



## **A STUDY OF CAREER BELIEFS OF ADOLESCENTS IN FAMILY ENVIRONMENT STATUS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The human being is self-conscious and purposeful. Like a shadow, work had been a constant companion of human beings. Career Psychology has analysed work behaviour as being influenced by social, cultural and cognitive factors. „The meaning and purpose of work has undergone significant changes over time. Molded by ideologies, shaped by tenets of a variety of philosophies and transformed by revolutions, work has finally grown to include the idea of career. Today work includes career which is a relatively modern concept of specialization and the focused development of specific work roles. The term career refers to the relatively modern concepts of specialization and the focused development of specific work roles. A career by itself is neutral. However careers are aspects of work that are performed within a social context. Running the course of a career is essentially the result of an intricate psychosocial process. A group of people (society at large) presents a wide variety of needs that demand attention. The dynamics of career development motivates individuals from within this larger group, to develop the expertise to meet one of these needs or specific components of a need in a professional manner. Career is a mechanism whereby society utilizes the services of its members to contribute to its well-being, progress and development. The larger society in return compensates the individual for delivering a particular service. An individual's career therefore has its being in the dynamic interaction between the garnering of personal gain and the services she renders to society at large.

**KEYWORDS:** Career Beliefs, Adolescents, Family Environment Status, Career Psychology, human beings.

### **INTRODUCTION**

A career is characterized by the volitional direction of energy and specialized effort, for a required duration of time, toward meeting societal needs through a specific area of work, for which one gains the means not only for a livelihood but also for the realization of personal potentials. It must be noted however that a variety of forces act together to facilitate, thwart or divert the unfolding of the process of career development. Attempts of career psychology to understand and explain the relationship between social and

environmental factors and human work-behaviour has led the development of various theories and concepts in the West e.g. Social Learning Theory of Career Decision Making, Social Cognitive Career Theory. The Indian population, give a conceptual framework to understand work behaviour of people in India. The Career Preparation Process Model describes career development as a process that occurs within a particular social-cognitive environment. Within this environment, socio-economic status variables and Career Beliefs



interact with each other and have a unique influence on the sources of self-efficacy. These factors influence the way career choices are made and career development tasks are resolved. Career Psychologists of today speak of modes of work acquiring a meaning from the social cognitive environments of which they are a part. These ideologies and experiences of the group created and perpetuated the social cognitive environment. Social cognitive environments could engender habitual ways of thinking with reference to work, occupation, and career. Within these environments, positive or negative values could be attributed to work in general, toward occupational clusters as well as to the notion of career development. We have referred to these cognitions as career beliefs, which are culturally mediated beliefs held by a group about the meaning and purpose of work. Krumboltz's (1994) early work on career beliefs has indicated that irrespective of their accuracy, career beliefs exert facilitative or inhibitive influences on individuals' decisions and actions as they attempt to develop and implement career goals. Our field experience has consistently demonstrated that when career beliefs are not addressed, the effects of career counselling are often negligible. The cultural preparedness approach to career guidance, therefore, keeps career beliefs at the forefront of career guidance interventions.

One most consistent observation about Indian young people and their families on issues of career development is that habitual ways of thinking – social-cognitive environments strongly influence career development. A conglomerate of attitudes, opinions, convictions and notions seem to cohere together to create mindsets and beliefs that underlie people's orientation to the idea of a career. Beliefs can become so deeply ingrained that they may not even be identified by their holders as beliefs - they are more like

unquestioned, self-evident truths. These assumptions and beliefs predispose the individual to making career decisions in a certain manner. We have referred to these deeply held convictions about activities linked to career development as career beliefs. The major role of career beliefs in career development has been demonstrated in several studies. People's beliefs about themselves and the world of work influence their approach to learning new skills, developing new interests, setting career goals, making career decisions, and taking action towards career goals. As the Internet becomes more commonly used in classrooms, opportunities to further explore career activities, tools, and people are more available. Recent studies have found that when web resources were introduced into the classroom, students interacted in more complex tasks, developed greater technical skills, and used more outside information than before the Internet was available. Thus, web resources provided vast and easily accessible information and human resources that promoted exploration of and interaction with additional information resources. Adolescent may be able to develop more informed self-perceptions of working within a specific career while interacting with web resources, e.g., participating in exploration and feedback processes. These perceptions may in turn influence science career interest.

## **CAREER BELIEFS**

Raynor and Entin pointed out that the term career is a combination of phenomenological and behavioural conceptions. It reflects one's self-perception within one's social context with regards to one's social past and present experiences as well as future plans. Career is the lifelong sequence of work, education and leisure experience. The term career refers to the relatively modern concepts of specialization and the focused development of



specific work roles". Career is defined as, "Time extended working out of a purposeful life pattern through work undertaken by the person".

Beliefs are the generalizations that are formed through the learning process from personal observations and inferences. They may not always be accurate. However, beliefs affect people's behaviours regardless of whether they are accurate or not. Krumboltz (1994b) declared that beliefs are neither good nor bad. A belief could be dysfunctional for one person but functional for another. Hence, whether a person's belief is good or bad depends on the person and the situation. A false belief becomes problematic when it discourages individuals from exploring career information and activities, or forecloses desired alternatives. "If their beliefs are accurate and constructive, they will act in ways that are likely to foster the achievement of their goals. If their beliefs are inaccurate, and self-defeating, they will act in ways that make sense to them but may hinder accomplishment of their goals. Rokeach postulated that "beliefs are inferences made by an observer about underlying states of expectancy". They are organized into architectural systems in which beliefs vary along a central-peripheral dimension. The more central a belief locates, the more important it is to the individual, and the more resistant it is to change. The core of the belief system primarily represents a person's truths about his/her physical and social reality, and the nature of "self."

## **SOCIAL COGNITIONS AND SOCIAL COGNITIVE ENVIRONMENTS**

Social cognitions are patterns of thinking that have become habitual across social groups. Mindsets engendered by social and moral frames of reference give a particular coloring and interpretation to the meaning and purpose

of work. Prevailing ideologies create what we refer to as social-cognitive environments. It is within these environments that career decisions are made and implemented. A career rarely bursts abruptly upon the individual. A person's orientation to work and then to career is something that develops over a period of time, within a specific social cognitive environment. It is within this environment that meanings and values are attached to work and career. Two important theoretical positions have emerged in the literature that addresses social cognitions.

- (i) **The Social Learning Theory of Career Decision-Making:** Mitchell, Jones & Krumboltz (1979) suggested that the interaction between factors such as genetic predisposition, environmental conditions and learning experiences contribute to the development of cognitions and beliefs that have a significant impact on career development. Irrespective of their accuracy, these beliefs could facilitate or inhibit individuals' career decision-making behaviour.
- (ii) **Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT):** Basing themselves on Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory, Lent, Brown and Hackett (1994) have put forward their Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT), which examines the manner in which beliefs about personal efficacy operate within a system of socio-cultural and socioeconomic influences to affect career decision-making behaviour. The theory indicates that the process of structuring a personal career is a function of a reciprocal



relationship between the social cognitive mechanisms of self-efficacy, outcome expectations and goal setting behaviour. It is argued that these social cognitive mechanisms can be influenced by environmental forces such as differential socialization and by the internalization of these forces. It is suggested that when opportunities are limited, career guidance based on traditional methods such as the exploration of interest and aptitude may be necessary but not sufficient. SCCT suggests that a deeper understanding of the client's belief structures may be of importance.

### IMPACT OF CAREER BELIEFS

Career beliefs can influence clients' career-related aspirations and action in both positive and negative ways. Negative beliefs affect clients' perceptions of themselves and the world of work, increase clients' level of negative emotions associated with making a career decision, and immobilizes clients' action toward their career goals. Negative beliefs can influence clients' actions at any stage of career counselling. Clients who experience negative emotions associated with the career decision making process may perceive themselves as being less able to cope with stress. Anxiety or overwhelming feelings about career decision-making can impede action toward career goals. If clients do not have a realistic perspective on their abilities, skills, interests, and values they may strive to reach unattainable goals but experience failure and discouragement. Alternatively, setting lower career goals avoids failure or challenging experiences, and the emotions associated with taking risks. Alternatively, positive career beliefs facilitate clients'

movement through the career decision-making process, create positive expectations, and contribute to effective problem-solving behaviour. Clients with positive beliefs are able to apply knowledge about themselves and occupations into realistic career and lifestyle goals, and ultimately engage in career-related behaviours. Career self-efficacy beliefs or the belief in one's ability to complete tasks related to career choice and development, is one type of belief associated with positive emotions and behaviours. For example, people with higher degrees of self-efficacy are able to set and take action toward their career goals more so than those with lower self-efficacy. Higher degrees of career decision making self-efficacy are also associated with increased engagement in career exploratory behaviour. Therefore, career counselors can listen for, and work to affirm those beliefs that help clients move through the career decision-making process.

### FACTORS INFLUENCING CAREER BELIEFS

Four factors contribute to the development of individuals' overall belief systems.

- (i) **Genetic Endowment and Special Abilities:** Genetic endowment is inherited qualities that may affect an individual's ability to acquire certain educational and occupational preferences and skills. It includes ethnicity, gender, physical appearance, special abilities, and disabilities.
- (ii) **Environmental Conditions And Events:** They are social, cultural, political, and economic forces which are outside the individual's control, but which can potentially impact people's career development.



- (iii) **Learning Experience:** Each individual has unique learning experiences through instrumental and associative learning mechanisms that result in different career preferences, aspirations, and choices of careers.
- (iv) **Task Approach Skills:** Interaction among the above three factors (genetic endowment, environmental conditions and events, and learning experiences), people develop their own task approach skills and apply them to tasks or problems they encountered. These skills include performance standards, values, work habits, perceptual and cognitive processing schema, and emotional responses.

## SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

Socio-economic implies two scopes namely social and economic, the social scope includes authority, occupational prestige, and education and standing in the community while the economic scope includes employment income, home ownership and financial assets, also it could be divided into three categories which are low SES, middle SES, high SES. In Kuppaswami's the attempts made to estimate the socio-economic status of an individual are based on three assumptions. These are:

- (i) There is a class structure in the society.
- (ii) Status position is mainly determined by a few commonly accepted characteristics.
- (iii) These characteristics can be scaled and combined by using statistics procedures.

Socioeconomic status is an economic and sociological combined total measure of a person's work experience and of an individual's or family's economic and social position relative to others, based on income and education, and occupation. Michael (2004) indicates when analyzing a family's social economic status, the household income, earners' education and occupation are examined, as well as combined income, versus with an individual, when their own attributes are assessed.

## MAIN FACTORS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

According to Wikipedia (2015) mainly there are four factors of socioeconomic status

- (i) **Income:** Income refers to wages, salaries, profit, rents and any flow of earnings received. Income can also come in the form of unemployment or workers, compensation, social security, pension, interest or dividends, royalties, trust alimony, or other governmental, public or family assistance.
- (ii) **Education:** Educational attainment is preferable to analyze for socioeconomic status because it can be figured for all individuals. A person's educational attainment is considered to be the highest level of education they have completed. Education also plays a role in income. Median earnings increase with each level of education. Higher levels of education are associated with better economic and psychological outcomes (i.e. more income, more control and greater social support and



networking). Education plays a major role in skill sets for acquiring jobs, as well as specific qualities that stratify people with higher socioeconomic status from lower socioeconomic status.

- (iii) **Occupation:** Occupational prestige as one component of socioeconomic status, encompasses both income and educational attainment. Occupational status reflects the educational attainment required to obtain the job and income levels that vary with different jobs and within ranks of occupations. Additionally, it shows achievement in skills required for the job. Occupational status measures social position by describing job characteristics, decision making ability and control, and psychological demands on the job. Occupation is the most difficult factor to measure because so many exist, and there are so many competing scales. Many scales rank occupations based on the level of skill involved, from unskilled to skilled manual labor to professional, or use a combined measure using the education level needed and income involved.
- (iv) **Wealth:** Wealth is a set of economic reserves or assets, presents a source of security providing a measure of a household's ability to meet emergencies, absorb economic shocks, or provide the means to live comfortably. Wealth reflects intergenerational transitions as well as accumulation of income and savings. Income, age, marital

status, family size, religion, occupation, and education are all predictors for wealth attainment.

## CAREER INDECISION

Career indecision is defined as the indecision with regards choice. Chartrand, Martin, Robbins, McAuliffe, Pickering, and Calliotte (1994) defined career indecision as a developmental problem within the career maturation process that results from a lack of information about self or the world of work. Career Indecision has been widely used with reference to problems relating to career development, particularly problems in making career-related decisions. Career indecision, in the context of university students has been defined as the "inability to select a university major or occupation". Career indecision can be viewed as a normal response when young people are required to make a career related decision. It might occur at any time a career is contemplated, but is especially likely to occur at career transition points, for example, when thinking about a part-time job or choosing school subjects or university programs Career indecision refers to an inability to make a decision about the career that one wish to pursue or it is a temporary state in an individual's career direction. Career indecision is defined as the inability to select and commit to a career choice Career indecision can thus be seen as a state which comes and goes over time as a decision is made, is implemented, grows obsolete, and eventually leads to the need to make a new decision, thereby producing a temporary state of indecision. Campagna and Curtis (2007) defined career indecision as a complex and multidimensional problem comprising an undecided state and an indecisive trait. It is important to note that this use of state and trait implies a time difference, which is similar to Spielberger and Sydeman (1994) "s descriptions of the construct of



anxiety. However, career indecision can fluctuate from person to person depending on a number of factors, like the need for career related information, career readiness, and self-efficacy. Individual's typically experience a certain level of developmental career indecision when they feel like they have limited experience and knowledge regarding the world of work. There is often confusion between the career indecision and career indecisiveness. Osipow (1999) draws a distinction between the notion of indecisiveness as a trait and career indecision. He argues that indecisiveness is defined as a chronic and permanent inability to make decisions across different situations, whereas career indecision refers to a normal transitory phase in the process of making a particular decision. Although the term career indecision has received criticism due to the negative societal connotations of being undecided and because it implies a negative description of the process of decision-making and choice the term retains its credibility.

## CONCLUSION

Career development learning offers an additional dimension to institutional strategies designed to foster the employability of students. It makes the value of such strategies transparent to students; it also strengthens the sustainability of their benefits. Career development learning has not always been as strongly represented in employability strategies as it should have been. The last few years, however, have seen a rapid growth of career development learning programmes within higher education institutions. In most cases, they currently cover only a minority of students; in a few, they have been extended to larger numbers or even made obligatory. If career development learning programmes are to continue to grow and develop, the nature of careers services within higher education and

their relationships with teaching departments need to be further reframed. The intellectual foundations of career development learning also need to be strengthened. It is hoped that this paper will support and contribute to these developments.

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