CAREER DECISION MAKING THEORIES: DO THEY SERVE THE INTENDED PURPOSE IN THE MODERN WORLD?

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Abstract Availability of people with job skills and their level of skills have an immense contribution to economic growth. Human capital theory, which focuses on economic growth, successfully demonstrates how firms can create competitive advantage through developing individuals’ skills. Researchers have identified a positive correlation between career development programmes, career needs gap and turnover. Parsons’ theory in 1908 was the first attempt to theorise career decision motives of individuals, which later developed as the trait and factor theory, focusing on a talent-matching approach for career selection. According to his theory, an occupational decision happens when there is the closest match between the occupation and individual’s traits. Career theories, which have adopted psychodynamic approaches, refer to the interaction of various conscious and unconscious mental or emotional processes. However, these have limitations in the modern world leading to argument that they are inappropriate, and need of change. People’s expectations have changed rapidly during the past four decades, and career theories need to be expanded vastly to accommodate the broad needs of individuals. This study shows that the present psychological approaches to theorising the career decision process do not fill this requirement, and therefore, it is necessary to review the career decision process. This study is focused to identify a comprehensive model for theorising career decision making.

Keywords: Career decisions, Career development, Career decision theories, Psychological motives related to career decision, sociological motives related to career decisions, economic motives to career decisions.

Introduction

Helping people to make career decisions that set them on a particular career pathway is a need in the modern world. Career decision making is a dynamic process, which could induced by many factors, especially social and economic development. People’s expectations have been changed rapidly during the past four decades in parallel to the technological and social development, and the emergence of new careers (Regan and Roland, 1982). The traditional process of matching one’s skills and expected job skills and trait theories need to be greatly expanded to accommodate the broad needs of individuals (Kidd, 1998). A need for changing the nature of career counselling has been argued (Hackett, 1993; Krumboltz, 1993).
Career decision making process

Careers arise from the interaction of individuals with organisations and society (Collin, 1988). Arthur et al. (1989) define a career as the evolving sequence of a person’s work experience over time. According to Young and Valach (1996, p. 362), a career “is not primarily a theoretical construct, and does not have a precise meaning”. Watts (1981b, p. 214) states that the term “career” is frequently used by people in their daily lives. Career, therefore, has a broader usage in society.

Career decision making is defined as self-efficacy in planning for and learning about careers, as well as learning about one’s self (Admundson et al., 2010; Stringer & Kerpelman, 2010). Therefore career decisions are not limited to learning about various careers and related facts but a difficult and changing process involving many personal factors.

Career decision is a combination of many predefined phases (Peterson, Sampson, & Reardon, 1991; Gati, Shenhav, & Givon, 1993). Many recent models of career decision making have shown this combination (Hirschi, & Läge, 2007). The Cognitive Information Processing approach (Peterson et al., 1991; Sampson, Reardon, Peterson, & Lenz, 2004) proposes that career decision making is a cyclic process, which occurs in five distinct phases: Communication (identifying a career problem), Analysis (interrelating problem components), Synthesis (creating likely alternatives), Valuing (prioritizing alternatives), and Execution (forming strategies to implement the choice).

Psychological and Sociological views

Psychologists recognise that people change their cognitive framework with new learning, Piaget’s (1980) work on cognitive modification explains how the individual and the environment affect each other, generating new perspectives of the world and new organizations of knowledge. This conclusion explains Super’s (1984) vocational self-concept model from a psychological perspective. Further to that, Piaget explains that new experience interacts with the existing cognitive structure (schema) and alters the structure; thereby making it more adequate. This is the stage where change may be both needed and appropriate. Proposing a matching model, practitioners of vocational guidance can assist their clients in choosing the “right” vocation. As such, vocational counselling is a process of helping individuals to match their abilities and other traits with available occupations.

Bacanli (2006) stresses the ability to use personality characteristics in a person’s career decisions. Such differences lead to the need for diverse career counselling for students with different personalities (Gunkel, et al, 2010). The current education system always directs and conditions students to higher education, neglecting their personalities. As a result, by the time a person realises his natural potential, he probably has passed his productive age, trained in the wrong occupation, had experience in a different career and done a mediocre job (Gunkel, et al, 2010).

Personality may not be static and is a changing property of a person with the changing environment. It can be influenced by extrinsic agents such as power and material
wealth, or intrinsic agents such as changing perception with the acquirement of new knowledge (Bandura, 1986). Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) work on the ecological environmental perspective supports this argument. Furthermore, this theory suggests that a person’s personality changes with experience of the job and the environment. Kidd (1994) suggests these changes may be due to socialization on the job. These studies are consistent with Piaget’s (1896-1980) theory of cognitive structure development. Piaget concludes that individual and environment are engaged in an ongoing interaction, which generates new perceptions of the world and new organization of knowledge. This modified structure in turn influences the individual’s subsequent perceptions. These new perceptions are then incorporated within a more complex cognitive structure. In this manner, experience modifies schema and schema modify experience (Cross, 1976).

Bandura (1986) has proposed the social learning theory, which is widely applied to the learning and development process. While rooted in many of the basic concepts of traditional learning theory, the social learning theory suggests that direct reinforcement cannot account for all types of learning. Usually both genetics and learning affect an individual’s personality, and social learning dominates this process. Observational learning, that is, learning by watching other people, is a social element that, according to Bandura (1986), can be used to explain a wide variety of behaviours. Basically there are three concepts of the social learning theory. According to the first concept, individuals learn through observation. Next is the idea that internal mental states are an essential part of this process. Finally, this theory recognizes that just because something has been learned, it does not mean that it will result in a behavioural change.

If people’s learning does not necessarily change their behaviours, as explained by the Social learning theory, this is a challenge for career advisors. Historically, industrial needs and social needs played a major role in absorbing people as employees. During that time, people had insufficient resources to survive and there was an economic needs-oriented motivation. Once society developed materially, people’s perceptions also changed. Krumboltz (1983) has contributed to social learning theory by proposing new dimensions to understand why people choose the work they do, as well as other occupationally related decisions. His contribution stresses the importance of action and cognitions (knowing or thinking) in making career decisions. This idea again highlights the interdependence of learning and environment as described in Bandura’s (1986) learning theory. Krumboltz’s Social Learning examines four basic factors to understand people’s occupation-related decisions. These four factors are Genetic endowments and special abilities, Environmental conditions and events, Learning experiences, and Task approach skills. Genetic endowment involves inherited physical appearance and health factors that are not outcomes of learning. Besides these, some people possess special inherited skills in arts and crafts, which come under special abilities. The greater an individual’s innate genetic abilities, the more likely he or she is to respond to learning and teaching. Krumboltz (1983) identified climatic and geographical conditions, economic, cultural, political and social considerations as environmental conditions and events. Clearly these environmental factors are beyond peoples’ control. He also noted
that many changes could be a result of learning; acquiring knowledge and skills or both. It is the age old belief in all societies that learning induces change. Krumboltz (1983) also included this factor in his learning theory.

Psychological career theory considers the induction of life activities to the career, which reflects Burchinal’s (1962) suggestions. According to Burchinal (1962), occupational choices are essentially based on the development of a progressively specific set of choices, a process which he termed “crystallization of occupational choice”. According to Burchinal, (1962), this process involves at least three periods of occupational decision making, which he named: choice based fantasy, tentative choices and the final trial-stable period of selection.

Social Cognitive Career Theory (Lent et al, 1987) proposes that career choice is influenced by the beliefs the individual develops. Further to that, this process is refined through four major sources: personal performance accomplishments, vicarious learning, social persuasion and physiological states & reactions. Nicholson’s (1987) transition cycle recognizes the processes involved with learning. He identifies four stages: preparation, encounter, adjustment and stabilisation, which reflect the cyclical nature of career development.

The need to become aware of the demands and necessity of the career decision-making process is regarded as an important first step in career decision-making by several models (Germeijs & Verschueren, 2006; Peterson et al., 1991; Savickas, 2000; Van Esbroeck et al., 2005). However, a review of recent literature reveals that little recent research has been conducted into how young people make career decisions. The majority of students are lagging in the career decision-making process.

It is clear that a comprehensive model is needed to conceptualise the career decision process. Theories of psychological orientation (Parsons, 1909; Holland, 1973; Davis and Lofquist, 1984; Brown, 1966) are readily available. Some career development theories have acknowledged the influence of socio-economic status in career selection (Parsons, Holland, Borden, Brown), but not given it significant attention (Patton, et al., 2006). Chevalier and Lanot (2002) point out that social status can influence the level of education attainment. According to Bratti (2006), social status influences the choice of field of study. Therefore, it could be hypothesised that social status influences career selection since study is the precedes work and influences career options available. Career theories have not acknowledged economic factors as an influential factor in career decision making. However, there is evidence that people are motivated to work for the expected material returns (Cropanzano & Wright, 2001; Bakker, 2009, Greenbank and Hepworth, 2007). Therefore the following model will provides a comprehensive model for the conceptualisation of a career decision making.
Many theories and arguments related to career selection, based on motivation, were developed in the 20th century. People’s motivation for career choice may be intrinsic or extrinsic. London (2009) states that in research studies extrinsic factors such as financial reward have been found to be the main contenders in job choice decisions. The economic status of people is one of the important factors which affect their career decision (Bozgeyikli et al, 2009). People make career decisions to meet their basic needs or to improve their existing life-style. According to Schoenberg et al (1984), socioeconomic status usually incorporates parents’ educational attainment and occupational status, and family income, which in turn determines access to basic needs. Moreover family economic status is positively associated with individuals’ occupational status, aspirations and expectations (Armstrong & Crombie, 2000; Bigler et al, 2003) and career decision making self-efficacy (Ali et al, 2005). This section, therefore discusses the economic needs-oriented career motives and quality of life-oriented career motives.

Needs have been defined as nutriments essential to a living entity’s growth, integrity and health (Deci and Ryan, 1991). This definition is based on biological and evolutionary approaches that determine organismic needs using functional criteria (Reis et al, 2000). As such, human beings need food, shelter and security as basic needs, which have often been cited under Maslow’s needs hierarchy model. Maslow's theory of a hierarchy of human needs offers a useful framework and explanation of work motivation, which explains that physiological needs are the most fundamental, or originally most potent factor in work motivation (Macarov, 1976).

Achieving basic needs is a global challenge common to everyone and 842 million people in the world do not have enough to eat (World Food Program, 2013). To meet this very basic need, the majority of people have to work. Unarguably basic human needs are satisfied by money. In this respect, Karl Marx describes two main social classes, the Proletariat (Labour) and the Bourgeoisie (Capitalist). The Proletariat (labour) make a living directly from their labour whereas the Bourgeoisie control the means of production (Martha, 2011). As such there are basically two categories of
people, those who have to work for their own survival and those who do not need to work. The latter, a small fraction in any society, have inherited property and doing a job is not a need. The former, the majority in any society, have to do a job for survival. For such people, career decision had no meaning during the past era. There were no choices, no selection and working people had to engage in compulsory labour (Martha, 2011).

Even today, in poorer societies, there are many people for whom career choice is not available. Eggerth and Flynn (2012) state that opportunities and decision-making latitude do not exist for many individuals from low income families. According to a report of the ILO (2013), two thirds of working age youth in some developing countries are either unemployed or trapped in low-quality jobs. In general, it is reasonable to assume that in less developed economies, people work mainly or even solely to earn money to meet their basic needs. In this situation they are prepared to do any job that helps to earn their bread and butter. Achieving this, in itself, may be a source of satisfaction. A study reveals that in developing countries, job satisfaction is surprisingly high, despite low job quality (ILO, 2013). In the sheer absence of decent work opportunities, where high unemployment forces young people to accept any type of employment, the process of career selection does not play a major role and is meaningless. There are attempts to explain psychological variables (Ilies, Schwind & Heller, 2007) also to explain this work-motivation phenomenon, but where the basic needs are concerned, such arguments are not valid. The Job demands–resources model (Bakker & Demerounti, 2007) suggests that job resources are the main initiators of employees’ work engagement. In the case of an economically developed society, in contrast, where there are other means to meet basic needs, career selection has a meaning and a good match between individual and career is considered extremely important to run the system smoothly.

The ability to meet basic needs does not, however, mean that economic motivation is no longer salient. A research designed to develop money profiles based on attitudes to money and to investigate differences in work-related attitudes revealed that “Achieving money worshippers” (23.22 per cent) had the highest scores among the factors, “good”, “respect”, “achievement” and “power” (Li-Ping et al, 2005). Therefore it is reasonable to assume people are motivated to select careers, that earn them the highest return. Studies on motivation for engaging in work suggest that people are motivated by the resources they receive from their organisations (Tyler and Blader, 2002). This implies that organisations can use money to attract, retain, and motivate their employees (Milkovich and Newman, 2005; Mitchell and Mickel, 1999; O’pah1 and Dunnette, 1966; Rynes and Gerhart, 2000; Wernimont and Fitzpatrick, 1972).

Hence, in modern society money continuously plays an important role in human activities. The economic factors influencing decisions could be the level of salary, amount of work benefits, job security and retirement benefits. Alexandera et al. (2011) state that salary, job security and job availability were the three most influential factors identified in a career decision related study. Lee and Lee (2006) found high salary to be as the most influential factor. Gupta & Houtz (2000) reported higher money/benefits as the most important factors. Rettenmayer et al. (2007) found that high salary and job
security were top in the rating of influential factors. Myburgh (2005) found that availability of jobs, followed by job security, were highest in importance.

Basically people do jobs to earn money to meet their basic needs. However if an individual has other means to satisfy his basic needs, he could have different motives. Society changes continuously. However people’s basic needs and wants are basically the same. Throughout human history, people suffered from starvation and lack of other basic needs, up to the mid twentieth century. With the development of science and technology, productivity was dramatically increased (Basu et al, 2001) and many people have the opportunity to access basic needs. Therefore with the saturation of basic needs, a basic needs oriented career motivation cannot be expected from a society.

Quality of life oriented career selection

People are engaged in an unending struggle to improve their quality of life. In the early civilisations, ordinary people struggled to achieve basic needs and they had no time to think about quality of life. However, in the modern age, with the development of the technology, productivity increased and basic needs more easily met, making people examine other dimensions of life. Today, quality of life has increased considerably and is still developing dramatically (Simon, 2000). Phillips (2006 p. 242) defines “Quality of life is both an individual and collective attribute. At the individual level it includes objective and subjective elements. People’s objective quality of life requires that their basic needs are met and that they have the material resources necessary to fulfil the social requirements of citizenship”.

Lawton (1983) defined quality of life as behavioural competence, the objective environment and perceived quality of life. A study by Bowling (1995b) revealed that people ranked highest, relationships with family and relatives. Second and third were the person’s health and health of another (close) person and finances/standard of living/housing. However it can be reasonably argued that these factors are sub-factors of finances, and that finances is the dominant factor in the modern world in the quality of life dimension.

Quality of life is thus a multi-dimensional concept incorporating facets such as health and social well-being, economic well-being, quality of education, level of security and safety, access to transport, and other aspects of life at a local level (Castelli et al, 2009). Unarguably access to these conditions has restrictions and limitations unless a huge price is paid. Therefore people consider earnings and other benefits when making career decisions.

Psychological needs oriented career decisions

People spend more of their life span on work than on any other waking activity. Consequently, self-identities are intricately linked to work identities (Muja and Appelbaum, 2012). Scholars have identified (Clarke, 2009; Thijssen et al., 2008) that rather than objective career progression and job security, employees are increasingly intrinsically motivated by subjective career success (e.g. pride, satisfaction, and personal accomplishment) and “employability”; the capacity for mobility to survive in
any job market. Grottfredson's (1981) theory has elicited numerous investigations into the effects of prestige on vocational aspiration (Leung & Plake, 1990; Holt, 1989; Lapan & Jingelski, 1992). Psychological factors that have an effect on career motives are based on individuals’ traits and self-efficacy. Individuals’ traits are distinguishing qualities or characteristics that are embodied within them. Self-efficacy is defined as individuals’ judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performance (Bandura, 1986).

**Traits based career decisions**

During the 20th century scholars studied peoples’ traits and their vocational abilities. Trait-factor theory, developed by Parsons (1909), was the earliest attempt to theorize vocational choice. This theory relies upon psychometric measures and many counselling programmes were developed based on this concept. Trait and factor theory implies that there is an ideal job for everyone. Later development of career theories (Holland, 1973; Davis and Lofquist, 1984; Brown, 1966) also has a psychological orientation. People have inherent skills, attitudes and interests in certain vocations. This theory assumes that individuals are interested in work that matches their own traits and skills. Therefore career advisors have developed many tools to measure individuals’ traits and match them with job requirements.

**Self-efficacy based career decisions**

The career decision process needs to be studied in terms of the self-efficacy dimension also. Career decision self-efficacy (CDSE) is defined as an individual’s belief that he or she can successfully complete tasks necessary to career decision making (Taylor & Betz, 1983). Practically, CDSE has been acknowledged as a critical factor influencing the career development process of young adults (Hui-Hsien Hsieh and Jie-Tsuen Huang, 2012). However, the precursors of CDSE have rarely been examined in the career decision related literature (Hui-Hsien Hsieh and Jie-Tsuen Huang, 2012). According to Bandura, self-efficacy is the mechanism that has the strongest influence on personal agency (Lent et al., 1994). It has also been identified as the predominant factor in career choice and actual career performance in a subsequent stage (Akbulut & Looney, 2007, 2009; Lent et al., 2002; Looney & Akbulut, 2007; Smith, 2002). It has been observed that although self-efficacy is built on past performance, individuals habitually over-estimate their capabilities (Galpin, Sanders, Turner, & Venter, 2003; Hilberg & Meiselwitz, 2008; Lent et al., 1994; Looney & Akbulut, 2007; Smith, 2002).

**Sociological needs oriented career decisions**

The economic and psychological perspectives towards career decisions of young people were discussed in the previous two sections. This section will discuss sociological aspects that influence individuals’ career decisions.

According to Rojewski and Kim (2003) socioeconomic status has considerable influence on determining both occupational aspirations and postsecondary transition (school to work transition) status of children. Possible sociological factors that induce career related decisions are concerned with individual behaviour that emanates as a
result of interacting in social events. These factors include culturally embedded motives that underpin people’s career selection behaviour. Grottfredson's (1981) theory has elicited numerous investigations into the effects of prestige and socioeconomic status on vocational aspiration (Leung & Plake, 1990; Holt, 1989; Lapan & Jingelski, 1992). In this regard, blue-collar careers and their social dimensions, including cultural perceptions towards hard labour related occupations, are also discussed in this section.

The pursuit of social studies

According to Weber (1968), social status can be defined as the honour attached to an individual’s position within a society, and this honour may be connected with any quality shared by a group. Behaviour and risk taking attitudes of people could vary with their social status. These differences have been studied and documented in Psychological, Sociological and Health studies. The influence of socioeconomic status on Lifestyle choices has been studied. Contoyannis and Jones (2004) and Goy et al. (2008) observed an effect of socioeconomic status and health related risk taking behaviour. Chevalier and Lanot (2002) point out that social status can influence the level of educational attainment. According to Bratti (2006), social status influences the choice of field of study. People, by nature, consider status as a very important element in their life. A person wins respect in society by virtue of his/her social status. Usually, people’s role changes along with their social status. It is generally believed that increase an individual’s social status entitles him/her to more respect than the existing status.

Throughout history, class divisions determined the hierarchal social status in the society. However, the status of a person cannot be seen as a solid concept, but varies with time. Race, birth, political power, wealth, occupation and intellectual attainment have been considered as determinants of status. Secord and Backman (1964) state the following three bases of status in society.

1. The capacity of a person for rewarding those with whom he/she interacts.
2. The extent to which he/she is receiving awards.
3. The type of costs he/she incurs, and his/her investments.

Usually, society determines a person’s status by two forms, named as ascription and achieved. This process is common to every society. Hollingshead (1975) identified a four factor index of social status: education, occupation, sex and marital status.

Education changes during childhood but it generally stabilises in the adult years. The years of schooling an individual has completed are believed to be reflected in acquired knowledge and cultural tastes. Moreover, education is a prerequisite to enter into occupations that carry higher prestige in the social system. Occupation may change in the early years of adult life, but it too tends to become frozen as a person grows up. This change usually stabilizes in the late thirties. This process coincides with Super’s (1954) life span career development model.

Unarguably, most people enter into the world of work to fulfil their basic needs. Once these basic needs are met fully or partially, a person looks around for other careers which bring him/her more satisfaction. During this process, his/her needs may transfer...
from the basic level to higher levels. The whole process is cyclic. Buckley and Petrunik (1995) view career orientations as changing with the stages of one’s career, new life circumstances and with identification with different reference groups. They conclude that changes in career orientation in relation to time are linked to career satisfaction. Social status may be a factor in such satisfaction.

**Social status based attributions as a factor in career choice.**

Usually it is assumed that the roles played by an individual in society reveal his/her position in society. The features of the role, including power over other elements in the community, determine the hierarchy. In generally, the status of a person is high if the role he/she is playing is considered important by the group. In many large power distance cultures, superiors are entitled to special privileges and status (Hofstede, 1980).

People have a real desire for social status. They select various ways and means to be well positioned in society. Achieving social status through their career is most popular among young adults. However there are advantages as well as disadvantages of prioritising a career in this manner. All careers are useful and required by society, but as a rule, considering the well-being of society, there must be a kind of equal status among careers. Gottfredson's (1981) theory has elicited numerous investigations into the effects of socioeconomic status on vocational aspiration (Leung & Plake, 1990; Holt, 1989; Lapan & Jingelski, 1992). Several studies have found that social forces are more powerful than personal ones like self-concept, leading to development of the “status attainment theory” (Blau and Duncan, 1961). This is a sociological approach, which proposes a social status based career selection perspective (Fitzgerald et al., 1995; Jencks, Crouse, & Muegger, 1983). However, the theory was conceptualised in relation to occupational attainment, rather than the career decision process. Hotchkiss & Borow (1996) state that occupational aspirations and attainment reflect bias and discrimination, social attitudes, cultural expectations, and experiences of stereotypes. They have reasoned gender, race and social class as relevant variables. Different cultural perceptions or societal expectations may impose a status dilemma on some adolescents. This type of attitude could result in limited career aspirations reflected by narrow, stereotypical employment possibilities.

Sociologists agree that today, class divisions are disappearing and income, which is the determinant factor of quality of life, has an important effect on individuals’ life (Haralambos and Holborn, 1995). Quality of life is usually measured on a four-factor scale: health and functioning, socioeconomic, psychological/spiritual, and family (Ferrans and Pwers, 1992). With the development of technology, which can be accessed by monetary means, quality of life has improved significantly and people have become more concerned about earning more to improve their social status. Consequently, earning capacity plays a major role in determining the careers, and the status of traditional occupations has been downgraded (Simon et al, 2014) and new occupations emerged. In this line Braverman (1974) argued that mechanization and specialization have ‘degraded’ work in the 20th century.
With the improvement of social status of some occupations, the social status of high labour intensive occupations was systematically reduced (Simon et al, 2014). This happened with the transition from manual employment to non-manual employment (Haralambos and Holborn, 1995,). A new concept of occupations emerged, creating a distinct division of occupations as blue-collar and white-collar jobs. According to a report published in 2004 in Sweden (Berg, 2005), blue-collar workers were on average paid 43% less than white-collar workers. The status groups may also create divisions within class.

The trend towards social status-based career selection has been neglected in career development studies. Rojewski and Kim (2003) state that career development theories have not integrated social and environmental factors well for the explanation of career choice. Nevertheless this trend of social status oriented career selection is evident, and does not have political boundaries; it is found in capitalist USA and communist China as well. Awareness of this trend undermines career selection theories. The situation is exacerbated as generally people dislike working in difficult conditions. In the Chinese context, for example it has been reported that people favour brainwork over manual labour. “Blue-collar jobs are simply not a choice for urban kids, and the thinking also extends to rural youngsters. Young people accept nothing below junior office work, no matter how frustrated they become with job hunting” (Global Times, November 23, 2010).

Theories related to the concept of “social status based career selection” are not available. (Refer: Patton. et al., 2006, p.66). Nevertheless, social status based career selection is inevitable since an individual’s status is a relative concept, that designates the amounts of prestige, deference or respect one receives from the other elements in society, compared to one’s fellows. The person enters into a never-ending competition to higher positions, since status is not a solid perception. To adjust to this changing environment, he/she has to find higher positioned jobs. Usually the status of a person in the group where he/she belongs may have little value in a different group. However there are exceptions; some careers, particularly celebrity jobs, are resilient to environment change. This situation creates another dimension of career selection. People are hunting for celebrity-based jobs (Brockes, 2010). The sociological approach asserts that social forces are more powerful than personal ones like self-concept (Fitzgerald et al., 1995; Jencks, Crouse, & Muesser, 1983). However the integration of social and environmental factors into the career decision making process is not observable within the literature (Rojewski and Kim, 2003).

With the development of new technology, moreover, new roles appear, which are not considered as important but are accorded higher status in society. This transition further developed with the development of the entertainment industry, which had a low status in the society in the past. As its status dramatically increased, celebrity personal became an elite group. A survey by Brockes (2010), reported in the Guardian newspaper, shows the attraction of youth to various occupations. Children voted high for celebrity personal assistant as their preferred career over a number of top jobs in society.
Young people have clearly shown their attraction to fame oriented occupations. They have voted for fame over knowledge and intelligence. Occupations such as singing, film acting or playing popular sports usually belong to this group. The arts and culture serve as a main source of income. They create jobs and contribute significantly to the Gross Domestic Product (Reeves, 2001). Half a century ago, the situation was different. These occupations did not enjoy their present status in society and the people in these occupations had a limited audience. With the development of new technology, they are able to break the boundaries to reach people far away. Today an artist can perform for an audience of millions of people. Media exposure gives such people for greater influence than before. One explanation of the popularity of celebrity careers is offered by Hull et al (1995), citing Gottfredson’s (2002) four-stage theory of circumscription and compromise in vocational development, they argue that the fourth stage, children in the age group of 14 to 18 years, integrate their interests into vocational identity. Occupational options are evaluated relative to personal interests and vocations incompatible with those interests are filtered out, so youth stick to what they see as acceptable alternatives. Accordingly the vocational decisions of adults are outcomes of carefully evaluated decisions against their experiences with social interaction. Thus, the popularity of celebrity careers in Brookes’ (2010) survey may reflect young people’s exposure and interest in the worlds of sports, music, cinema and the like. As a common occurrence, children watch TV programmes and listen to radio programmes related to celebrity personnel, their private affairs and their lifestyles. The social learning theory of media impact suggests that viewers will be likely to imitate the behaviour of popular characters played by actors (Idriss and Fancy, 2009). Usually, media programmes induce higher value related to the celebrity group in the minds of the audience. As a result, the human mind is conditioned to regard the social status of these people as elite. Unfortunately, we cannot find enough studies related to this problem. Shrum (2009), and Hawkins (1990) note that research conducted to date does not satisfactorily address explanatory mechanisms, i.e. “how” media works on human cognition. However are several studies have been done on media violence and its impact on aggression among adults (Sparks and Sparks, 2002; Zilmman and Weaver, 2003; Bushman and Anderson, 2009). Therefore by ethical reasoning, even with the limited literature, we can assume that young people; as the most active segment of the society could be influenced by the media positioning of elite life styles. This is why they have valued the role of personal assistant, whose duty is to satisfy the personal needs of another person, higher than that of a company chairman or a chancellor of a prestigious university.

It could be interesting to know how far such attitudes are related to intelligence. Generally, mankind is intelligent, although different people have different levels of intelligence (Ceci, 1990). However we cannot find a universal definition for Intelligence. When two dozen prominent theorists were asked to define intelligence, they gave two dozen somewhat different definitions (Sternberg & Detterman, 1986). However, in general, society accepts academic performance as a tool for measuring intelligence. Education is a process of imparting knowledge, as well as of filtering people based on their capacity of intelligence. Educated and intelligent people as the
leaders in a society make most of the decisions in adjusting the future of the world. According to the above cited survey results, young people visualise fame as their target and strive to find ways and means to reach this target. In this race it is reasonable to assume that more intelligent people win over the less intelligent. As a result, by the simplest logical reasoning, it may be that more intelligent people become personal assistants, while less intelligent people strive for academic posts.

It is clear that the existing career selection theories do not fit today’s requirements. Most of these studies were done in economically advanced countries, and these theories explain only a part of the story. Clearly, they do not provide a person-environment fit model for a major portion of world population. Apart from that career theories cannot address the needs of an unemployed person in the modern society. Therefore these theories should be readjusted to address the real issues including economic and social environment as major variables.

Whenever a person faces a the task of selecting a career out of more than two careers, he presumably selects the career that earns him the highest social status. The status dimension of careers and fluctuation of status of careers has created new dimensions to be analysed. If certain roles in society adversely affect the dignity of those who perform them, people will try to avoid such jobs.

Influence of cultural-contextual factors for career decisions

There is evidence to support the influence of cultural-contextual factors on individuals' career behaviours. According to Blustein and Ellis (2000), one of the challenges for career assessment in the 21st century is the need to affirm cultural diversity. Increasing globalisation and cultural diversity in the workforce demand that career assessment be relevant for all cultural groups (Fouad & Zao, 2000). However, little has been done to examine the applicability of career assessment to cultural minorities (Leong and Hartung, 2000; Leong and Leung, 1994). Leong and Hartung (2000) have indicated that studies focusing on cross-cultural career assessment have tended to focus on the cultural validity of existing instruments, which have been based predominantly on Western models of test construction. Perceptions of career-related barriers and decision-making difficulties play a significant role in the career development of women and ethnic minorities (Lent, Brown, and Hackett, 1994). Studies have shown that women and ethnic minorities perceived more career-related barriers than did white American men (Luzzo & McWhirter, 2001). In a cross-national study, Mau (2001) found that the clusters of difficulty have different effects on career indecision depending on various nationalities.

The behaviour of society reflects that the modern person expects not only wealth but also a definite status. Regardless of other factors and, apparently, no matter how satisfied the father is with his job, the son is encouraged to seek an occupation at a higher level than the father (Shostac and Gomberg, 1964). Even if it is not openly demanded, status entitles a person to enjoy several prerogatives.

Social positioning of jobs plays a major role in the career decision process. As an active group in society, youths react quickly to the social status dimension of careers. The
status dimension of careers and fluctuation of status of careers has created new dimensions to be analysed. This study reveals the need for career decision theories to be reorganised under those three pillars of Economic, Psychological and Sociological factors, which were conceptualised on page 5.

Career decision motives could be based on psychological, economic or sociological factors. An individual’s career motives could be due to any of these factors alone or in combination. Therefore career advisors have to identify the real motives for the individuals’ based on these three perspectives. The parameters considered for theorising career models (e.g. Miller and Form, 1951; Holland’s, 1997; Parsons’ 1909; Sonnenfield and Kotter, 1982; Super, 1954; Ginzberg et al, 1951), have been conceptualised on psychological orientations and economic and social factors are neglected within the extent frameworks. As such, a combined approach of psychological, sociological and economic approach would be more useful to serve the career decision making process.

Implications to Management

The business community as a direct stakeholder has to think more about training and development under the purview of strategic business development. Human capital theory, which focuses on economic growth, successfully demonstrates how firms can create competitive advantage through developing individuals’ human capital (Garavan et al., 2001; Nordhaug, 1993). Career success has twofold advantages, to the individual as well as to the employer. Personal success can eventually contribute to organisational success (Judge et al, 1999).

Organisations have to concentrate career development programs and identify career needs gap of their employees, since there is a positive correlation between career development programmes, career needs gap and turnover (Chen, Chang, Yeh, 2004). According to the findings, when the gap increases job dissatisfaction increases. Today, in many situations, the level of education and skills has become the yardstick for measuring eligibility for a job (Yaxley, 2014). This trend was fuelled with the development of the new technologies and people’s demand for higher quality and standards, forcing manufacturers and service providers to rely on the education and skills of their employees (Manyika et al 2012).

If people’s learning does not necessarily change their behaviours, as explained by the Social learning theory (Bandura, 1986), training employees is a challenge for the management.

Conclusion

The cognitive process that leads to a career decision could be influenced by economic, psychological and sociological factors and an individual’s career motives could be originated due to any of these factors, alone or as a combination. The parameters considered for theorising career models, have been conceptualised on psychological orientations and economic and social factors are neglected within the extent frameworks. Therefore career theories have to be re-conceptualised, as shown in the
To fill this gap, which will help the career advisors to identify real motives for the individuals’ career motives. As such more studies are needed to develop this career decision making model for career theorising.

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