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Building careers through an interdisciplinary approach

Introduction

The central issue of career counselling and guidance is supporting decision-making and projecting a series of decisions onto a career. Gati Kulcsár (2021) dedicated a detailed article to this issue in career guidance. Lent and Brown (2020) suggest a content-process-context framework for career choice assessment and intervention, moving away from Parsons’s traditional three-step model (1909).

On the other hand, there are several disciplinary approaches to decision theory outside the domain of career counseling as well. There are different approaches in economics, mathematics, sociology, social psychology, law, political science, public policy analysis, and philosophy. In addition to psychology, sociology, labor economics, management science, law, and many other disciplines have shaped career guidance’s theoretical and practical knowledge. Career counselors and individuals, families, and communities building careers use the practical results of all these disciplines, often unconsciously. This theoretical article aims to review the views of each discipline on careers, career management, and decision-making to reflect more consciously on these challenges in the training and practice of career professionals. However, different disciplines emphasize the link between career and decisions from different perspectives. Economics, in general, is interested in maximizing benefits and minimizing losses from decisions. The economics of work and Education focuses on the accumulation and use of human capital over the career, sociology on social mobility and lifestyles, and psychology on the psychological components of decision-making, career maturity (Super, 1957), and career adaptability (Super & Knasel, 1981; Savickas, 1997). Although career decisions are reversible in modern social divisions of labor (Castel, 1996), an infinite number of decisions cannot be made in a career. In his famous rainbow model of careers in the 1970s (Super, 1980), Super still advocated linear career development. Towards his death in the early 1990s, he could go beyond this linearity with the triumphal archway model. Super's second synthesizing model, the archway of career determinants (1992), also known as the archway model, was created to clarify these environmental and intrapersonal determinants of career, which were suggested by the developmental tasks of the career rainbow model. In this model, linearity no longer prevails, as the rainbow model implies. However, the latter model also illustrates how the number of resources and energy available varies between efficiency and flexibility and between path reinforcement and path correction. The main message of the Club of Rome's repeated report (Meadows, 2020) is that "efficiency gains come at the expense of flexibility, and this is felt in all sectors of society." So, for all career decisions, the question is: do we lose efficiency by further improving career flexibility (cf. How many times can one retrain without losing the skills accumulated over a career?) and, conversely, does worker efficiency always increase with seniority? To use a natural science analogy, the principle of energy conservation is true if we consider a closed system. Modern boundless careers, however, are not a closed system with a particular work organization or occupation (Hall & Moss, 1998), nor are they indefinitely variable. Another key issue is what supportive resources are available by the environment (state, community, family) to make a career more flexible. The decision Information (as well as disinformation) is infinite in the digital age, but as decision-makers, none of us have infinite resources or time to gather and analyze information. This is particularly true in the modern world, which has become super-complex (Barnett, 2020), where the task of discovering and processing information, separating the content of directed marketing from data collected along self-interest and values, is complex. The new digital tribal separation of subjective reality perception is a new challenge for modern digital societies. We call this phenomenon the echo chamber (Cinelli & De Francisci Morales, Galeazzi & Starini, 2021). In news
media and social media, an echo chamber is an environment or ecosystem in which participants encounter beliefs that reinforce or strengthen their existing beliefs. In the context of careers and career paths, from school choice to employment, career planners and guidance counselors encounter this phenomenon on countless occasions, which can close the reflection leading to decision-making. There are two basic concepts behind decision theory thinking: utility and probability. When people make decisions in familiar situations, these decisions are typically quick and automatic. They base what works and what does not on previous experience. However, decisions are far from automatic or quick in unfamiliar situations, as they need to consider the pros and cons, the expected risks, and possible gains. Furthermore, the implementation of any decision involves the use of resources, and the question to be examined, as in any counseling process, is whether the person making the decision a) has a realistic knowledge of his or her resources? b) has the resources to implement the decision? (This latter question is intensively examined in the System Theory Framework (STF) Patton & McMahon, 2006) or constructivist counseling (Bassot, 2012). In doing so, it anticipates the future course of the implementation of the decision and the probability of each eventuality (scenario) occurring. Practitioners rightly note that their clients often face more complex and difficult problems. Given that people live in a highly complex social environment, many of the most important decisions a person makes are made in the context of inextricably linked social interactions. Moreover, the decisions people make throughout their lives depend on the concurrent decisions of others (Charpentier et al., 2016, cited in McCue, 2020). Information is central to all decisions. Its total absence leads to completely uncertain situations with little room for reflection. Conversely, in high certainty, routine, safe situations, decision-making is unnecessary. Therefore, no psychological tension is associated with decision preparation and decision-making (the counselor cannot work with the client).

TABLE 1: The certainty-uncertainty continuum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree of uncertainty</th>
<th>characteristics</th>
<th>examples</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No uncertainty (certainty, certain circumstances)</td>
<td>Outcomes and results can be accurately predicted.</td>
<td>The laws of physics and mathematics, some of the natural sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 1 (objectively measurable risk)</td>
<td>Outcomes can be identified and the probability of their occurrence is calculable, known</td>
<td>Gambling: lottery, cards, dice, simpler technical and economic systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2 (subjective probability risk)</td>
<td>Outcomes can be identified and the probability of their occurrence can be estimated.</td>
<td>Natural science research, weather, investment, business, development projects CAREERS in the short term (own addendum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3 (uncertainty)</td>
<td>Outcomes can be identified, but the probability of their occurrence is unknown.</td>
<td>Fire outbreaks, accidents, long-term investment developments in the economic situation CAREERS/ LIFETIME PLANS in the long term (own addition)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 4 (complete uncertainty)</td>
<td>The outcomes cannot be fully identified, nor is their occurrence known.</td>
<td>Space exploration, discoveries, stochastic projects.</td>
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The certainty-uncertainty continuum (see attachment) source: Williams et al., (1995), Székely Cs. (2020), modified by the authors. If we did not filter information and discard opportunities throughout our lives, we would suffer from a paralysis of constant reflection and be unable to make any decisions in the face of the complexity and ambiguity of the real world. However, this filtering comes at a price and introduces significant biases into our decisions. One is overconfidence, where we tend to be unduly optimistic and filter out many sources of uncertainty from our consciousness. The other problem is that we tend to be influenced by how a problem is framed (McCue, 2020). We know there
is no such thing as a 100% rational decision, yet we still know little about how feelings translate into concrete decisions. A schematic diagram (Restát, 2012) illustrates the effects of the decision on in- and outsiders over time, based on the security that typically exists in modern societies. By security, here we mean security of life and property in the broadest possible sense, starting with the list. In the case of the precariat (Standing, 2012), job- and existence-less strata known from the modern career counseling and sociology literature, the security (often even life and property security) associated with the decision situation can be highly questionable. Thus, the resources needed to implement the decision are lacking. According to Blustein (2006), who has devoted much of his career to the study of career opportunities for the American underclass, there are three aspects of work: a) it allows us to survive, b) it provides us with social connections - work a place where we can feel connected. c) work allows us to define our future and lives autonomously - it gives us meaning, a sense of achievement, and identity. Career decisions, the decisions to study and work (or both simultaneously and in combination) throughout a person's life, are typically decisions in which we can make big mistakes and face several negative consequences. Although most career decisions in modern societies are reversible, they always come at a cost that the decision-maker cannot always afford. The more closed the structure of a society is and the higher the costs of correcting career decisions (in terms of time, money, and time of supporters, the more the decision-maker is burdened by the weight of the decision. Sociologically, there are lifestyle issues behind career decisions. It is what gives the psychological weight to career decisions. Lifestyle is a system of activities undertaken to meet needs. As a topic of relevance to this article, it includes work and other factors such as culture, social life, and consumption. The central sociological concepts of the differentiation of society are lifestyle, Education, and social and occupational prestige, in addition to lifestyle. In general, we make decisions about all these when making career choices. All these sociological variables must be understood by the person making the career decision and the career counselor. Interpreting and thus shedding light on the content of the normal anxiety behind career decisions. As the stakes of career decisions increase, the pressure to perform increases, and early selection intensifies, modern concepts such as educational anxiety emerge, referring to the different forms and degrees of anxiety experienced by educational participants in educational activities. Educational participants can be divided into parents, teachers, and students. Educational anxiety refers to the nervousness, restlessness, anxiety, worry, panic, and other emotions experienced by parents in the process of educating their children and the uncertainty caused by educational outcomes, which parents experience in the academic performance of their children, employment, and life prospects, as well as excessive panic about their children's test scores, learning attitudes and learning progress, (Chen & Oubibi & Liang & Zhou, 2022). During a career transition, the same pressures can persist and even be! An extreme case is the performance pressure known in Japan as karoshi, or sudden death from work. The choice between security vs. uncertainty can be a different kind of pressure. For example, someone considering a career change in their forties often struggles with the idea of a fresh start, as opposed to remaining dissatisfied with their job for the sake of financial security. The decision framework has also been prominent in the theoretical literature on career guidance. We call these schools decision theorists. Tiedeman (1984) saw life decisions and career decisions as integrally related. A career decision is an interconnected process consisting of two phases: anticipation or choice of occupation and implementation or adjustment (career correction) (Szilágyi, 2005). Tiedeman emphasized the importance of the decision structure. He further decomposed the pre-selection phase as follows: a) Exploration stage: the person primarily collects ideas and considers several alternative options; b) crystallization stage: after taking stock of the options, the person evaluates them and establishes a preference order; c) Choice stage: based on the stabilized order, he/she selects the alternative that seems appropriate; d) Specification stage: once committed to the chosen alternative, it uses more and more information to confirm to itself that its choice is the right one and takes action. Gati (1986) defines occupational and career choice as a special case of decision-making under uncertainty, aiming to achieve an optimal choice between alternatives, i.e., solving a multi-criterion decision-making problem (MCDM). Decision uncertainty can be
considered as the lack of clear preferences or knowledge due to the lack of mental clarity of the decision maker, which may result in uncertainty of future outcomes. Thus, he identifies four main decision-making challenges (this is the basis of his later developed self-assessment questionnaire, the CDDQ: Career Decision Making Difficulties Questionnaire, Gati, Krausz, & Osipow, 1996) • Lack of knowledge of a preference model that can be used by the career decision maker • Lack of resources (e.g., time and money) to gather the necessary information. • Limitations of the decision-maker in processing information. • Lack of a framework for making the right decision. Disciplines and career decisions In addition to the literature on counseling, other disciplines are constantly influenced by it and are also constantly concerned with the role of decision. Indeed, counseling itself, and within its career counseling, can be seen as an interdisciplinary field that, in developing its theories and practical frameworks, has absorbed and continues to absorb the problem formulations of other fields, including dilemmas and solutions to decision-making. The table below (No. 2) shows how decision dilemmas are perceived by each discipline, from philosophy to counseling and then to career counseling.

TABLE 2: Areas of expertise: Role and purpose of the decision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disciplines</th>
<th>Decision dilemma and outcome</th>
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<tr>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>unquantifiable dilemma / &quot;good life&quot;, &quot;good decision&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>human values can be quantified /utility, value utility, optimum, risk, probability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>individual perception and motivation help to navigate the dilemma by resolving the emotional and sometimes existential elements that prevent the client from making a decision (McCue, 2020)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociology</td>
<td>lifestyle, social mobility, closed vs. open society issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>economic (e.g. profit/loss calculation) non-economic (e.g. attitude-based) / set of possible alternatives, taking into account that each choice has consequences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>law in the most general sense is a rule of conduct, a norm in the system of relations between state and citizen, citizen and citizen, a dispositive provision that provides a choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization and Management Science</td>
<td>supporting management decision-making within an organisational framework. Management science distinguishes between strategy/management/operational decision levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselling</td>
<td>capacity building leading to a decision process facilitation aims to increase the learning capacity of the advice seeker as a system so that they can solve their problems (Schein 1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Guidance</td>
<td>positive future (career) vision, career choice, career adaptation, career correction support decision making, the ability to change, coping with problems, and competent, independent career or life development are the goals of counselling (Kissné Viszket &amp; Mogyórosy, 2019)</td>
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data availability statement
The author confirms that the data supporting the findings of this study are available within the article.

Areas of expertise: Role and purpose of the decision (see attachment) Labour economics is interested in individuals' and firms' choices when looking for work in an imperfect market. "Economic job search theory assumes that individuals have imperfect information about jobs and wages. Finding an acceptable job takes time, and individuals must make decisions about their job search behavior." (van den Berg et al., 2014). Who adapts, and at what cost? In technical terms, where is the reservation wage of the worker/jobseeker? "The reservation wage establishes the link between unemployment and wages. The reservation wage represents the wage level at which the benefits of accepting or rejecting a job offer are equal. The higher the unemployment rate, the longer it takes to find the next job offer,"
other factors being equal." (Köllő & Kertesi, 1998). Sociological literature emphasizes the dominance of socially structured paths, while policymaking assumes of individual freedom of choice. In the 1990s, British sociologists developed a three-factor model of career choice based on Bourdieu’s model of inequalities in the British education system. These factors are a) pragmatically rational decision making, which is in the habitus of the person making the decision; b) interactions with others in the (youth training) field, which are related to the unequal resources held by the different ‘actors’; and c) the location of decisions in the partly unpredictable pattern of turning points and routines that make up the life course (Hodkinson & Sparkes, 1997). In sociological terms, therefore, career choice covers the choice between socially bound time (work) and leisure. In addition to individual preferences, the choice of learning paths leading to occupations depends mainly on the permeability of structural and institutional frameworks and the accessibility of social mobility paths. The sociological and legal worlds are also linked by Durkheim’s theory of the social division of labor (2001), where changes in the division of labor give rise to new organic solidarity. "Diffuse social functions" have come to the fore, contractual relations have spread, and with them, the law of "cooperation" is developing to the detriment of penal sanctions. The result is a new type of integration, organic solidarity." (Somlai, 2009). However, the development of individual autonomy, i.e., freedom of choice, is contradictory. The development of the world of (wage) labor is essentially associated with strengthening contractual obligations. In sociological terms, socially bound time is increasing. Therefore, From our subject’s point of view, there are no decision alternatives for the individual. The theory of law assumes that law can only fulfill its mediating function if it has socially legitimate, historically fixed decision-making patterns. Varga put it this way; “to fulfill its mediating function, it must be embodied in an objectified form, unfolding its particularities, i.e., the representation of law in written norm structures, its formulation as predetermined decision patterns, requires both equality of rights, legal certainty, predictability of the outcome of conflict resolution, and so on.” (Varga 1999, p. 93).

**Conclusion**

Counselors, like the average career counselor and career planner, cannot and should not be trained in multiple disciplines. However, it is essential to ask how much awareness we have of the professional knowledge other disciplines offer to career counseling when dealing with a counseling case or making our own career decisions. It is also clear that it is not possible, nor should it be, to keep the training and daily practice of career counselors within any of the disciplines mentioned above, thereby accumulating perceived losses in support of (career) decisions that neither the professional nor the individual involved in the career decision can later account for. For the counselor, but also the person making the career decision, it is worthwhile to understand the concept of socially bound time, the functioning of social systems that regulate its possibilities from the outside, to which Super already strongly alludes in his rainbow model, but which is made dominant by systems and constructivist theories of career counseling. It may be a worthwhile counseling exercise to think through one’s career, not only in terms of their temporal components but also in terms of the individual disciplines, to think through with the counselor.

**References**


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