubarak

Department of Business Administration, College of Business Administration, King Faisal University, Al Ahsa, Saudi Arabia, 00966561357735, aalshaik@kfu.edu.sa

Dr. Alshaikhmubarak is a Saudi assistant professor. He received a master's degree from RIT University in human resources development and obtained a Ph.D. from the University of Southampton in the same specialty. He is a member of the Board of Directors of Anan Company, a member of the British Academy of Management, a member of the Harvard Business Review Association, and member of the distinguished students' arbitration team. He has presented several training courses, including a human resources specialist course, and a course on the art of entrepreneurship for employees.

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