

## ***SELF-DIRECTED CAREERS IN THE NEW WORLD OF WORK: PROTEAN CAREER ORIENTATION AND CAREER SELF-EFFICACY AS FOUNDATIONS FOR CAREER SUSTAINABILITY: A NARRATIVE REVIEW***

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### **ABSTRACT**

Changes in the world of work driven by digitalization, hybrid work, the gig economy, and organizational restructuring have made careers increasingly non-linear and require individuals to take a more active role in managing their career trajectories. This narrative review synthesizes international literature from reputable journals to explain how *Protean Career Orientation* (PCO)-a *self-directed* and *values-driven* career orientation-contributes to *career sustainability* through enhanced career self-efficacy. Drawing on sustainable career models that emphasize *health, happiness, and productivity*, as well as the *social cognitive career theory* framework, the article proposes that *Protean Career Orientation* strengthens individuals' confidence in making career decisions, acquiring new skills, and navigating change. Career self-efficacy, in turn, promotes adaptive behaviors such as *career self-management, lifelong learning or upskilling, networking* and personal branding, and *job crafting*, which ultimately enhance *employability, subjective career success, and well-being* as indicators of *career sustainability*. This review also highlights the importance of context (*career shocks, work flexibility*) and organizational support (*learning culture, coaching, access to training*) as triggers and amplifiers of these processes. Finally, the article presents a conceptual model and narrative propositions that can serve as a basis for empirical research and as practical guidance for human resource development in the new world of work.

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