

NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

# EGC 805



## Vocational Guidance Module 2

# **EGC805 Vocational Guidance Module 2**

## **Course Developer/Writer**

Dr. Rosemary Ogbodo Abo, Prof. I. O. Salawu, Prof. T. James, National Open University of Nigeria

## **Course Editor**

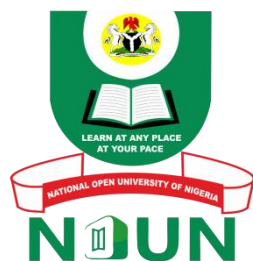
Prof. A. I. Ikeotuonye, National Open University of Nigeria

## **Programme Leader**

Prof. U.S.A. Osuji, National Open University of Nigeria

Credits of cover-photo: Henry Ude, National Open University of Nigeria

**National Open University of Nigeria** - University Village, 91 Cadastral Zone, Nnamdi Azikiwe Express Way, Jabi Abuja, Nigeria



[www.nou.edu.ng](http://www.nou.edu.ng) [centralinfo@nou.edu.ng](mailto:centralinfo@nou.edu.ng)

[oer.nou.edu.ng](http://oer.nou.edu.ng) [oerunit@nou.edu.ng](mailto:oerunit@nou.edu.ng) OER repository

Published in 2021, by the National Open University of Nigeria

© National Open University of Nigeria 2021



This publication is made available in Open Access under the [Attribution-ShareAlike4.0 \(CC-BY-SA 4.0\) license](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/). By using the content of this publication, the users accept to be bound by the terms of use of the Open Educational Resources repository [nouonline.net](http://nouonline.net) of the National Open University of Nigeria.

The designations employed and the presentation of material throughout this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of National Open University of Nigeria concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The ideas and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors; they are not necessarily those of National Open University of Nigeria and do not commit the organization.

## How to re-use and attribute this content

Under this license, any user of this textbook or the textbook contents herein must provide proper attribution as follows: “First produced by the National Open University of Nigeria” and include the NOUN Logo and the cover of the publication. The repository has a version of the course available in ODT-format for re-use.

If you use this course material as a bibliographic reference, then you should cite it as follows: “Course code: Course Title, Module Number, National Open University of Nigeria, [year of publication] at [nouonline.net](http://nouonline.net)

If you redistribute this textbook in a print format, in whole or part, then you must include the information in this section and give on every physical page the following attribution: Downloaded for free as an Open Educational Resource at [nouonline.net](http://nouonline.net) If you electronically redistribute part of this textbook, in whole or part, then you must retain in every digital file (including but not limited to EPUB, PDF, ODT and HTML) the following attribution:

Downloaded for free from the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) Open Educational Resources repository at [nouonline.net](http://nouonline.net)

## Module 2

### Unit 1 The Role of Theories in Vocational Psychology

---

#### 1.0 Introduction

Vocational theories are the pivot for successful career guidance. They serve as the pivot as well as the bedrock or key for vocational guidance. Several theories have been formulated to explain how and why individuals choose and enter different vocational or occupations. These theories have also attempted to describe and account for some of the difficulties which often arise in the process of making and implementing a vocational decision. This unit will cover the introductory part.

#### 2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the meaning of theory as related to vocational guidance
- discuss Trait and Factor theory and its implications to counseling.

#### 3.0 Main Content

##### 3.1 The Role of Theories in Vocational Psychology/Trait and Factor Theory (Parsons 1909)

Theories of vocational guidance are attempts made by occupational theory to explain the various factors which lead a person to his first choice of occupation. Vocational guidance can be better understood through career theories of development. Theories begin with the observation of events and end in bringing together diverse happenings. Theories lead to a lot of controversies and to deduce theorems which in turn can be translated into research whose predictive value partly allows the assessment of the validity of that theory. (Allport, 1955).

The purpose of a theory is diverse and explains a phenomenon. It is basically a scientific shorthand that states the relations believed to prevail among a comprehensive body of facts. Shertzer and Stone, (1976) in Ajoku and Odoemelam (1998). A vocational theory should be a rationale for what one does in the vocational process. Brammer (1973) adds that a theory includes basic assumptions of how people learn and change their behaviour or mentality toward work.

A theory should have some elements of personality such as structure, growth and motivation. In this respect, vocational theories are an embodiment of values and goals, the nature of humanity and behaviour changes. It is a conceptual framework that summarises, generalises, predicts and facilitates understanding and explanation of human behaviour in terms of vocational guidance, psychological, social, personal and educational phenomena.

In this connection, Denga (1983) says that a theory provides some guidelines, facilitates broad conceptualisation about human behaviour, clarifies events and provides a road map to guide the actions of the workers.

The road-map is directional, pointing to some details in the map. The vocational theory points and directs the counselor and teacher to goals practices, activities, strategies, techniques, methods or procedures of vocational guidance to be utilised for career satisfaction. In other word, theories help in understanding of events and the universe. It articulates events and lead to further prediction about related events. It must be noted that no single vocational theory can explain all vocational behaviours, henceforth, we are be dealing with those areas that concerns us for this lecture. Meanwhile, a close examination of each of these theories would suffice to get better picture of vocational, educational, decision making process, choice and development.

### **3.2 The Trait and Factor Theory**

The trait and factor theory of vocational development identified with Parsons (1909) who is regarded as the father of vocational guidance. This theory is based on the psychology of individual differences and the requirements of various occupations. His disciples, or followers according to Nwoye (1990) Yuh (1980), Akande (1979), Tor-Anyiin (2008), Okeke (1979), Gesinde (1986), include Kitson (1925), Hall (1929), and Williamson (1965). The theory, to Parsons proposes that every human being is born with unique personal traits, like abilities, beliefs attitudes, interests and values. It is believed that people enter only into such jobs that match their traits or dispositions. On the other hand, some abandon their professions when they discover that such professions or vocations do not match their traits. The following is the parsonian three – step process of choosing a vocation as outlined by Crites (1969), in Mallum (2000) and Tor-Anyiin (2008):

1. A clear understanding of self, abilities, aptitudes, interests, ambitions, resources and personality.
2. A detailed knowledge of the requirements, conditions of success, advantages and disadvantages, compensations, opportunities and prospects in different lines of work.
3. A true reasoning of the relationship between self and job characteristics in 1 and 2 above. In other words, an individual has to compare his capabilities and dispositions with the demands of the job and then select the job he matches best.

### **3.3 Parson's Counseling Implications**

Individuals unique configuration of capabilities, potentials and weaknesses are stable in adolescence hence should be measured at this time to provide an understanding of the person to guide him/her towards selection of a vocation.

The trait and factor theory reasons that counseling is purely a cognitive process. As such, one must be mentally intelligent before he will provide such services. The theory provides only three stages for counselling. The first stage is to identify an individual's abilities, ambitions, resources, and limitations, through tests: The second stage is identifying and understanding the requirements and conditions of success advantages, compensations, opportunities and prospects in different lines of works to match them within the work type. The third stage is fixing of an individual to an occupation. To do this very well, tests, preferably psychological tests be conducted to understand the individual and match him/her.

Since school subjects are also based on abilities and interests, vocational guidance can help students match their intellectual ability with their areas of interest to enable them make proper choices. Thus, vocational guidance is not only for applicants but also for students. If

guided well in subject combination, no difficulty will be experienced after graduation. Counseling was viewed as simply information dissemination rather than a decipher of such information (Tor-Anyiin 2008).

### **Self-Assessment Exercise**

1. Discuss parson's trait and factor theory.
2. Describe the three steps to match its vocational guidance.

## **4.0 Conclusion**

In this unit, it is shown that an understanding of vocational theories with the introduction will give the counselor the knowledge of the studies of others. They provide a rationale for counselor's action that goes beyond personal experience and trial-and-error.

## **5.0 Summary**

In this unit, you learnt that vocational theories are the pivot for successful career guidance. They serve as the pivot as well as the bedrock or key for vocational guidance. Several theories have been formulated to explain how and why individuals choose and enter different vocational or occupations. These theories have also attempted to describe and account for some of the difficulties which often arise in the process of making and implementing a vocational decision. This unit will cover the introductory part.

## **6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise**

1. What is theory?
2. Discuss why vocational theories are important in this course.
3. Explain the trait and factor theory.
4. What are the implications of parson's theory of vocational choice for the counselor?

## **7.0 References/Further Reading**

Allport, G. N. (1955). *Personality, Psychological Interpretation*. New York: Holt.

Ajoku, M. U. & Odaemela, Rev. sr. (1992). *The School Teachers and The Guidance of the Child*.

Crites, J. O. (1969). *Vocational Psychology, Study of Vocational Behaviour and Development*. New York: MacGraw Hill.

Denga, D. I. (1986). *Counseling in School and Non-School Setting*. Calabar: Centour Press.

Gersinde, S. A. (1986). "Vocational Theories Applied to the Nigerian

Cultural Background". In Ipaye, T. (Ed). *Educational and Vocational Guidance Concepts and Approaches*. University of Ife Press.

Shertzer, B. & Stone, S. C. (1976). *Fundamentals of Guidance*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.

Tor-Anyiin, S. A. (2008). *Handbook on Vocational Guidance for School Counsellors*. Makurdi: Selfers Academic Press Ltd.

## Unit 2 Limitation of Parson's Trait and Factor Theory

---

### 1.0 Introduction

In this unit, you will learn about the limitations of Parson's trait and factor theory, its contribution and its applicability to Nigeria setting.

### 2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the limitations of the Parson's trait and factor theory in vocational guidance
- discuss the contributions made through Parsons trait and factor theory in Nigeria.

### 3.0 Main Content

#### 3.1 Limitations of Parson's Trait and Factor Theory

Parson regarded vocational guidance as a single event which is done once rather than a process with the belief that once an individual is guided to choose and enter a vocation, the function of vocation guidance terminates.

The theory placed much emphasis upon individual analysis before selection of an occupation. It wrongly assumes that an individual is not operating in a given socio-economic and dynamic environment, which must have influence on the decision of an individual. The theory over rules the fact that factors for vocational satisfaction and success are not negotiable. This shows that the working life of the individual, his success and motivation towards higher productivity were underrated.

The theory ignored the fact that the world of work was unceasingly changing, and so according to Super, (1957) makes the identification of traits and factors which differentiate them parson equally did not take cognisance of the inherent physical changes of man and consequently his changing needs due to experience, knowledge explosion well as influence of science and technology.

#### 3.2 Contributions of Parson's Trait and Factor Theory to Vocational Guidance

Parsons' theory of matching model ignited more thoughts about vocational Guidance. The theory paid attention to a virgin area of human interest, and led to the construction of instruments starting from the strong vocational interest Blank (SCIB), the Differential Aptitude Tests (DAT), the Kuder preference record (KPR) and Gulford Ziommerman Aptitude survey among others.

The theory has really advocated for the use of psychological techniques for diagnosing the individual characteristics. Thus, Parsons' theory has encouraged psychological test development to facilitate objective analysis of persons. Without the theory psychological testing would likely not have been developed to the level it is now.



Furthermore, vocational guidance was seen by parson as one-step operation that occurred before employment. Conclusively, one can say that the trait and factor theory has contributed greatly to the organisation and development of vocational guidance or vocational psychology. It has therefore paved way for further research activities.

The cognitive aspect of the matching model introduced counseling psychology to the field of vocations which was seen as purely socio-political or socio-economic decision.

Hence, the theory is also serving as a theoretical base for vocational guidance and has ignited many more theories on vocational guidance. It is the oldest and perhaps the most durable of the many theoretical approaches available for vocational Guidance.

### **3.3 The Applicability of the Theory in Nigeria**

The trait and factor theory is applicable in Nigeria because:

1. Nigerians are also born who personal traits that can be matched with occupations;
2. Nigerians can produce adequate human resources to do any job;
3. Nigerians can provide the necessary materials; and
4. Information about vocations can be obtained and used in Nigerian schools.

The difficulty in the applicability of the theory is that the number of counselors is very inadequate to handle the function as of now.

There is yet no data bank for vocational information. Nigeria government through the ministries of education, information, Labour manpower and development, chambers of commerce and other Labour related agencies are yet to produce a comprehensive data on vocations in Nigeria.

Another problem in the applicability of the trait and factor theory in Nigeria is the absence of cultural free psychological tests dealing with vocations.

The increasing rate of corruption in Nigeria affects vocational choice as such it seems a wasted effort for career counselors to do anything contrary as of now.

The experimental number of 1000 persons used to form the basis of the theory is highly inadequate to attempt to apply it in a large country like Nigeria, where secondary schools only are over two thousand times more than the experimental number.

The emphasis of the trait factor was simply employment. However, employment without productivity does not help national development; rather self-actualisation of the citizens is the hallmark of national development. Kolo (1999) also observed thus:

Although a perfect matching does not mean eventual satisfaction and productivity, there is also supportive empirical finding that a large amount of differences between ones personality type and the working environment can lead to career frustration, maladjustment and low productivity (P.72).

The dominance of agriculture in Nigeria reduces the chances of the applicability of the trait and factor theory; as agriculture is generally psychomotor oriented. Since the trait and factor did not emphasis vocational success and satisfaction which is the preoccupation of the worker, it is no longer relevant in the Nigeria world of work in this 21<sup>st</sup> Century Nigeria.

### **Self-Assessment Exercise**

1. Discuss the limitation of Parsons' theory in vocational guidance.
2. Explain the parsons' contributions to Nigeria vocational system.

## **4.0 Conclusion**

Conclusively, the research is ongoing, but the Parsons' trait and factor theory is a milestone in the origin and development of vocational guidance. It's limitations as well as other socio-economic conditions in Nigeria call to question its applicability. In fact, times have greatly changed over 100 years of the theory and so unless new changes are built into it, its applicability not only in Nigeria but elsewhere is doubtful.

## **5.0 Summary**

This unit covered the theory's limitations, its contributions towards vocational guidance in Nigeria and its applicability in Nigeria and elsewhere.

## **6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise**

1. Discuss the limitations of Parsons' trait and factor theory in vocational guidance.
2. What are the contributions made by this theory?
3. What benefits would a counselor derive from this Parsons' trait and factor theory, illustrate your answer with examples?

## **7.0 References/Further Reading**

Parsons, F. (1909). *Choosing A Vocation*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin.

Super, D. E. (1957). *The Psychology of Careers*. New York: Hamper and Roe Publishers.

Tor-Anyiin, S. A. (2008). *Handbook on Vocational Guidance for School Counsellors*. Markudi: Selfers Academic Press Ltd.

## Unit 3 Trait and Factor Theory of Career Development by Ginzberg, Ginsburg, Axelrad and Herman

---

### 1.0 Introduction

Vocational guidance or career development or choice is the concern of everybody who is interested in the survival of the world of work as well as humanity. This is because there is no place for a lazy person and work and humanity will cease to exist if nobody chooses work to contribute his/her quota. It was the realisation of this that Ginzberg (an economist), Ginsburg (a psychiatrist), Axelrad (a sociologist) and Herman (a psychologist) pulled their respective experiences to produce the vocational theory which criticises the single factor consideration for career choice or development presented by impulsive and the accident theories.

### 2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:-

- explain the fantasy, tentative and realistic periods of Ginsberg and his associates
- state how to use vocational information in counselling students who has no vocational preferences, or whose choice is unrealistic
- relate the background of Ginzberg and his Associates.

### 3.0 Main Content

#### 3.1 Trait factor theory of Ginzberg and his Associates

Multifactor theory has four basic principles united together in a knot of compromise and irreversibility. The principles are that:

Vocational choice is a decision making process that starts from pre-puberty up to adulthood. Thus, an individual enjoys more vocational satisfaction from early career choice. If these are not adequate for the individual the likelihood of a new choice is increased. Environment which determines education and other preparatory and exploratory decisions could make the decision irreversible.

This is however dependent on the nature of the job. Again with increased knowledge new opportunities for training are possible even where they had not existed; so irreversibility has, according to Osipow (1981) turned down and is now viewed in terms of the expenditure of time and reserves.

All human beings want to excel in their careers and so compromise and choose occupations that are in agreement with their interests, capabilities and values. In their revised position however, according to Osipow (1981) the concept of compromise has been changed to one

of optimisation, which is the continuing search on the part of the individual for the best fit between the preferred career avenues and availability.

That vocational choice is a process. Considering the above, therefore, Ginzberg and associates regarded their theory as developmental corresponding with human developmental stages. Consequently, the major concepts of the theory and the associated periods are:

- a. Fantasy 4-12years
- b. Tentative 12-18years
- c. Realistic 19-22years

#### **a. The Fantasy Period: 4-12years**

The fantasy period according to the theory is for those age 4-12 years. This period not only corresponds with psychoanalytic latency period but also most importantly corresponds with the Nigeria pre-primary and primary education for 1-5years and 6-11 years respectively. Osipow (1981, p.193) observed that “fantasy period is the arbitrary translation of children’s choices and their lack of reality orientation reflected in the occupational preferences experienced during the period”.

The fantasy period is the period of wishes. The children imitate models and wish to be that, which the model or significant one is. No reason is attached to the wish other than that they fancy the role being played and wish for the day the role will be theirs. Fantasy therefore is not based on any rational thinking or assessment. The fantasy period therefore is the first stage of vocational choice in which children start to experience about the world of work through their role playing and discussions in functional pleasure motive, which “refers to the observation that every young child delight in activities for the sole sake of the characteristics intrinsic in the activities”, (Osipow 1981, p.195). This is fantasy because, any activity they observe an adult perform they admire and wish it to be their role.

At this fantasy period, children are in an imaginary world of works, being frustrated by their maturity level which demonstrates their lack of understanding of reality which also ignores their abilities and potentials. Osipow however observed that as the children grow and become more socialised, they seek out activities that possess potentials for extrinsic rewards such as parental approval, success regards, money (with which to buy toys), and so on. The fantasy period is guided by intrinsic value intellectual development of the child.

#### **b. The Tentative Choice Period 12-18 years**

This period corresponds with Nigerian secondary school life JSS1-SSIII with various tasks. As the name connotes, this is the period that knowledge, age, maturity and intellectual development permits some reasoning about vocational choice. At this stage, adequate awareness of the world of work could be appreciated depending on the levels of performance ability in a given activity or educational attainment, which is moving with chronological and mental age, as well as physical ability. As adolescents, children begin to discover their dislikes and abilities which are geared regards identified career choices. This tentative stage has four sub stages.

- i. *The interest stage 11-12 years. This period corresponds with JSS 1 in Nigeria educational system. Having left the primary school at the age of 6-11 years to the secondary school, at the age of 11-17 years plus; the child starts to appreciate his/her likes and dislikes. Predisposition to some activities or occasions is clearly identified. As he/she begins to*

associate and improve reasoning ability or advance reasons for the likes or hatred of some activities, at the same time, attitude and values are being cultivated towards a career direction. According to Osipow (1983) choices are considered in terms of the potentials they hold for the intrinsic enjoyment with strong ambivalence, identification with a significant other. They are however, able to wait, watch and research with high emotion and physical capability.

- ii. The capacity sub-stage 13-14 years: this is the stage to demonstrate the ability or process in given activity or function. In Nigeria, the children with the Universal Basic Education (UBE) are expected to be in the JSS 1-3. They have started to identify functions, activities or responsibilities they can perform well. Uba (1990, p.100) considered it as the period in which individuals “find out that they can perform some activities more ably than other activities and perhaps excel in some of these as compared with others of the same age group”. Knowing his/her ability as compared with others endears him or her. Knowing his/her level of capability influences decision of what to do or not do. This could be in both physical maturity like in games or mental as per subject to choice or skills to focus on. Models are no longer the immediate family but others including peers. With present existence of information technology models could also be picked from the mass media, internet, television, history texts, novels, physical contacts among others.
- iii. The value stage 15-16 years: This is the period a youth understands the implications of his/her actions. At this stage an individual will get by an activity both intrinsically and extrinsically. The major question is, who benefits most from this, others or me? While in a group he/she exhibits cooperative nature or humanitarian pre-dispositions. Individuals now identify the various life styles of the various occupations. Accordingly Osipow (1981, p.196) observed, “it is during this stage that the individual begins to face the necessity of rational future and furthermore to assume the responsibility for the course...”. More information for careers are sought and social and economic environment of jobs are identified as the individual can be identified with certain values. These values include; honesty, freedom of expression, patriotism, spiritual value and prudence. The society or the psychological environment determines the child’s value orientation. This explains why the role of counselors is relevant to help in value clarification.
- iv. The transition period 17-18 years (post-secondary education period): This is a period: This is a period the adolescent decides to move ahead regardless of other people opinions. At this period, the individuals are to decide whether to proceed to higher education or pass out and join the world of work. This is usually the climax of the identification of their mental and physical capabilities as well as philosophical idea of life (values).

Accordingly Osipow (1983, p.85) observed that “as their time perspectives broaden, they become more sensitive to the imminence of vocational commitment”. They now start to plan their own careers trying to be independent of parental control. It is worthy of note that this period affects the females most. They are faced with academic vocational as well as marital issues. While boys may be heavily discussing vocational issues, the girls will be discussing marriage. For the girls, marriage affects their academic pursuit in most cases. At this stage, their value orientation takes more shape and energizes them to determine where to fit in with their value orientation.

- v. The realistic period 19-22 years: As the name suggests this is the period of choice. School, at least secondary, has been completed; skills, values and interests have been properly identified. This period is when a decision is actually taken of where to belong in the world of work.

According to Uba (1990) at this stage an individual's occupational reality process is dependent on four ingredients which are:

- the reality testing;
- the development of suitable time perspective;
- the ability to defer gratification; and
- the ability to accept and implement compromise of their vocational plans.

Uba (1990) is of the view that should these ingredients fail to develop properly, a deviant vocation is likely to emerge or vocation maladjustment will result. For instance, boys or girls that marry are likely to become parents at tender ages and so lofty ideals about vocational choice are abandoned.

This realistic stage of vocational development has three stages, exploration, crystallisation and specification:

**Exploration stage:** This is the stage to, explore, survey, evaluate and acquaint oneself with the environment or situation. At this stage "an individual is trying to acquire the needed experience for resolving his occupational choice". (Mmaduakonam and Nwankwo, 1999, p.165). In fact, having entered the job, and faced with some challenges, an individual is actually in a fix as to either stay on or disengage to another job. This is therefore, a stage of indecision which according to Uba (1990) is partly because the reality of the situation does not yet require a specific decision to be made probably from two or three competing vocation. The exploration stage is the stage which interests, values and abilities are converging to enable proper selection of a vocation based on the circumstance. Care is highly needed to avoid frustration in the latter days in the vocation.

**The crystallisation stage:** Crystallisation connotes clear vision or position, after due assessment. Crystallisation stage in vocational process implies settlement on the best from the available chances after due elimination process, knowing those to strive for and those outside the scheme. The eliminations are done through evolution of reliable information, requirements and prerequisites of the vocations in line with the personality attributes.

The theory mentions pseudo crystallisation where clients think and act as if they have crystallised their decision but later events indicate otherwise, (Uba, 1990). It is worthy to note in line with Uba that crystallisation in vocational process is subject to some amendments due to new information, experiences and of course reappraisal of earlier experiences or situations. All the same, crystallisation is the critical assessment of the unfolding factors necessitating cementing position in the vocation choice. Individuals however vary in their progress towards this period due to biological, social and psychological factors.

**The specification stage:** within a vocation, various areas of specification abound. The specification stage is the apex position of the vocation selection process and it implies adjusting oneself in a particular area to master and grow within it. Mmaduakonam and Nwankwo (1999) regarded this stage as a period when the persons' available alternatives are weighted and reviewed with respect to a field of specification and particular career

objective. This stage is the final position in the process of vocation development of the realistic stage. Many, according to Osipow (1983), never make this stage probably because of poor educational pursuit or lack of adequate environmental supporting factors. This stage however is one's highest level in the job or occupation chosen which makes it impossible to go and start somewhere else, hence the irreversibility concept, Tor-Anyiin (2008).

## 4.0 Conclusion

This theory is so described because it agreed that vocational choice is gained through developing patterns of activities that are largely irreversible and take place throughout all the formative years of an individual. The Ginzberg and Associates collaborated to produce a rationale that during the realistic stage, the counselor should guide the clients through test and information to work out the best compromise between what he or she wants and the opportunities which are available to him or her. Ginzberg believes that changes in business activities resulting in unemployment affect vocational or occupational choices therefore, the information of the client should include business or organisations where changes do not occur regularly.

## 5.0 Summary

This unit covered the background of Ginzberg and his associates, the major concepts which are the three stages of the process have been entitled. Fantasy (childhood) Tentative (Early Adolescence), Realistic (middle Adolescence) stages with full explanation linking to our present (Nigeria) system of education, that each person has specific vocational tasks to be accomplished, which is based on the professional background of the theorists hence they recognise that person variations in the patterns will occur due to biological, psychological and environmental factors resources such as:

- The reality factor which causes a person to respond to the pressure of his or her environment in making decisions with vocational impact.
- Educational influence which is the amount and kind of education a person has had that limits or facilitates the flexibility and type of vocational choice he or she makes.
- Emotional factors in the person's responses to his environment are important since it seems on inductive basis that personality and emotional factors should have vocational concomitants.
- Persons values are deemed to be important in vocational choice they should influence the quality of the choices made by viruses of the differing values in various careers for accomplishment of the task.

### Self-Assessment Exercise

Comment on the fantasy, tentative and realistic periods constitute the basis of Ginzberg and his associates theory of trait factor career development.

## 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment

What are the views of Ginzberg and his associates on the theory of vocational guidance?

1. State and describe the stages involved in vocational development of Ginzberg and his associates.
2. Write out how you would use vocational or career information in counseling a Nigerian adolescent who has no vocational preferences, who has a tentative choice or whose choice is unrealistic?

## 7.0 References/Further Reading

Ginzberg, E. G. Ginsburg, S. W. Axelrad, & S. Harman, J. L. (1951). *Occupational choice. An Approach to a General Theory*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Ginzberg, E. Ginsburg, S. W. Axelrad, S. O. & Herman, J. L. (1951). *Occupational Choice*. New York: Columbia University press.

Mmaduakona, A. D. & Nwanku C. N. A. (1999). *Guidance and Counseling. A New Perspective*. Onitsha: West and Solomon Publishers.

Osipow, G. H. (1983). *Theories of Career Development*. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc.

Tor-Anyiin, S. A. (2008). *Hand Book on Vocational Guidance for School Counselors*. Makurdi: Selfers Academic Press Ltd.

Uba, A. (1990). "Ginberg and Associates Theory of Career Development". In. Ikeotunoye, A. I, Olufuegba, B. & Gambari F. A. (Eds). *Career Guidance and Vocational. Approach for Schools*. Zaria: Hudahuda pub. Coy.



## Unit 4 Limitation of Ginzberg and His Associates

---

### 1.0 Introduction

This unit explains the limitation of Ginzbergs' and his associates' theory, the strength of the theory, implications and its applicability will be highlighted because vocational or career development is viewed as a process that encompasses the total life span and includes all of an individual's roles and positions. That means that career choice is irreversible to them.

### 2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the limitations and implications of Ginzbergs' theory of vocational choice.
- explain the strengths and applicability of Ginzbergs' theory to Nigeria education
- apply Ginzbergs' theory for your students' benefits in vocational guidance and career choice.

### 3.0 Main Content

#### 3.1 Limitation of Ginzberg & His Associates

Limitations of the trait and factor theory of career development of Ginzberg and his Associates. The theory good as it sounds has some limitations. Super (1954) identified its limitations as including:

- i. inability to build adequately on previous works even though the study, according to Osipow (1981) is more likely to have served to conform and refine some theoretical expectations than to have shaped them in the first place;
- ii. inability to differentiate between concept of vocational awareness and aspirations, preference and entry or choice;
- iii. creation of false distinction between choice and adjustment; and
- iv. the compromised process between interests, capabilities, values and opportunities not identified.

To Osipow (1981) the shortcoming of the theory is the complete absence of test data when the concern of the authors was the role of personal and emotional factors in career choice. The absence of a test to conform finding vitiates their position.

It is also necessary to add that while the theory emphasises the crystallisation, it failed to explain the difference between it and revised pseudo crystallisation. Under the specification stage, the theory also mentions pseudo specification but did not distinguish the pseudo-event from the real one. It has also not laid down any counseling procedures or techniques; neither does it state counseling goals.

The number of 64 students interviewed, to give birth to the theory seem to be too small. The spread of the strata is equally inadequate. Consequently, to Uba (1990, p.99) "the total sample used in the study was quite small and cannot be considered representative of the general population". He also stated that it seems unlikely that a comprehensive theory could

have developed from the inadequate data base they reported, more so as “no statistical data was reported” (Osipow 1981, p.202).

Ginzberg's group according to Uba (1990) has a theory which is difficult to implement in research terms because of the diffuseness of the concepts employed, compromise, irreversibility, optimisation and emotional factors. The theory therefore suffers from some local difficulties by introducing pseudo concepts which can easily serve as explanatory loopholes if events do not occur as predicted. The position of a psychiatrist in the team is likely to have influenced the emotional factor in vocational decision. Though it is very difficult to pin this down; there seems to be a tie between emotional stability and vocational deviancy, whether of a casual or correlate nature is not clear. Research is therefore, waited.

The theory identified two basic personality types, with respect to work. These are the work oriented type and the pleasure oriented. The former has the ability to defer gratification and to be relatively impervious to deflections from work or occupational goals, whereas, the pleasure oriented person is usually unable or very slow to defer gratifications for work and is easily distracted from a vocational course by alternatives that seem reasonable. The work oriented actively attack their probes while the pleasure seeking are passive problem solvers. The identification of these is not easy as no test was constructed to identify them.

The clear demarcation of the stages with definite years is not the most brilliant idea as many factors, ill health or accident could affect such early decisions. All these could be termed reality factors, which exert an increasing influence on the vocational preference. Tor-Anyia (2008).

### 3.2 Strengths of the Theory

The above limitations notwithstanding, the theory has some strength which includes:

- i. Considering the fact that Ginzberg and associates are not counselors but have put in a theory of vocational guidance to stand the test of time shows how visionary they were;
- ii. The compromise of interest, abilities and opportunities emphasised by the theory is reminiscent of the matching model and is relevant;
- iii. Its emphasis and dependence on the general concept and principles of developmental psychology has taken to earth their position;
- iv. The multifactor approach has truly vitiated the strong points of the impulse and accident or chance theories and provided a better explanation of occupational behaviour;
- v. The comprehensive nature and good relationship with biological, social, educational and psychological development of human development. In agreement, Uba (1990, p.108) holds that “the process of normal vocational development and awareness of the different is clearly evident in the theory and to a lesser extent; patterns of deviant vocation behaviours are also described”.
- vi. The theory can equally serve as a very good theoretical framework in vocational psychology or study of career development; that the theory can now be used as theoretical frame work explains its relevance in vocational guidance.
- vii. The development approach of vocational decision implies that career guidance is for life. Peterson and Niscuholz (1992) applauded the theory thus: Career counseling in view of the developmental life span concepts is not just an approach to use with high and college students to help them find the most appropriate career only, it is an activity that must be pursued through-out life time.

### 3.3 Counseling Implications

Ginzberg (1952) helped to identify vocational counseling implications which include:

1. That vocational choice has chronological and mental age implications. In view of the maturation influence, counselors should regard their role as starting from the earliest educational level. Thus Uba, (1990) is of the view that counselors who accept this theory of vocational choice might help people to reach wise decisions earlier in life if they could increase the accuracy and the adequacy the occupational information at their disposal during the vocational stages from fantasy.
2. In view of the stages, the theory suggests that counselors must be abreast of normative information about the vocational process to know where a student is not in his/her normal pattern of maturation. Counselors need to be able to identify needs during vocational process and address them through special or extract attention.
3. Counsellors must be able to identify their individual student's interests, values, abilities and attitudes, which are to influence choice and possible vocational adjustment. The identification of these personality attributes implies that counselors must be conversant with relevant psychological tests.
4. The role of counseling is to facilitate the individual's growth in four basic features of vocational growth, (the reality testing, adequate time perspective, the deferment of gratification and the ability to compromise), (Uba 1990). This suggests construction of indigenous test to identify our children's values, interest and capabilities, in line with our cultural milieu.
5. Counsellors need careful efforts in selecting and realising appropriate information to avoid wrong choice of vocation due to inadequate and inappropriate information.
6. Counsellors have a role to help individuals identify their development tasks. This implies use of all available sources to obtain and release to the students the necessary vocation information.
7. Since environment plays a significant role in vocational choice, adult models must be exemplary. Parents must also be involved in career counseling. Counselors are therefore to see career choice as a complimentary function between counselors, clients and their significant others.

### 3.4 Applicability of the Theory in Nigeria

Consequent upon the introduction of the Universal Basic Education in Nigeria, the applicability of the theory cannot be overemphasized, this is because, the theory's developmental stages of fantasy, tentative and realistic stages of the vocational development process, are in line with educational ladder of Nigeria. This implies therefore that counselors must be available at every stage of educational ladder to provide adequate information and guidance.

Research findings equally indicate the applicability of their theory. For instance, Okonkwo (1979) had found that age significantly differentiated to career preferences of his subjects, 13-15 years were interested in medicine more than those 16-18 years. The developmental value aspect seems to come into play. Gesinde (1976) also discovered that students at lower levels of secondary education were more attracted by the glamour and prestige of some careers than senior secondary schools. Age and experience seem to play a role.

This theory can also be applied if Nigerian counselors are constructing and developing appropriate psychological tests to enable them identify problems at the various developmental stages and develop preventive measures, (Mmadukonan and Nwankwo 1999).

Since the theory emphasizes the role of personality traits, its applicability implies that Nigerian vocational counsellors must have adequate information about vocations to be able to provide to the client at their appropriate educational levels. Career interests, abilities and value inventories and test batteries must be well understood.

The emphasis on individual counseling implies that Nigerian counselors must understand the personality development theories to equip them with reliable data to identify at the earliest level the students “short comings in terms of subjects, sociability and psychomotor areas”, (Mmadukonan and Nwankwo 1999, p.167). Thus, the application of the theory in Nigeria implies the use of available sources to identify the various needs of the individuals, only then will appropriate guidance be provided towards enhancing self-actualisation, the hallmark of guidance.

The success of the theory in Nigeria equally implies obtaining, storing and retrieving of appropriate information on clients about vocations at the different educational levels. Ministries of education, Labour and other relevant agencies must live to expectation by having available data on vocations to help career counselors.

## 4.0 Conclusion

The Trait and factor Theory of career Development coming from combined effort of various professionals about career development has served as a very important comprehensive theory about vocational career development. It has seen vocational development as a process being contingent on the individual's psychological, social, mental, maturity and personality traits. The theory provides a good theoretical frame work for vocational guidance Tor-Anyiin, (2008). The theory also stands on a very good foundation for application in Nigeria educational system. Then, counselors have an important task to do and must help each student to acquire a clear understanding of the career or vocational choice that is available to him/her.

## 5.0 Summary

This unit covered the limitation of Ginzberg and his associates, the strengths of the theory, its implications and its applicability to Nigeria system of education. A comprehensive developmental vocational guidance programme to help each student to explore him or herself in detail in order to understand his/her personality.

### Self-Assessment Exercise

1. What are the limitations of Ginzberg's theory of vocational choice?
2. Discuss the strengths of the theory.

## 6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. Discuss the implications of Ginzberg's theory of vocational choice for the school counselor
2. Explain how this Ginzberg's theory is applicable to Nigeria

3. List five strengths of Ginzberg and his associates' theory
4. What steps should the counselor take to ensure that individual student will benefit from the theory?

## 7.0 References/Further Reading

Gesinde, S. A. (1978). *A Study of the Most Liked and Disliked Things about Teaching as a Career*. *Careers* Vol. 4, No 1 & 2.

Ginzerg, E. (197). *Career Guidance: Who Needs It, Who Provides It, Who Can Improve It*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co.

Mmaduakona, A. D. & Nwankwo, C. N. A. (1999). *Guidance and Counselling. A New Perspective*. Onitsha: West and Solomon Publishers.

Okonkwo, B. (1980). *Some Determinants of Vocational Preference Among Nigerian Secondary School Students*. Unpublished Work. University of Ibadan.

Osipow, G. H. (1983). *Theories of Career Development*. (3<sup>rd</sup>ed). New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc.

Tor – Anyiin, S. A. (2008). *Hand Book on Vocational Guidance for School Counselors*. Makurdi: Seflers Academic Press Ltd.

Uba, A. (1990). "Theory of Career Development". In A. I. Ikeotunoye, & Olufuegba, B. *Vocational Approach for Schools*. Zaria: Hudahuda Pub. Coy.