**The Why, What, and How of Careers Research:**

**A Review and Recommendations for Future Study**

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**Abstract**

**Purpose**–The field of careers studies is complex and fragmented. The aim of this paper is to detail why it is important to study careers, what we study, and how we study key issues in this evolving field.

**Design/methodology/approach** – Key theories, concepts, and models are briefly reviewed to lay the groundwork for offering an agenda for future research.

**Findings** – We recommend ten key directions for future research and offer specific questions for further study.

**Research limitations/implications** – This paper contributes to the development of the theoretical underpinning of career studies.

**Practical implications** – We hope the proposed agenda for future research will help advance the field and encourage more research on under-studied, but important, topics.

**Originality** – This paper presents a comprehensive view of research on contemporary careers.

**Key words**: careers; career studies; contemporary careers; future research agenda

Contemporary careers are dynamic and operate within an increasing complex work landscape (Chin, Li, Jiao, Addo, and Jawahar, 2019; Tomlinson, Baird, Berg, and Cooper, 2018). As a result, the field of career studies is dynamic and evolving; it is also fragmented and spans multiple disciplines (Arthur, Hall, and Lawrence, 1989; Lee, Felps, and Baruch, 2014). Careers are influenced by many contextual factors, including regional and global economies, labor markets, technological innovations, government policies, and evolving societal and cultural norms (Gunz, Lazarova, and Mayrhofer, 2020). The shifting of responsibility for careers from organizations to workers has fueled a more individualized career orientation (Gubler, Arnold, and Coombs, 2014; Hall, Yip, and Doiron, 2018) and greater recognition of the role that multiple parties play in supporting or hindering career opportunities (Baruch, 2015; Baruch and Rousseau, 2019).

We define a careeras “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. This definition recognizes both physical movements and psychological transitions, 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)” (Sullivan and Baruch, 2009, p. 543).

The field of careers is interdisciplinary, which is both a strength and weakness. Its interdisciplinary nature is a strength because scholars have the opportunity to learn from and contribute to other fields. The field examines how each individual enacts a career, which has strong implications for many facets of that person’s life. Further, other actors participate in the process, with multiple roles, aims, and obligations (Arthur et al., 1989; Hall, 2002). These actors may include employers, professional associations, unions, government agencies, and NGOs. The field also examines career systems, where careers evolve, and each context (e.g. geography, sector) forms a career landscape where careers take place, locally and globally (Baruch, 2015; Gribling and Duberley, 2021; Hart and Baruch, 2022). Even those who enact careers outside traditional organizational structures, such as contract and self-employed workers, are influenced by organizations as short-term employers, competitors, or market influencers (Tempest, McKinlay, and Starkey, 2004). As a result, understanding careers and how to manage them effectively is important to the many actors and various constituencies. The inter-disciplinary nature of career studies is also a weakness because the field is fragmented (Baruch et al., 2015). This fragmentation makes it difficult for scholars to remain current in the literature and determine the most appropriate methods to use in studying careers at multiple levels of analysis.

The purpose of this paper is to help make sense of this complex but fragmented field by (a) detailing why it is important to study careers, (b) briefly reviewing key theories, concepts, and models of careers, and (c) examining what methods are used to study careers. Based upon this review and analysis, we offer ten major recommendations to guide future research.

**Why we study careers**

Careers are important. For many, careers are a major source of identity and satisfaction. Careers enable people to pay their bills and be contributing members of society. People support themselves and loved ones through their careers. Many relationships are embedded in careers. People often fulfill their dreams, inspire others, or leave a legacy through their careers.

It is important to study careers because the choice of occupation, continuous learning and development to fulfill work requirements, and transitions across work roles affect individuals’ career success and well-being (Chudzikowski, 2012). Career success is an important outcome for people, hence, it is important to their employing organizations (Heslin, 2005). To be effective and socially responsible, employers must manage their resources, and the most critical resource is their employees. Applying best practices for talent management that support workers’ well-being and enhance their productivity should lead to strong positive organizational outcomes and stronger nations (Combs et al., 2006; Jiang et al., 2012; Tzabbar et al., 2017).

Within the global arena, nations attempt to attain competitive advantage through the better use of their resources (Porter, 2011). This requires governments to invest in people and develop systems that support optimal employment levels while enabling people to flourish. Educational institutions, including vocational and professional schools, are a key element in a nation’s competitive advantage and may greatly impact the type of careers individuals are able to enact.

In summary, the world of work is changing at an increasingly fast pace. The field of careers strives to offer an understanding of these changes and to help improve the planning and management of careers from a multi-level perspective – individual, organizational, and societal. Much is at stake for people, employers, and nations. Over the course of a lifetime, people spend about 90,000 hours working (assuming the average person works 40 hours per week, for 45 years and for 50 weeks a year). People want to earn an income, but they also want to be successful and happy while working (Spurk et al., 2019). From an employer’s point of view, matching the right people to the right job and work environment yields the greatest results for organizational effectiveness (Jiang et al., 2012). From the national perspective, the productivity and creativity of the workforce influences a country’s economy (Porter, 1990), the availability and quality of services (e.g., health care, infrastructure), and happiness of its citizens (Thinley, 2005).

**What We Study**

One of the major changes in the study of careers that has occurred over the past 40 years is the shift from focusing on the traditional, linear career models to applying nontraditional, contemporary models to capture the increasing variety of career patterns being enacted by an increasingly diverse workforce. In the following sections, we briefly review key theories, concepts, and models. We begin by discussing the traditional perspective of career stages.

*Career Stages*

The traditional models are exemplified by Super’s (1957a, b) well-known career stage model. According to Super, people’s implementation of their self-concept is summarized by a series of age-based career stages. At each stage, individuals complete certain developmental tasks (e.g., acquiring new skills, finding one’s niche) as they mature and gain work experience. Super based his model on the careers of men as they climbed the organizational hierarchy, sought extrinsic rewards, and permanently disengaged from the labor force on retirement.

Super’s career stages have been integrated into other models and used as a moderating or control variable in many studies. For example, Super’s (1980) life-career rainbow describes how individuals play different roles, in different situations, and in different career stages. Hall and Mirvis’ (1996) suggest people’s careers are characterized by a series of mini-stages of exploration-trial-mastery-exit across work boundaries, with cycles driven by learning and mastery rather than age. Mainiero and Sullivan (2006) examined how the three parameters of the kaleidoscope career model (KCM) shift across people’s career stages.

Super’s career stage model has had a great positive impact on careers research. Despite the importance of his model, however, it is not without limitations. Scholars have questions whether Super’s model accurately captures the career experiences of women (Sullivan, 1999), members of the increasingly diverse workforce, and those whose careers are increasingly affected by structural changes, including the rise of the gig economy and the increased use of AI and virtual work (Sullivan and Baruch, 2009). Super’s model focuses on extrinsic rewards, yet many people also desire career satisfaction and meaningful work. The model emphasizes upward movement, yet people are often willing to accept lateral or downward transfers in exchange for reduced work-life conflict and stress (Arthur and Rousseau, 1996; Hall, 1996).

*First generation of contemporary careers*

As the workplace changed in response to rapid technological advances, increased globalization, and the increased downsizing of white collar workers during the 1990s, the first generation of contemporary career concepts was introduced. These newer theories and concepts included the boundaryless (Arthur and Rousseau, 1996), protean (Hall, 1996), post-corporate (Peiperl and Baruch, 1997), and intelligent (Arthur, Claman and DeFillippi, 1995) career.

*Boundaryless and protean career orientations*

The two most prominent of the contemporary career concepts are the boundaryless and protean careers. A boundaryless career (BC) is “one of independence from, rather than dependence on, traditional organizational career arrangements” involving “opportunities that go beyond any single employer” (DeFillippi and Arthur, 1996: 116). A BC is characterised by varying degrees of physical (i.e., “actual movement between jobs, firms, occupations, and countries”) and psychological (i.e., “the capacity to move as seen through the mind of the career actor” movement (Sullivan and Arthur, 2006: 21). In contrast, the protean career (PC) consists of the two dimensions of values driven (i.e., “person’s internal values provide the guidance and measure of success for the individual’s career”) and self-directed career management (i.e., “having the ability to be adaptive in terms of performance and learning demands”) (Briscoe and Hall, 2006: 8). The PC orientation represents a major shift from organizational career management to employees taking responsibility for the planning, directing, and evaluating of their careers (Hall, 2004).

Since the introduction of measures of the PC and BC orientations (e.g., Baruch, 2014; Briscoe et al., 2006), research on both concepts has dramatically increased (Li, Goering, Montanye, and Su, 2021; Wiernik and Kostal, 2019). Despite the substantial amount of research on these two orientations, common misconceptions persist (Hart and Baruch, 2022). For example, it is often assumed that those with a higher BC or PC orientation are more likely to engage in all types of physical mobility, without considering differences in transition types (e.g., job changes versus promotions versus turnover) (Li et al., 2021; Wiernik and Kostal, 2019). Likewise, although the BC and PC are theorized as two distinct, but related concepts, the terms are often (mistakenly) used interchangeably (Briscoe and Hall, 2006; Briscoe et al., 2006; Sullivan and Arthur, 2006).

The introduction of the BC and PC concepts has greatly advanced the study of careers. To further enhance research in this area, two major issues regarding the BC and PC orientations should be addressed. First, there is the continuing debate about the relevance and validity of these two theories (Inkson et al., 2012; Rodrigues Guest, and Budjanovcanin, 2016). Recently, Wiernik and Kostal (2019) examined the empirical distinction between the BC and PC orientations. Based on their meta-analysis findings, they concluded the PC dimensions of self-directed, values-driven, and the BC dimension of psychological mobility belong to the same construct, supporting the view of PC as a single construct (Baruch, 2014). The BC dimension of physical mobility preferences, however, is a distinct construct. These results call into question the distinctiveness of the two orientations. Second, there are questions about whether these theories provide an overly rosy view of contemporary careers (Baruch and Vardi, 2016; Furnham, Hyde, and Trickey, 2014). Recent meta-analysis reviews (Li et al., 2021; Wiernik and Kostal, 2019) demonstrate that studies on the PC and BC orientations focus on their associations with positive personality variables and career outcomes. However, there may be a dark side to these orientations. Taking responsibility for managing one’s career, engaging in continuous learning to remain employable, and coping with feeling of job insecurity may take a toll on people, but the possible negative aspects of the BC and PC orientations are rarely considered (Baruch and Vardi, 2016).

*Post-corporate careers*

The post-corporate career (Peiperl and Baruch, 1997) is defined as the dynamic system of transition from traditional career structures towards a more dynamic and agile system where alternative career options are available and are considered viable and worthy. This concept integrates the individual, organization, and work-environment perspectives where career transitions take place. The framework juxtaposes traditional and contemporary career models, indicating that alongside the large, mostly bureaucratic organization (hence career) structure, multiple options are becoming available to individuals. In contrast to previous models, the concept of the post-corporate careers suggests that in the dynamic labor market, people, like organizations, may develop horizontal links that transcend geographic and organizational boundaries.

*Intelligent careers*

The intelligent careersconceptfocuses on the three major career competencies of knowing why (what motivates an individual to choose or remain in a certain occupation, job, or lifestyle), knowing how (an individual’s skills, knowledge, and experiences), and knowing whom (an individual’s relationships and network connections) (Arthur, Claman and DeFillippi, 1995; Arthur, Khapova, and Richardson, 2016). This framework was later expanded to include the additional three competencies of knowing what (opportunities, threats, and requirements), knowing where (entering, training, and advancing), and knowing when (timing of choices and activities) (Jones and DeFillippi, 1996). Despite the expansion of the concept, most research applying the intelligent career model focuses on the original three competencies, with authors often using different measures of these competencies. *Second generation of contemporary careers*

Since the mid-2000s, a second generation of contemporary career theories and concepts were developed. These second generation career concepts include the KCM (Mainiero and Sullivan, 2006), career construction theory (CCT) (Savickas, 2005), employability (Fugate, 2006; van der Heijde and van der Heijden, 2006), career sustainability (De Vos and Van der Heijden, 2015), chance events and career shocks (Bright, Pryor, and Harpham, 2005), and the career ecosystem (Baruch, 2015).

*Kaleidoscope careers*

The KCM describes how individuals focus on the three interacting career parameters of authenticity (i.e., individuals make choices to align their values, behaviors, and attitudes to be true to who they are), balance (i.e., seeking equilibrium between the work and nonwork aspects of life), and challenge (i.e., desiring stimulating work, growth, and advancement). The three parameters are always active and simultaneously influence career decision-making and transitions. At a given time, one parameter usually takes priority and has a greater influence in shaping an individual’s choices. As individuals search for the best fit given their values and life context, the three parameters shift in response, with another parameter taking priority at point in time (Sullivan, Forret, Carraher, and Mainiero, 2009).

Studies on the KCM found people follow either a more: (a) traditional career pattern, with this pattern usually taking place across more boundaries than the traditional pattern described by Super (1957a,b), or (b) discontinuous pattern, whereby individuals, for example, may leave corporations to become entrepreneurs or transition out of the labor force for a time to address personal interests or caregiving responsibilities (Mainiero and Sullivan, 2006; O’Neill and Jepsen, 2019). While the KCM was originally applied to refute the myth of the opt-out revolution (i.e., women permanently leaving the workforce to care for children), O’Connor and Crowley-Henry (2020) applied the KCM to test the assumption that institutional and structural barriers cause the underemployment of skilled migrants. They found that most of the skilled migrants prioritized balance over challenge and authenticity, and opted out of professional jobs related to their home-country employment and qualifications.

Research has supported the basic tenets of the KCM. For example, studies have found that authenticity, balance, and challenge influence career decisions and the three parameters shift over time (August, [2011](#B11); Kirk, [2016](#B32); Mutter and Thorn, 2018; O’Neill and Jepsen, [2019](#B43)). More research on the KCM is needed, including the use of longitudinal, quantitative designs and samples from non-Western countries. Studies on the potential dark side of a kaleidoscope career should also be conducted (Baruch and Vardi, 2016).

*Career construction theory*

According to the CCT, individuals construct themselves and their careers through multi-layered interpretive and interpersonal processes over the life span, with career development driven by adaptation to the environment (Savickas, 2005). Career adaptability is the core psychosocial construct of CCT and is defined as “an individual’s resources for coping with current and anticipated tasks, transitions, traumas in their occupational roles that, to some degree large or small, alter their social integration” (Savickas and Porfeli, 2012: 662). Career adaptability is compromised of four resources: concern (i.e., the degree people are prepared for expected career tasks and changes), control (i.e., the degree people take responsibility for their career development and influence their work environment), curiosity (i.e., the degree people explore possible future selves and work roles and environments), and confidence (i.e., people’s beliefs that they can solve problems and overcome difficulties (Savickas and Porfeli, 2012).

Many studies have been conducted on career adaptability. Limitations of current CCT research include that the term career adaptability is used inconsistently across studies and the use of measurement scales that fail to capture the difference between career adaptability resources and responses (Johnston, 2018).

*Employability*

While traditional career models focused on lifelong employment, contemporary career concepts focus on remaining employable over the life span. Employability is broadly defined as “a psycho-social construct that embodies individual characteristics that foster adaptive cognition, behavior, and affect, and enhance the individual-work interface” (Fugate, Kinicki, and Ashforth, 2004, p. 15). Those high in employability effectively react to environmental demands, proactively engage in continuous learning, prepare for possible changes, and initiate change (Fugate, 2006; van der Heijde and van der Heijden, 2006). Employability is influenced by many individual factors including a person’s education, qualifications, and identities as well as organizational and sector variations, such as being employed by a local or multinational enterprise, or working as a freelancer (Van der Heijde and Van der Heijden, 2006). Much research has examined graduate education as a factor in employability (Donald, Baruch, and Ashleigh, 2019), suggesting future research should examine other factors, such as socioeconomic status, PC career orientation, and ambition. Although many studies have examined employability, there is currently no consensus on its dimensions (Fugate et al., 2004; Williams, Dodd, Steele, and Randall, 2016).

*Sustainable careers*

Career sustainability refers to people’s capacity to learn, create, test, and maintain adaptability in managing their careers (De Vos and Van der Heijden, 2015). Conceptualization of career sustainability is still in a nascent stage, with several authors offering different ways to characterize the construct (see Chin et al., 2019 for a review). For example, De Vos, Van der Heijden, and Akkermans (2020) suggest the three interacting dimensions of person, context, and time be used to examine career sustainability, with level of sustainability determined by measuring people’s health, happiness, and productivity. Chin, Jawahar and Li (2021) propose that sustainability consists of the four dimensions of flexible, renewable, integrative, and resourceful. They developed and validated a twelve item scale to measure sustainability.

*Chance events and career shocks*

Chance events are unpredictable, luck-based occurrences that may influence one’s career (Bright et al., 2005). Baruch and Lavi-Steiner (2015) found that positive (negative) chance events do not necessarily lead to positive (negative) career outcomes. For example, people may come to see being fired as a blessing in disguise because it forced them to transition away from an abusive organizational culture to better employment opportunities. Negatively perceived chance events may have a positive impact on career trajectories because these events may spark happenstance learning (Krumboltz, 2009). In addition, Bright et al. (2005, 2009) found that people are biased in their perceptions of chance events. Individuals more readily recall events that are negative in impact and with relatively uncontrollable consequences. Many chance events result in no career changes and thus are rarely studied.

A career shock usually follows an uncontrollable chance event and triggers a deliberate thought process about one’s career (Akkermans et al., 2018). Depending upon the context and people’s characteristics (e.g., personality, career orientation), career shocks may be perceived as positive or negative. Career shocks vary in frequency, duration, and intensity. Shocks may push or pull people from their original or desired career path, causing them to change occupations or abandon goals (Kindsiko and Baruch, 2019). Career shocks may also affect people’s ability to thrive (Mansur and Felix, 2020).

Research has examined career shocks such as traumatic injuries (Haynie and Shepherd, 2011), the onset of an adult disability (Baldridge and Kulkarni, 2017), and the COVId-19 pandemic (Akkermans, Richardson, and Kraimer, 2020). One limitation of research on career shocks is that scholars often impose their perception of whether a career shock is positive (e.g., promotion) or negative (e.g., job loss), rather than measuring whether respondents perceive it as positive or negative. Also, greater differentiation is needed between career shocks with similar terms, such as chance events, career jolts or happenstance.

*Career ecosystem*

The career ecosystem (Baruch, 2015) offers a theoretical lens to explore careers from multiple perspectives. It examines a variety of actors (individuals, organizations, nations/societies) as they engage within a labor market, for many a global one, where each actor has their own agenda. For instance, individuals may stay or move in their chosen or imposed occupations, organizations, sectors, and locations. They may work for one or more organizations and sometime for themselves. During their career, they may cross many boundaries and move in various directions in what is called the “flow of talent” across organizations, sectors, and nations.

Along with the flow of talent, the ecosystem mechanisms of change, expansion, and decline are in a perpetual motion of evolution. Actors operate within a labor market ecosystem, with each such ecosystem characterized by: (a) a constant flow of human capital, prompted and influenced by push/pull factors; (b) spiral learning processes, required for continuous adjustments and adaptation to new situations; (c) ongoing change processes, influencing the directions and magnitude of human capital flow; and (d) influencing factors, including global ones, at many levels. Thus, the construction of the career ecosystem involves economic, technological, social, legal, and political forces. Although the career ecosystem has been effectively applied as an organizing framework (e.g., Baruch and Rousseau, 2019), greater empirical study of the theory is needed (see Gribling and Duberley, 2021).

*Summary*

Theories, conceptualizations, and models of careers have evolved as people change how they view their careers and structural changes influence possible career paths. Research continues to examine traditional careers characterized by linear, upward movement across people’s career stages. More studies now are being conducted on nontraditional careers (e.g., BCs, PCs, post-corporate careers, kaleidoscope careers) that are often characterized by interruptions, frequent transitions across a variety of more permeable boundaries, and changes in where (e.g., work from home, virtual meetings) and how (e.g., AI assisted decision-making, freelance platforms) work is accomplished. Scholars have theorized about how career competencies, chance events, career shocks, and adaptability may influence people’s employability, career sustainability, and career success within the career ecosystem.

Studies on the BC and PC orientations continue to dominate research on careers, due in part, to the introduction of scales to measure these concepts (Briscoe et al., 2006). The recent development and validation of scales to measure career sustainability (Chin et al., 2021) will probably dramatically increase research on it. Research on career sustainability and employability will be further enhanced when scholars reach a consensus on the dimensions comprising these constructs. The use of qualitative studies may help clarify these constructs. Contemporary careers are typically described in positive terms and the potential dark side of nontraditional career paths is often neglected (Baruch and Vardi, 2016). However, some careers that provide flexibility and autonomy may also have a dark side. For instance, Tempest et al. (2004) found that less skilled workers who transitioned from in-house employees to freelancers experienced difficulties finding jobs and getting employment that was challenging and resulted in rich on-the-job learning. Feeling forced to accept tedious jobs to earn a living, these freelancers felt trapped in a cycle of unchallenging work that eroded their employability. Table 2 summarizes the theories, concepts, and models examined in this review.

[Insert Table 1 about Here]

**How we study careers**

The field of careers has benefitted from multiple perspectives, yet there continue to be repeated calls for scholars to increase the use of longitudinal data, multi-country research designs, and mixed methods (e.g., Akkermans, Lee, Nijs, Mylona, and Oostrom, 2021; Sullivan, 1999; Sullivan and Baruch, 2009). Scholars studying careers, however, are moving away from cross-sectional research designs to more complex methods, such as the use of longitudinal, multi-source data (Murphy and Tosti-Kharas, 2021). Similarly, more studies are using mixed-methods, moving away from the artificial divide between qualitative and quantitative methodologies and instead recognizing the complementary nature and value of these methods (Gibson, 2017). More scholars are also using network analysis to study career competences and capital or to identify the prominence of individuals within a system (Collins and Steffen-Fluhr, 2019). New tools are constantly being developed and used in the careers field, including sequential analysis and optimal matching analysis (Dlouhy and Biemann, 2015; van der Laken, Bakk, Giagkoulas, van Leeuwen, and Bongenaar, 2018). Some methods, such as laboratory studies and experiments, continue to be infrequently used to study careers (cf. Allen, Eby, O’Brien, and Lentz, 2008).

Important knowledge continues to be gained from the extant literature by the use of meta-analyses and systematic literature reviews (Denyer and Tranfield, 2009). For example, several meta-analyses have focused on factors leading to career success (e.g. Ng, Eby, Sorensen, and Feldman 2005; Ng and Feldman, 2014). Various literature reviews have examined the growing number of career concepts, constructs, and related variables that evolve as the field continues to develop (e.g., Akkermans et al., 2021; Baruch, Szücs, and Gunz, 2015).

In terms of samples, while early studies of careers (e.g., Super) focused on white males in professional or white- collar jobs, most studies today use samples including both men and women. Blue- and pink-collar workers and workers from the public or nonprofit sectors are still studied less frequently. Samples from developed countries still fail to capture racial and ethnic diversity. Studies of work-nonwork conflict still focus on heterosexual couples. Likewise, relatively little research has been completed on the careers of those with chronic illnesses and disabilities (Beatty, Baldridge, Boehm, Kulkarni, and Colella, 2019). Few studies examine how undergoing medical treatments (e.g., chemo, major surgeries) affect people’s careers. While many studies still focus on the early career stages, with the abolition of retirement age in many countries, there is a growing interest in studying the later career stages and retirement (Baruch, Sayce, and Gregoriou, 2014; Schmidthuber, Fechter, Schröder, and Hess, 2021).

Even though contemporary careers models (e.g., career ecosystem) suggest that careers should be studied within the context they occur, whether it be within or outside organizations (Hall, 2002), at the local or global level (Dickmann and Baruch, 2011), or across different industries and sectors, most career studies are at the individual level of analysis. Some studies, however, have examined how individuals and organizational representatives (e.g., HR managers, counselors at government job assistance programs) together plan and manage different types of careers (e.g., intrapreneurial, entrepreneurial, self-directed) (Asante and Affum-Osei, 2019) as well as the characteristics of organizational career systems (Bagdadli and Gianecchini, 2019).

In summary, the careers field benefits from inter-disciplinary perspectives and the use of an array of research methods that have enabled the field to progress and offer many new insights. Empirical studies at a global scale, such as the 5C (Briscoe et al. 2018), push the field forward. Mixed methods and advanced analytic techniques (e.g., moderated mediation) help to improve our understanding of careers. However, this multiplicity adds to the complexity and fragmentation of the careers field (Arthur et al., 1989; Baruch et al., 2015), making it difficult for scholars to remain current in the careers literature and research methods. Thus, the value of diverse research teams, composed of scholars of different career stages and backgrounds, is apparent.

**What We Should Study**

Based upon our review of key theories, models, and methods used to study careers, we suggest the following ten major avenues for future research. Table 2 summarizes these research directions and offers some specific questions for further study.

[Insert Table 2 about Here]

*Recommendation #1: Study more than upward movement*

Super’s (1957) traditional career stage model focused on climbing the organizational hierarchy and extrinsic rewards. Much of the research on careers still focuses on upward mobility and career success (Benschop, van den Brink, Doorewaard, and Leenders, 2013; Ng et al., 2005; Spurk, Hirschi, and Dries, 2019; Sullivan and Al Ariss, 2021) despite the contemporary career models’ focus on using lateral or downward transitions as opportunities for growth, improved work-life balance, or reduced work stress (Hall, 1996; Sargent, 2003; Wolf, 2019). We know relatively little about whether people perceive lateral or downward transitions to be voluntary and, if they are voluntary, why people choose them.

Scholars should explore the many types of career transitions (up, down, lateral), if possible within one study, and how these different transition types impact career outcomes. For example, what types of lateral transitions (e.g., across functions, locations; different levels of enrichment and enlargement) lead to productive learning experiences and enhanced employability, and what type of transitions instead lead to career plateaus or reduced career adaptability? Similarly, the long-term effects of different types of career transitions on career satisfaction, employability, and future career transitions as moderated by career orientations and KCM parameters could also be explored

*Recommendation #2: Explore the career conundrum of continuous learning*

The contemporary career frameworks emphasize the need for continuous learning and development as people’s assumed greater responsibility for managing their careers or increase their mobility across employment settings. However, as careers become more self-managed and less tied to organizational career development practices, how will people continuously learn and develop in order to be employable? Studies indicate individuals have difficulties engaging in the process of the continuous learning (e.g., Tempest et al., 2004). For example, Mallon and Walton’s (2005) reported that while professionals believed they were responsible for their own career management, most did not know how to do so. Those without organizational ties reported having insufficient time to engage in learning activities, while those employed by organizations were passive about their career development. For freelance workers and others without access to quality organizational training programs, research is needed on the best methods for people to quickly and effectively enhance their skills to remain employable. Studies are also needed on how educational institutions can assist individuals in understanding how to manage their careers and devote sufficient time to continuously learning. Similarly, scholars should examine the effectiveness of community colleges and non-profit organizations, such as NPower and Per Scholas, in helping under-represented groups train for increased employability.

Future research is needed of organizational and government strategies for the reskilling and redeployment of employees displaced by evolving technology or market conditions. Estimates suggest that by 2030, technological advances will displace from 10 to 375 million workers (Manyika, et al., 2017). The digitalization of manufacturing processes is already requiring blue collar workers to continuously expand their knowledge and skills to keep pace with rapidly evolving software and machinery (Chin et al., 2019). Workers will not only need to reskill for jobs replaced by technology, but will need new skills, such as how to make decisions aided by AI (Wilson and Daugherty, 2018). Exploring the best methods for helping employees adjust to technological changes and effectively reskill is an area of future research with practical and societal importance.

Research is also needed on changing organizational career systems, such as the increased consideration of experience and the completion of certification programs instead of four-year university degrees in the hiring process. The societal impact of such alternative selection requirements should be examined, as these changes may result in more inclusive hiring practices, given that fewer minority group members hold bachelor's degrees (Johnson, 2019).

*Recommendation #3: Study new career options and paths*

The fourth industrial revolution and the increasing use of AI (Schwab, 2017) are expected to pose a threat to careers, in particular within the service and public sectors. During the industrial revolution, people moved from agriculture to production; what jobs will people displaced by AI move into? Will massive reskilling programs be instituted by employers, unions, or governments? How effective will these programs be? The answers to these questions may involve dramatic changes in attitudes about work and careers (Baruch, 2022). For example, if the demand for labor decreases due to increased automation, the implementation of a universal basic income (UBI) may be used. The UBI has been suggested as a potential buffer to volatile changes in the labor market (Perkins, Gilmore, Guttormsen, and Taylor, 2021) and may present a new type of career path to people (Baruch, 2022).

The use of a UBI may create a totally new social class – those who do not engage in paid employment. For some, a career may be more about caregiving, leisure, or volunteering; there may be a different search for satisfaction under a new value system. Future research could explore which factors increase the likelihood of engaging in a career based on a UBI (e.g., career orientation) and whether a UBI-based career is sustainable. Will the use of a UBI permit more people to pursue artistic endeavors or a career calling? Will organizations increase wages or improve working conditions in order to attract and retain workers who have the viable alternative of a UBI? The implications of a UBI for human resource management (HRM), careers, and society may emerge as an exciting new area of research.

*Recommendation #4: Examine alternative work contexts*

A great deal of research has been completed on careers within organizations, with more studies increasingly examining alternative work contexts. Organizations' greater use of “just in time” hiring practices, freelance bidding platforms, and short-term employment contracts are a double-edge sword for employees. The rise of the gig economy offers workers increased flexibility and autonomy, but also may increase employee job insecurity and the potential for employers to exploit them (Duggan, Sherman, Carbery, and McDonnell, 2021; Kalleberg, 2009; Kost, Fieseler, and Wong, 2020). Studies are needed on the short- and long-term effects of alternative employment forms on people’s career patterns and success. Research is also needed on how organizations effectively socialize, motivate, and train these nonstandard employees.

Additional study is needed on the career orientations, paths, and outcomes of individuals who transition in and out of seasonal professional (e.g., accountants at tax time), service (e.g., ski resorts, holiday staff), and manual (e.g., farm, construction) employment. A greater understanding is needed about the career attitudes and behaviors of individuals who must simultaneously work two or three part-time jobs to earn a decent living (e.g., adjunct faculty, retail clerks), or move from one short-term assignment to another. Scholars should examine the careers of those moving out of undesirable contexts that undermine employability, such as war or climate change refugees, people re-entering the labor force after extended periods of illness or incarceration, and those stuck in limbo between the job they occupy and the job they desire. Understanding what differentiates those who follow an alternative career path and whether these individuals earn a good standard of living, are important areas for future study.

*Recommendation #5: Explore the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on careers*

The global COVID-19 pandemic as a career shock has already encouraged research on its effects on individuals’ careers and organizations’ career management systems (Hite and McDonald, 2020). The pandemic has accelerated the study of other career related issues, in particular, alternative work arrangements in the shape of virtual work and working from home (Dingel and Neiman, 2020). However, the impact of the pandemic on other important career issues are yet to be examined.

Since the pandemic started, a growing number of people are questioning the meaning of their jobs, roles, and careers (Hite and McDonald, 2020). Some are questioning their relationship with their employer and whether to turnover or retire. Others have been displaced, with some having no prospects of returning to their former jobs. Anecdotal evidence suggests that many individuals, especially those in the retail and service sectors, are seeking greater opportunities for a “real career path” rather than a dead-end job (Lohr, 2021). Future research should examine how the pandemic has influenced people’s career orientations, perceptions of employability and career sustainability, and kaleidoscope career patterns.

Likewise, the influence of the pandemic on negative career attitudes and behaviours should be explored. The substantial increase in the number of people working from home because of the pandemic has caused an increase in the number of workers who are “overemployed.” Overemployed workers are typically white collar professionals who, unbeknownst to their employers, concurrently work for multiple employers. During the pandemic, this practice became more viable, especially for those working in the technology, banking, and insurance industries. Anecdotal evidence suggests that those who are overemployed work less than 40 hours a week on multiple jobs and just do enough work not to be noticed (Kelly, 2021). Relatively little is known about the careers of the overemployed or the impact this practice has on organizations and society.

*Recommendation #6:* *Investigate the dark side of contemporary careers*

Much has been written about the positive aspects of contemporary careers, while the potential negative impact of these career paths on career success, stress, and burnout has been largely ignored (see Baruch and Vardi, 2016). More studies are needed on the frustrations, disillusionments, and failures experienced while pursuing a nontraditional career path. For example, what happens to the many talented individuals who cannot earn a living as a professional musician (Dobrow Riza, and Heller, 2015)? After devoting years to earning a doctoral degree, what do faculty members do when they cannot move into highly desired, university research positions (Bamber, Allen-Collinson, and McCormack, 2017) or cannot even find a job in academe? Events, such as being denied a promotion or suffering a career setback, may negatively affect people’s perceptions of their employability (Webster and Beehr, 2013) or increase their likelihood of engaging in counterproductive work behaviors (Fine, Goldenberg, and Noam, 2016). Even positive practices, such as alternative work arrangements that increase employee flexibility, may have a dark side to them. For example, those working from home may experience increased stress and work-life conflict as the line between work and home becomes more blurred. Alternative work practices may limit the career prospects of certain populations, such as working mothers (Golden and Eddleston, 2020).

Within the context of the dark side of careers, there is a segment of the workforce that is rarely covered in the literature, those engaged in illegal and criminal activities. People involved in physical, organized or white- collar crime develop careers within the context of illegal operations and fear of detection. While interest in studying white-collar crime has recently increased due to well-known cases of hacking and the growth of cyber crime (e.g., 2021 Colonial Pipeline attack), relatively little research has examined the careers of other types of criminals.

*Recommendation #7: Recognize changing gender roles and norms*

Contemporary career concepts (e.g., post-corporate career, KCM) discuss how career paths become more discontinuous as individuals opt out of corporation to pursue entrepreneurial endeavors or exit the labor force for a period of time for caregiving responsibilities. Future research is needed on what conditions and in what contexts career paths are becoming more (or less) discontinuous. For example, men’s career paths may become more discontinuous because of changes in traditional gender roles (Mainiero and Sullivan, 2006), the decreasing number of men aspiring to highly demanding C-suite positions (Powell and Butterfield, 2013), and the increasing numbers of men who plan to be stay-at-home fathers (Kramer, Kelly, and McCulloch, 2015). In contrast, women’s career paths may have fewer interruptions if organizations create cultures that promote gender equality, reduce sexual harassment in light of the #MeToo movement (Atwater, Sturm, Taylor, and Tringale, 2021), and institute policies that encourage greater work-nonwork balance. Women’s career paths may become less discontinuous as more women are choosing to remain child-free (Blackstone, 2019) or to have fewer children. For instance, while in 1950 the average birthrate was 4.7 children, in 2017 the average dropped to 2.4 (Gallagher, 2020). Greater study is needed on how changes in gender norms and structural factors, such as organizational and government policies, may influence career patterns.

Other gender norms are changing and affecting people’s careers, yet are understudied. As noted previously, scholars tend to use samples that reflect mainstream cultural norms. Future research is needed on the careers of members of the LGBT community as well as trans, gender non-conforming, and nonbinary individuals. Scholars also need to consider the increasingly diverse workforce when designing research. For example, when studying the careers of dual-career couples, data on same-sex couples should be collected. Likewise, survey language should be inclusive; for instance, responses other than male or female should be provided.

*Recommendation #8: Consider changing age norms*

As people in most developed countries are living longer, healthier lives, the recruitment of retirees is one means of addressing predicted labor shortages (Oude Mulders, Henkens, and Schippers, 2017). Although more studies are being conducted on bridge employment (i.e., work between long-term employment and retirement), few studies have examined “unretirement” (i.e., people returning to labor force after a period of retirement) or “boomerang retirees” (i.e., retirees who repeatedly opt in and out of the labor force) (see review by Sullivan and Al Ariss, 2019). While the traditional career stage models viewed retirement as a permanent exit from the labor force, approximately 50% of older people engage in paid employment (Pleau and Shauman, 2013) and 11-19% of retirees move in and out of the labor force (Cho, Lee, and Woo, 2016).

As suggested by the contemporary career frameworks (e.g., career ecosystem, career sustainability), greater research is needed that examines how individual characteristics and needs (e.g., authenticity, balance, challenge), organizational programs (e.g., phased retirement, pensions policies), government policies (e.g., national pension programs, health care coverage), and the socio-economic context (i.e., retirees’ financial resources, inflation rate) influence the paid and unpaid employment of older workers and retirees. The lack of research on the aging workforce is especially concerning because scholars have provided managers with relatively little evidence-based guidance on how to recruit and retain older individuals.

*Recommendation #9: Do not ignore the impact of career management systems on careers*

While much of the contemporary literature explores self-directed careers outside organizational boundaries, many people still have careers within organizations where career management is a shared employer-employee responsibility or sometimes directed more by the organization than the employee. Through the selection of employees, motivating them to work, and providing them with opportunities for mentoring and training, organizations play an essential role in the careers of its employees. Organizational career management remains an important, yet under-examined, area in career studies (Baruch, 2006; Wiersma and Hall, 2007).

Greater research is needed on how an organization’s choice of talent management strategies, implementation of HRM practices, and nature of the employer-employee psychological contract influences people’s careers. Organizations have a major influence in the shaping employees’ careers, even after individuals have moved on to other employers or become self-employed. Higgins’ (2005) study of Baxter’s imprinting of its employees is a good example of the power of organizational culture on people’s careers and their subsequent development as industry leaders. Future research should use multi-level study designs, considering how individuals’ careers unfold within organizations and are influenced by organizational practices. Because organizational career management systems occur within a career ecosystem, study of such systems requires researchers to recognize the influence of the national economies, laws, and cultures within global labor markets.

In addition, careers research could be enriched by the greater integration of the career management and career counseling literatures. Unfortunately, these two streams of research are studied separately and by two distinct research communities, leading to a lack of mutual learning and transfer of knowledge between them. Collaborations among scholars from these different streams could enhance research by recognizing the influence of organizational processes on the careers of individuals. For example, the study of how employability and career sustainability are developed during the school to work transition would benefit from insights from both the career counseling and career management perspectives.

*Recommendation #10: Be brave and conduct innovative research*

Like most of the OB and HRM literature, published research on careers is dominated by quantitative studies (Akkermans et al., 2021). We challenge careers scholars to consider using more creative methods of data collection and analysis, including the increased use of mixed methods, web scraping (i.e., extracting data from websites), text mining (i.e., using AI to transform unstructured text into data suitable for analysis) or data mining (i.e., process of discovering patterns, correlations, or anomalies in big data). For example, Karanović, Berends and Engel (2021) combined data collected from interviews with two Uber senior representatives, public information (e.g., court cases, newspaper articles), and Uber drivers’ online forum posts to examine how drivers responded to organizing solutions (e.g., task allocation, reward provisions) in different regulatory environments. Likewise, Davis, Wolff, Forret, and Sullivan (2020) collected survey data, and also scraped and coded data from respondents’ LinkedIn profiles, to examine the relationships of PC orientation, networking ability, social networking site usage, and career benefits.

Although time consuming and often difficult to accomplish, scholars should use longitudinal research or multi-wave studies to examine careers. Much more research is needed that measures the extent to which career variables, such as the PC and BC orientations, the KCM parameters, career sustainability, and employability, may change over time. In addition, scholars should explore how past decisions and hoped for future career outcomes may influence current decision-making. For example, do people make tradeoffs, such as forgoing work-nonwork balance today, in the hopes of greater work-nonwork balance in the future? How do the career identities and attitudes of individuals who choose to migrate to nations that do not recognize their professional credentials (e.g., MDs, teachers) change over time as they transition from country of origin to their adopted country? How do individuals’ KCM parameters affect networking behaviors and how do these networking behaviors alter as the KCM parameters change over time and across different career stages? To better understand the unfolding nature of careers over time, scholars must conduct longitudinal research and study how the present may be influenced by both the past and future expectations.

**Conclusion**

In this review, we delineated why scholars study careers, what is studied, and how it is studied. We then focused on major areas deserving of greater research attention, developing an agenda for future research on these topics. However, because the field of careers is complex and fragmented, this review is not all-inclusive. For example, we did not examine models of global careers due to space limitations and because global careers have been extensively discussed elsewhere (Al Ariss, 2010; Baruch Altman and Tung, 2016; Kanstrén and Suutari, 2021). A limitation of this examination is that many noteworthy theories and frameworks were beyond the scope of this review. We focused on these select theories and concepts based upon our personal judgements, considering the major changes the world of work is now experiencing. Despite its limitations, we hope this review and recommendations for future study encourage increased research on the changing nature of careers within the evolving career ecosystem.

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Table 1: Summary of Major Theories, Concepts, and Models Reviewed

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Career Theory, Concept, or Model | Basic Premise | Key Developments |
| Traditional Career Stage Theory | People’s implementation of their self-concept is summarized in a series of career stages. People attempt to complete developmental tasks at each of these stages (Super, 1957a). | Addressing the interaction of people and situations, Super (1980) proposed the life-career rainbow, that details how people play different roles across different settings and career stages. |
| Boundaryless Career (BC) | A BC is independent of traditional, firm-based career arrangements, and the boundaries within and between organizations are more permeable (Arthur and Rousseau, 1996). | Publication of scales to measure the dimensions of the BC (Briscoe et al., 2006). Refinement of conceptualization to recognize that it is not if people have a BC or not, but that BCs are characterized by varying degrees of physical and psychological movement (Sullivan and Arthur, 2006). |
| Protean Career (PC) | A PC is characterized by career self-management based on the person’s own values (Hall, 1996). | Publication of scales to measure the PC (Baruch, 2014; Briscoe et al., 2006). Meta-analysis findings suggest the self-directed, values-driven, and psychological mobility dimensions are one construct while physical mobility preferences are a distinct construct (Wiernik and Kostal, 2019). |
| Post-corporate Career | People are transitioning from organizationally bound career structures to more agile and dynamic systems where a variety of nontraditional career options are available, viable, and valued (Peiperl and Baruch, 1997). | The concept continues to be featured in career studies (Brewer, 2018), with its use expanded to various geographies (Ezzahra and Sanaa, 2021) and professions (McKevitt, Carbery, and Lyons, 2017). |
| Intelligent Careers | Intelligent careers are described by the three major career competencies of knowing why, how, and whom (Arthur et al., 1995). | The three competencies of knowing what, where, and when are added to the conceptualization (Jones and DeFillippi, 1996). |
| Kaleidoscope Career Model (KCM) | Individuals make career decisions and transitions based on the three interactive parameters of authenticity, balance, and challenge (Mainiero and Sullivan, 2006). | Publication of scales to measure the KCM parameters (Sullivan et al, 2009). Research supports the basic tenets of the KCM (e.g., O’Connor and Crowley-Henry, 2020; O’Neill and Jepsen, 2019). |
| Career Construction Theory (CCT) | CCT’s core construct is career adaptability, which is comprised of the four resources of concern, control, curiosity, and confidence (Savickas and Porfeli, 2012). | Scholars studying career adaptability often define the construct differently or use instruments that do not distinguish between career adaptability resources and responses (Johnston, 2018). |
| Employability | Employability is comprised of people’s characteristics that promote adaptive cognition, behavior, and affect, and enhance their ability to be marketability within and across work settings (Fugate et al., 2004). | There is no consensus among scholars on the dimensions that comprise employability (Williams et al., 2016). |
| Sustainable Careers | Individuals who manage their careers by learning, creating, testing, and remaining adaptable are thought to have a sustainable career (De Vos and Van der Heijden, 2015). | Chin et al. (2021) developed and validated the first measure of career sustainability. |
| Chance Events | Chance events are unexpected, luck-based occurrences that influence careers (Bright et al., 2005). | In contrast to expectations, positive (negative) chance events do not necessarily result in positive (negative) career outcomes (Baruch and Lavi-Steiner, 2015). |
| Career Shocks | A career shock typically follows a chance events that triggers a deliberate thought process about the career (Akkermans et al., 2018). | Research has examined such career shocks as traumatic injuries (Haynie and Shepherd, 2011), the onset of an adult disability (Baldridge and Kulkarni, 2017), and the COVId-19 pandemic (Akkermans et al., 2020). |
| Career Ecosystem | The career ecosystem is a new, overarching theoretical lens to examine careers (Baruch, 2015). | Research on the theory is in the nascent stage. |

**Table 2: Summary of Recommendations for Future Research Agenda on Careers**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Research Recommendations | Potential Research Questions |
| 1. Study more than upward movement | Are people with a higher PC or BC orientation more likely to engage in lateral or downward transitions? Are these  relationships moderated by employability or career stage?  Are people whose priority is balance rather than challenge or authenticity more likely to engage in downward  transitions? Is this relationship moderated by the PC or BC orientation?  How do chance events or career shocks influence people’s career transitions over time? Are these relationships moderated by employability or career adaptability?  How do lateral or downward transitions influence people’s employability, adaptability, knowing competencies, and career success? Are these relationships moderated by career stage, gender, or personality?  Do people who engage in lateral or downward transitions more (less) likely to have a sustainable career? Are these relationships moderated by the PC or BC orientation or personality?  How do the PC or BC career orientation, KCM parameters, or knowing competencies influence the likelihood of career plateaus?  Are chance events or career shocks positively related to career plateaus?  How do different types of career transitions (up, down, lateral) influence employability or the likelihood of career  plateaus? Are these relationships moderated by the PC or BC orientation, KCM parameters, or adaptability?  How does the interaction of structural and individual factors affect people’s career transitions within and outside of organizations? |
| 2. Explore the career conundrum of continuous learning | Does career stage moderate the relationship between PC or BC orientation and time devoted to learning and development?  Are people whose priority is challenge rather than balance or authenticity more likely to engage in continuous learning and development? Does career stage, age, or gender moderate this relationship?  What personal and situational factors influence an individual’s ability and motivation to engage in continuous learning? Are these relationships moderated by adaptability or employability?  Who is more likely to experience downward learning spirals and how can they be prevented?  How can organizations (universities) more effectively encourage continuously learning among their employees (students)?  What government or nonprofit strategies are most effective in helping workers displaced by technology to reskill?  How do freelancers, gig workers, and those who are self-employed manage their careers and engage in continuous learning?  How is career sustainability or employability influenced by organizational training and development programs, having a mentor, or one’s networking ability?  How should organizations manage the career development and training of nonstandard workers, such as  contract and gig workers?  How is career sustainability influenced by one’s knowing competencies, PC or BC orientation, or employability?  Do hiring practices that consider work experience or certificate programs in place of four-year university degrees increase diversity in organizational recruitment and selection processes? |
| 3. Study new career options and paths | What jobs will people displaced by AI move into? Will massive reskilling programs be instituted by organizations, labor unions, nonprofits, or governments?  How may the availability of a UBI affect people’s career choices, attitudes, and behaviors?  Who is most likely to desire a career based on a UBI?  How would the use of a UBI affect organizations’ HR and talent management practices, government social-welfare  programs, and the productivity and well-being of citizens? |
| 4. Examine alternative work contexts | What are the differences in the career paths, employability, and career sustainability of blue-collar, gig, and different types  of nonstandard workers?  What are organizational best practices for socializing and training new nonstandard employees?  What is the impact of working from home on employees’ work-nonwork conflict, employability, job security, and  career sustainability?  Do alternative work arrangements help women and other marginalized groups or reinforce exclusion from main-stream  career paths?  Do those in alternative work contexts, who may have more autonomy but also more job insecurity, have more  or less stress and burnout than those in more standard employment?  How does PC or BC orientation, KCM parameters, or adaptability influence people’s desire to work from home or follow  other types of alternative work schedules? How do these career variables influence the productivity, job satisfaction, and  career success of people who work from home?  What are organizational best practices for initiating and maintaining an effective workforce when employees work  from home or follow alternative work schedules?  What are the career patterns of war and climate refugees?  How can the many stakeholders in career systems – employers, professional associations, governments, educational institutions, and NGOs—be brought together to optimize the utilization of current and future workers? |
| 5. Explore the  impact of the  COVID-19  pandemic on careers | How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected people’s careers? Are there differences based on gender/gender-identity,  race, or career stage?  How have those with a more traditional career pattern fared during the COVID-19 pandemic compared to those with a nontraditional career pattern?  How does career adaptability affect the impact of COVID-19 on people’s career sustainability or employability?  Are people more likely to change jobs, occupations, or employers because of the COVID-19 pandemic?  Are people more likely to retire, opt out of the labor force for a period of time, or re-enter the labor force due  to the COVID-19 pandemic? Are these relationships moderated by PC or BC orientation, the KCM parameters,  employability, or the intelligent career competencies?  What are the short versus the long term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on people’s careers?  Why do some people choose to become “overemployed”? What are the organizational and societal implications of overemployment?  How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected organizational career and talent management practices? |
| 6. Investigate the dark side of contemporary careers | Are certain groups (e.g., women, minorities) more likely to experience negative outcomes if they have a high PC or BC orientation?  Does the occurrence of abusive supervision, sexual harassment, discrimination, and counterproductive work behaviors increase as employment becomes more boundaryless?  How do individuals react to career setbacks, lost promotions, and other career disappointments, such as failure to find employment in one’s chosen field or being underemployed? Are these relationships moderated by the PC or BC orientation, career adaptability, employability, or intelligent career competencies?  What impact do negative chance events or career shocks have on people’s perceptions of employability and the sustainability of their careers?  What are the possible negative effects of organizational imprinting on people’s careers?  How can organizations and individuals overcome the negatives associated with remote work and the reduction in the boundaries between work and nonwork aspects of life?  How do the careers of those involved in illegal and criminal activities unfold? |
| 7. Recognize  changing gender  roles and norms | Are there gender differences in employability or career sustainability?  How the does the interaction of gender and generational cohort influence the relationship between the three parameters of the KCM and career success?  Are men’s (women’s) career paths becoming more (less) discontinuous? If yes, why?  How have changing gender roles and norms influenced how people cope with work-nonwork conflict? Are these  relationships moderated by career stage, gender/gender identity, or being part of a dual career couple?  What are the career experiences of LGBT+ individuals? |
| 8. Consider changing age norms | How do people’s career paths alter as they opt in and out of the labor force after retirement? What  motivates them to opt in and out of retirement? How are these relationships moderated by gender/gender identity,  generational cohort, or career orientation?  What differentiates the type of paid or unpaid employment individuals seek in work after retirement?  How do organizational career systems, national culture, and government systems influence people’s continued employment beyond typical retirement age, or whether people opt in and out of the labor force after retirement?  What can we learn by using the framework of the career ecosystem to examine those who engage in work after  retirement? |
| 9. Do not ignore the impact of career management systems on careers | How do organizations’ strategic human resource management and talent management programs affect  individuals’ careers? How are these relationships moderated by career stage, gender, or minority status?  What are the implications of using the lens of the career ecosystem for studying career management systems?  What lessons may scholars in the fields of career counselling and career management learn from each other?  How can the recognition of the areas of overlap between the career counselling and career management literatures benefit future research? Where are the areas of distinctiveness between the two that may justify separate research directions?  How can our understanding of the impact of career management systems on careers be better informed by the collaboration of scholars from both the career counselling and career management perspectives?  What can organizations do to promote the active engagement of individuals in the career development process so that people have full-filling careers, either within or outside of organizational boundaries?  How can organizations make the best use of their human capital via the management of people at work (e.g. applying appropriate career practices)?  What role can HRM play in developing individuals for their full potential? |
| 10. Be brave and conduct innovative research | How may career scholars use more innovative methods to collect and analyze data, including the use of mixed methods, web scraping, text mining, or data mining?  What steps should career scholars take to develop collaborations with scholars of different backgrounds, career stages, and skills to produce more innovative, meaningful research?  How can longitudinal studies be effectively designed to investigate changes in the PC and BC orientations, KCM parameters, and employability over time?  How can multi-method, longitudinal research be used to investigate the influence of prior and expected future career  transitions (or prior and expected career outcomes) on current career decisions and career transitions?  How can the influence of context be more fully realized in the study of careers? |