

Prolonging Late Career Phase - a Sustainable Career Perspective

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Abstract : Due to the large societal changes in working life, such as retirement reforms, globalization and technological changes, careers are becoming longer, more varied and unpredictable than before. Similar to other new career concepts, such as protean and boundaryless career, a sustainable career concept emphasizes an individual's active role and agency in managing his/her own career in changing working life. However, the sustainable career concept also underlines the importance of safeguarding and developing human capital over time and thereby fostering continuity. Especially, the theoretical discussion around sustainable careers stresses flexible career choices that meet an individual's own personal needs, allow work-family balance and promotes continuous learning. Although sustainable careers concern employees at all ages, this study focuses on older employees (aged 50+). So far, the changing nature of careers has been mainly investigated among younger generations, and the changing and prolonging late career phase has received less attention among career scholars. In other words, there is lack of knowledge regarding what constitutes a sustainable career in the late career phase and how the individual, organizational, and societal levels of sustainable career ecosystem are interconnected. The theoretical discussion around sustainable careers is closely linked to the sustainable management of human resources in organizations. In the field of human resource management (HRM), sustainable HRM has received more attention in recent years and it has been seen as a step forward from strategic HRM approach. As a concept, sustainable HRM stresses the long-term focus on organizations' social, economic, and ecological resources, and the benefits of HRM practices for employees, organizations, and the society at large. However, some HRM scholars argue that the ecological and financial matters have overshadowed the social aspect of sustainability. In this study, the sustainable career and sustainable HRM literature are combined. As a result of an integrative literature review, this study provides new insight, how sustainable late career phase has been understood and conceptualized in sustainable career and sustainable HRM literature.

Keywords : sustainability, career, human resource management, ageing

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