

Krumboltz's Social Learning Theory of Career Development

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Abstract

This paper will include the history and explanation of Krumboltz's social learning theory of career development and its applications by counsellors in suggesting a suitable career to customers that they can choose in their lives. It also discusses the factors that affect the social learning process and the problems that may arise while applying the theory to a certain group of people. It explains the model suggested by researchers for counsellors in the assessment of the best careers for people and its application. It also discusses the NCDA Code of Ethics, which is the law and regulations provided by the U.S. government for counsellors to perform ethical and lawful service to the people.

Introduction

We strive to make this world progressive today. Technology is booming, and there are lots of opportunities in different fields where people can make progressive careers. There is a need for a program that can guide a person to have a glimpse of what to select as a field and what approach is needed to work for that specific career. In today's world, there are many successful careers, from engineering to medicine, biology to policy making, and arts to journalism. Choosing a field that does not feel interesting to you will eventually force you to change that field, and you can never put your full potential into that career.

Counselling psychology emerged as an applied science in America in 1940. John Whitely, a well-known scientist of counselling psychology, considers the most efficient methods for counselling as verbal guidance, individual differences, and mental hygiene, along with medical and psychoanalytic counselling. Counselling and guidance were recognized by the American Psychological Association in 1946. APA then started to review counselling psychology regularly, which further helped in legitimizing this field and its regular evaluation in the literature. Veterans in 1950 did significant research in the counselling field and started showing interest in this field after World War II. During this period, research in [human development](#) and behaviour, psychodynamics, and humanitarianism started rapidly (Lent, 1992).

The [Career counselling theories](#) date back to 360 B.C., when Plato observed that different jobs need a specific type of expertise and knowledge to be performed efficiently. Frank Parsons further refined this theory in the late 19th century and explained that career placement needs to be done effectively through the knowledge of special skills required for that job. There is a sensitive relationship between

understanding these skills and various jobs. Nowadays, many people, women, and migrants, with an increasing number of opportunities, are turning to career counselling to make intelligent decisions in selecting a career.

Discussion

The theory presented by John D. Krumboltz, who is an established career theorist known as Career decision-making, social [learning theory](#), explains how educational and occupational skills are required for the selection of a career (Krumboltz et al., 1976). It describes the involvement of certain factors like environmental conditions, social status, educational experiences, genetic factors, and skills that become reasons for people to switch careers. The combined effect of these factors encourages the person to look for a new career that best suits them. The options available to every individual are influenced by both internal and external factors, which either facilitate or discourage the person and change the shape and number of available opportunities and how the individual responds to them. Sometimes many options are available, and the individual lacks the power to select one, being uncertain of whether this career can be beneficial or if it will end up like his previous bad experience that happened because of his wrong choice of field. Selecting one career option from the available ones can affect the number of options available for that person in the future. Which, in some cases, can be irreversible and may become one of the factors that open options for options in that environment.

Social learning constructivism has three aspects: antecedents, cognitive mediators, and consequences. Important antecedent events are related to social aspects, like the ability to influence others; for example, when a child is asked in her teens why she wants to be a doctor. Her answer usually is that she gets inspiration from a successful doctor whom she thinks of as a role model. Therefore, considering a role model in life is the most prominent social learning method. Then comes cognitive meditation, in which the learned response from the antecedent is considered in comparison to the individual's self-assessment of their abilities. Finally, the self-assessment of abilities along with reinforcement from consequences, enables the individual to perform in a certain way and finally helps out in career consideration (Krumboltz et al., 1976).

There are several factors that matter in the career selection by an individual. These factors, as explained by Krumboltz, that matter in selecting the best career for a person and participating in "self-evaluation" on whether "I" am suitable for this career are described in the following sections:

Environmental Conditions and Events

Ideally, career development is the method by which an individual develops accurate perceptions of the available opportunities and the relationship between that individual and those opportunities. In this process, the individual collects the information obtained in [career development and constructs](#)

their own reality using cognitive theory, and receives input from the environment. The individual's personal concept of the environment is developed by his prior experience and the new knowledge that he extracts from career development. Therefore, his future decisions always depend on his personal analysis (Bandura in press).

Genetic involvement and specific skills

Everyone is born with specific qualities that make them better and most productive in one career and least effective in another. These differences affect the person's occupational preference and educational exposure. These differences can be of race, gender, physical appearance, characteristics, or birth defects. The genetic and environmental factors affect the person's development of skills, as people are born with more or less proneness to benefit from certain types of learning experiences. These aspects can be differentiated by a person's intelligence, creative abilities, nervous coordination, and interaction with influences from the environment.

Cognitive and emotional response:

Cognitive development, which includes dualistic thinking, development patterns, and relativism, plays an important role in career development. Counselling theories have accepted cognitive development as an important factor in career development (Bandura, in press). This cognitive and emotional response can change an individual's point of view in measuring subject matter and authority in different ways. The switching of career from a simple and categorical viewpoint of career decisions can be more difficult if interrupted by emotional instability and pressure to develop abilities.

Social Learning Experience:

Every individual possesses certain inherited qualities, special learning experiences, and a method to approach a problem. These problem-approach skills are affected by the individual's environmental exposure and personal characteristics and can alter his or her future actions. Social learning experiences like educational background, previous job experience, efficiency, verbal reinforcement, and stress management may influence the career development process.

Social learning can be related to factors that are critical in career selection. The occupational preference and previous experience may lead to the enrollment of the individual in a specific degree program and institution. That program, if it isn't the best career education for that particular individual, can result in future changes in the career. So, previous experience and preferences are to be included in the social learning program of the individual.

Another social learning part is the self-efficacy theory, in which the impact of the personal beliefs of an individual on the ability to perform that task is carefully observed in career selection.

Gender differences can also affect an individual's self-efficacy. The females are less self-efficient, and their expectations to choose a field and excel in it are lower than those of males. Some careers create different self-efficacy biases for everyone, i.e., if a career is new, most people will fear failure and will consider other options. (Borgen, in press)

Verbal reinforcement is another aspect of social learning. It is the most effective procedure to acquire people's responses to a career by considering a rational approach and all the good and bad aspects of that career. In this program, the individual's beliefs about the career help in understanding how and when that individual will react to the job, and help in making a decision for the selection of a career.

Every job will test the individual's pressure endurance and stress management skills. However, some jobs require a high level of stress management, such as surgeons and doctors. Individuals who are interested in selecting these careers in life should participate in stress management programs. These programs consist of education and training in real scenarios. During the program, the individual gets an idea of stressful situations that can appear during the job, learns how to manage stress, and is then given case studies and tasks that train them in stress management.

Application of Krumboltz's Social Learning Theory

There are different assessment methods for career counselling that measure an individual's personal interests and competency for that career. However, all assessment test strategies follow a basic template.

The CAPA Assessment system proposed by Nancy Betz and Fred Borgen is the most accurate and detailed of all the Major Assessment Tests or MATs. It is the most suitable computer-based system that measures the individual's interests, self-efficacy, strengths and weaknesses, and personal views about careers. The CAPA system includes 47 testing measures related to interest and confidence. It also contains Life Engagement Scales that measure academic achievement, leadership skills, and decision-making. It also has a Healthy personality that measures the creativity and innovative skills of the individual.

This scale also measures psychometric properties like diversity and heterogeneity that are similar to a previously proposed system suggested by Strong in 1927. This test, however, is improved in a way that it helps students understand the aim and particulars of that specific subject so that they can individually match whether their skills are suitable for this particular major (Symer, 1996).

A similar approach is devised in our method of career selection. Our proposed type of MAT is mainly based on the CAPA system with a few advancements. We introduce Krumboltz's social learning in this career assessment test. The additions to the CAPA Assessment system questions are as follows:

Big Five Personality Traits

This portion will assess the individuals on the following points:

1. **Openness:** This trait measures the individual's imagination and insight. The individuals who rank high in this trait will give us an idea of a person's creativity, love for adventure, and ability to tackle new challenges.
2. **Conscientiousness:** This scale will measure the quality of an individual in terms of thoughtfulness. It will tell us how much time an individual takes to prepare, how much attention they pay to details, and whether they have the ability to work on a tight schedule.
3. **Extraversion:** This characterizes the person in terms of excitability, social dependence, assertive nature, and emotional expression.
4. **Agreeableness:** This character measures a person's level of trust, kindness, affection, and social behaviours. This measure tells us how cooperative the person will be or whether they will be of a manipulative nature.
5. **Neuroticism:** This measure characterizes sadness and emotional instability. The reason for the addition of this trait. The reason for the addition of this trait is that we want to test the individuals on how they will perform under pressure. As per Krumboltz's theory of social learning, stress management is essential in working on the job. People who are more emotionally unstable are likely to manage stress poorly and sometimes give up too soon.
(Borgen et al., 2002)

Career Understanding and Efficacy

There is a relationship between personality factors and career self-efficacy. As Neuroticism is linked to different career understandings, it can also influence the behaviour that the individual will deliver in a real job. Therefore, the best understanding of the career is a must. Otherwise, it will lead to wrong decisions and failure in one's career.

Multiculturalism

Effective career counselling must incorporate multiculturalism. People who are different in race, ethnicity, religion, and cultural background need special counselling services. Counselling professionals have to develop their multicultural understanding as today the world is more culturally diverse. An Individual's career development should include the citizen's whole life experience, ethnic and religious beliefs, gender, disabilities, language barrier, and cultural differences.

Need for Multicultural counselling:

The rapidly emerging career opportunities in the U.S. and the diverse cultural reach of counselling psychology make cross-cultural counselling critical. According to certain metrics, the average annual earnings of Asian Americans (\$57,500 per year) are greater than those of Caucasians (\$49,000) and Hispanics (39,241). African Americans often do low-level jobs and are underrepresented in skills and professional jobs. But they should have equal career opportunities as they are not any less in expertise and mental abilities (Terrell et al.,1994).

The second biggest difference arises from gender differences. Males are mostly found in realistic jobs while females are serving in social services.

Incorporation of Multiculturalism in our assessment model:

We incorporate cross-cultural variables in our system by the addition of some measures in our career assessment system. We introduced racial identity and cultural differences in our system. Upon reviewing the specific cultural background and racial identity, we modified our career counselling system on the basis of these answers.

We asked African American men and women about their social interaction and gender-specific career choices. Most women opt for Home-based work, and most men opt for office work as a career choice.

As suggested by research, career choices are affected by family circumstances. Like most families who have a history in medicine, politics, the judiciary, or engineering, their successors are most likely to join these fields as careers. An African American child is 50% more likely to join a law school if his father or uncle has already served in the judiciary or has studied law and served as an advocate. If the child has lived in slums and belonged to a poor family, his career interests are mostly jobs related to the police or sports, as there are several examples in which people who belonged to slums finally found their dream job in these departments (Makela, 2006).

There is a need for special career development counselling for these people as they are most biased and attracted to some specific jobs. But as counsellors, it's our job to make people realize what job suits them best and will be most productive for them, rather than their personal interest in their family field.

State laws and regulations related to career

counselling: The NCDA Code of Ethics

The NCDA Code of Ethics helps define professional behaviour and serves to protect how to practice these ethics in the profession. The ethical laws involved in personal and professional life. Ethical behaviour is all about transparency.

The NCDA Code of Ethics is designed to be a guide and resource for career counsellors. It sets the principles that are applied to a wide range of situations, and they are comprehensive in nature. A counsellor should not engage in a particular practice if it is unethical or can result in violence. It is safe not to opt for a counselling option if you are unsure about its ethical nature. Knowing the behaviour of the subject is necessary before proceeding to counsel service. The opinions that a counsellor gives should be safe and unquestionable.

Professional values and principles

Career development professionals have to take care of some values while demonstrating a commitment to ethical behaviour. These ethical values are as follows:

1. Safeguard the integrity of professional working relations.
2. Practice counselling in an ethical manner.
3. Respect the dignity, moral values, and uniqueness of all subjects.
4. Respect and promote social justice.
5. The professional values that are the basis of ethical principles include:
 - Autonomy: having control over the direction of one's life.
 - Avoiding actions that can cause harm.
 - Always serve to be beneficial to society and promote healthy decisions.
 - Treatment of all individuals on an equal basis.
 - Must be honest, keep promises, and ensure the trust of customers.
 - Being truthful to everyone, to all people who need career development.

The NCDA Code of Ethics has five main purposes:

1. It clarifies how you intend to be in compliance with relevant state laws and various ethical codes, and future members and the people who are served by those members, the ethical responsibilities to be held in common.
2. This code supports the mission of NCDA
3. It defines the ethical behaviour and way of practice of its members.
4. It helps counsellors develop a professional course and best utilize their services in their profession.
5. It gives a guide to the people who receive a guide to understand what to expect from a

counsellor and know their rights and obligations as consumers.

Conclusion

The field of counselling psychology is the result of professional movements, the influence of society, and the development of organizations. The career self-efficacy decision strongly relates to the perceived and actual difficulties that arise in implementing a career decision. The social learning factor in career counselling should be given more emphasis in every practice. The differences in individuals should be carefully observed and respected. The counsellor should consider that cross-cultural people who want to provide services in society should be helped in a neutral way, and counsellors should always abide by the laws and ethics that are followed by the NCDA code of ethics, as the assessment taken by the counsellor will affect the individual's whole life and their success in the chosen career.