

---

## Lecture 2 and 3

# Classical Theories of Career Psychology

---

### Intended Learning Outcome

At the end of this module, it is expected that the participant will:

1. Describe the key concepts of the Trait-Factor Approach and critically appraise its contributions to career guidance.
2. Describe and critically appraise the key concepts of the Holland's Typological Theory and critically appraise its cross cultural reliability and validity.
3. Describe and critically appraise the key concepts of the Developmental and Life Span Oriented Approaches.
4. Explain the stages of career development as described Donald Super.
5. Explain Super's Life Span and Life Space Approach.
6. Explain Linda Gottfredson's model of Circumscription and Compromise.
7. Describe the key concepts of Social Cognitive Theory and critically appraise its contributions to career guidance.
8. Provide an overview of Cultural Theories of Career Guidance.
9. Describe the key constructs that differentiate work and career in the Indian context from Western concepts.

### 2.1. Career Psychology

Many definitions of mental health have been attempted. But when they go beyond the portrait of a happy person, they end in a tangle of words. As simple and sensible a concept as any is that proposed by Sigmund Freud when he describes a mentally healthy person as someone who is free to love and work (Freud, 1901). The concept of work is as old as the history of mankind. When humans first appeared upon the face of the earth, work perhaps centred around the search for food, clothing and shelter. It has grown from being merely linked to survival needs to something far more complex. Today work carries connotations related to gender, socio-economic status, prestige and self-actualisation. In contemporary life, it is difficult to think of any element of the social context which does not have implications for or is unconnected from, working life and careers (Killeen & Kidd, 1991).

The study of the individual as a 'worker' has moved into the purview of psychology only recently and Career Psychology has been an area of vigorous psychological investigation. Significant advances have been made in the area of theory generation and to some extent theory has translated into practice. Increasingly, research and methods dealing with career counselling are in the mainstream of applied psychology. Whereas at one time career counselling seemed to be an activity almost exclusively in the province of counselling psychologists, today, applied psychologists in clinical, industrial, organisational and social setting find career development issues of interest. Despite these accomplishments, however, there is a growing recognition of the fact that various discontinuities are present within this body of knowledge. Theories of vocational psychology and career development are almost exclusively oriented toward the white middle class, in developed economies. The relevance of existing theory to such populations has not been adequately investigated. These

considerations become all the more important in the context of developing economies.

It seems Freud was once asked what he thought a normal person ought to be able to do. He responded, "Lieben und arbeiten", which translates into English as "To love and to work".

Theoretical traditions within Career Psychology could be broadly classified into three schools of thought, namely the trait-factor approach, the developmental school and the social learning / social

cognitive position (Hackett & Lent, 1991). The following sections provide a brief overview of these theories.

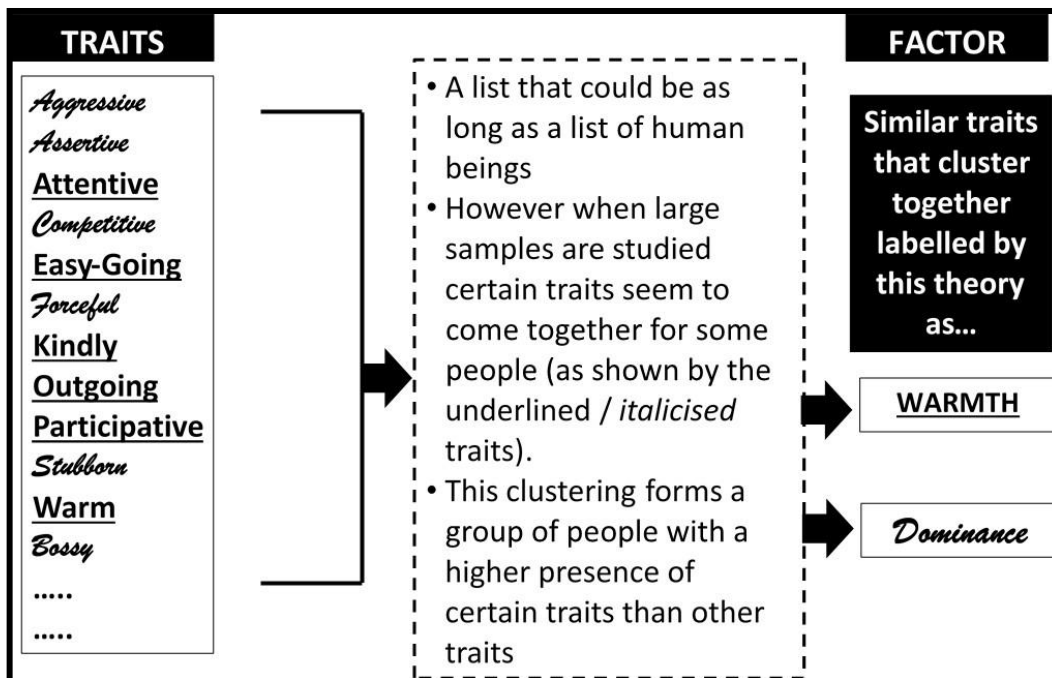
## 2.2. The Trait-Factor Approach

### 2.2.1. Key Concepts

In psychological terms, a trait is any characteristic that accounts for *regularities* and *consistencies* in a person's behaviour. In other words, trait is a theoretical construct that describes an underlying constituent of the individual's personality, which explains the consistent and cohesive manner in which a person behaves. Figure 1A further explains the manifestation and clustering of traits into factors.

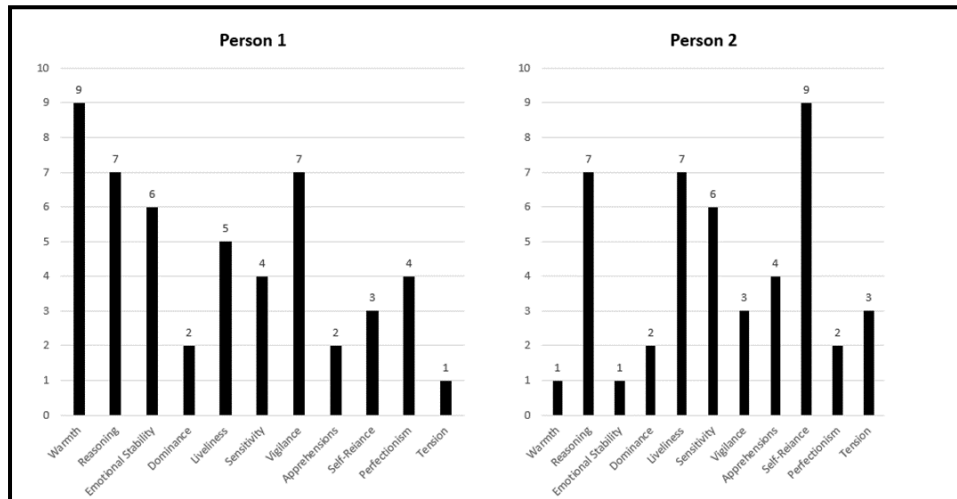
**Figure 1: Trait and Factor:  
Example from Cattell's 16 Personality Factor Theory**

**Figure 1 A: Trait and Factor**



As shown by Figure 1B, if this theory of personality were used to assess two people *individual differences* would be seen between them across the various factors being assessed.

**Figure 1 B: Comparison between two persons**



A characteristic is said to be a trait if it is *enduring and stable* across time and situations. Let us assume for example that Mary's personality is characterised by "Warmth". According to the Trait-Factor approach it is likely that Mary will consistently exhibit the traits that cluster around warmth (e.g., attentive, easy going, kindly) in almost all interpersonal situations that she encounters. On the other hand, let us assume that Paul's personality is characterised by "Dominance" According to the Trait-Factor approach it is likely that Paul will consistently exhibit the traits that cluster around Dominance (e.g., aggressive, forceful, bossy).

The Trait-Factor theory was perhaps the earliest approach to career development and emerged in response to the need for accurately matching people to specific occupations.

This theory rests on a set of assumptions. Firstly, it is assumed that individuals possess a *unique combination* of traits, which can be *measured and quantified* with accuracy.

It is further assumed that the *characteristics of occupations* are such

that workers must exhibit certain specific traits for successful execution of the job roles of a particular occupation.

Based on these two assumptions the Trait-Factor approach attempts to identify and quantify the traits that characterise an individual and match this person with occupations that would draw from his or her unique profile of traits. This approach therefore describes career decision-making to be a simple process of *matching personal characteristics with job requirements*. Accordingly the closer this match the greater the likelihood of optimal productivity and personal satisfaction. In other words career success is contingent on finding the closest match between the individual's traits and the demands of a particular occupation.

*Frank Parsons* in his seminal 1909 publication *Choosing a Vocation*, outlined the Trait-Factor approach. He described career decision-making to be a rational process of problem solving, which is based on the systematic collection of information, the verification of this information and finally using this information to make a career decision. This was the approach that dominated

career counselling in the West from the early 1900s to the around the 1940s.

### 2.2.2. Impact and Relevance

Any evaluation of the Trait-Factor approach must take into consideration the historical period during which it made its appearance, the attending social conditions and the profound changes in the world of work that characterised this period in history. The Industrial Revolution had transformed earlier conceptions of occupational choice and decision-making. Hitherto unknown forms of employment were created in an environment of social change that had weakened existing mechanisms for occupational role allocation. The urgent need was for an objective method based on which workers could be identified to effectively perform particular job roles. The Trait-Factor approach seemed to be ideally suited to a career decision-making environment that was limited to identifying the individual's suitability for a specific occupation. Interventions based on this school of thought made significant and timely contributions to the career development needs of young people aspiring to enter the world of work at that time.

Almost 99 percent of our DNA is identical to our closest chromosomal cousin, the chimpanzee – just as though they were different spellings of the same expression. It is this minuscule variance that allowed the emergence of sapience and a capacity for learning that lies at the heart of the human ability to work and follow a career. Indeed, while our genetic inheritance entitles us to be homo sapiens (thinkers) also moves us toward being homo faber (thinking workers)

Career development however is a dynamic process that changes and evolves. It is in the context of contemporary career development needs that the continued

relevance of the methods of the Trait-Factor approach has come into question.

First of all, at the heart of the Trait-Factor method is the necessity of identifying the career aspirant's traits. As a result, one of the most important outcomes of this school of thought was the emergence of an enormous array of psychological tools in the form of inventories, tests, checklists and similar devices. These tools were developed with the view to identifying, measuring and quantifying a wide range of human traits. This contribution continues to play a significant role and an important aspect of career counselling will always rest on data that is gathered through psychological tests.

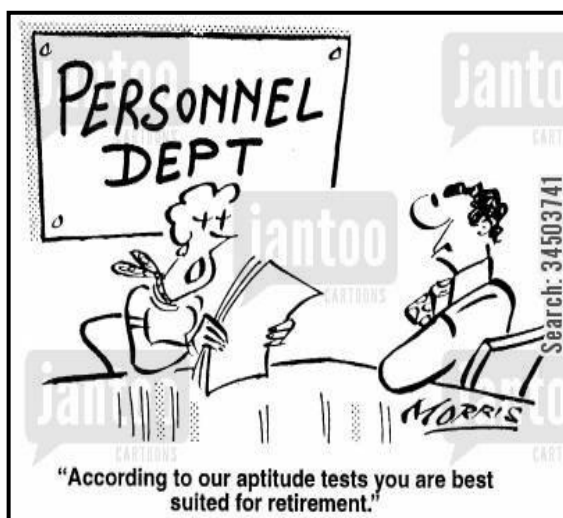
However as the knowledge base of Career Psychology grew in complexity, the Trait-Factor approach's reliance on the identification and measurement of traits came under *severe criticism*. The description of what traits are became and continues to remain a subject of controversy in the world of psychology. In the early days it was assumed that traits could be directly linked to neurological and physiological substructures. However, while some 'concrete' traits (e.g. height, weight, complexion, dexterity) could be described to be the result of biological factors a *vast number of other human characteristics are not biological in nature*.

On this background, psychological testing itself has become the subject of intense debate. The *validity and reliability* of test results have been found to be dependent on a number of factors such as cultural background, language fluency, gender and psycho-social influence. In a country like India for example, test construction presents an enormous challenge. A single interest inventory would have to be standardised in at least a dozen different languages, with accompanying norms for interpretation of the test's results. Another important assumption of the Trait-Factor approach, namely the linking of personal traits with occupational requirements has also come under question. Researchers quickly realised that a given occupation presents requirements that are too varied

to be reduced to a simple matching procedure.

It seems therefore that while methods based on the Trait-Factor approach are simple and straight forward, they do not take into consideration the operation of a variety of other influences on the career decision-making process. The process of decision-making itself could be a crisis and a struggle for the career aspirant and decision-making styles could vary significantly across individuals. An aptitude test may indicate for example that a person's strongest traits are well suited for a career that requires physical-mechanical skills. Whether that person would be happy to *actually choose* careers in this field depends upon a multitude of other factors emerging from social-cognitive and psycho-social environments. In the final analysis, while the Trait-Factor school of thought served an important function as the earliest form of vocational guidance, the complexities of contemporary career decision-making are such that its relevance may have faded.

The fact remains however that career counselling as a discipline has absorbed some of the key components of the Trait-Factor approach. Information from aptitude testing and interest analysis will remain an important pillar that supports the edifice of career counselling. To this end, the Trait-Factor approach has made a vital contribution to the foundations of Career Psychology and counselling.



### 2.3. Holland's Typological Theory: An application of the Trait Factor Approach

The theory of career choice propounded by John Holland more than 40 years ago (Holland, 1959), is perhaps the most well-known and widely studied career theory in the history of Career Psychology. This is probably because the theory has yielded objective methods for the practice of career counselling. Furthermore the theory has been constantly revised and refined in response to criticisms and empirical evidence from research findings. Holland designed his theory to be simple and practical but at the same time rooted within a firm theoretical framework.

#### 2.3.1 Key concepts

At the heart of Holland's theory are three propositions:

##### A. Proposition 1:

It is possible according to Holland to classify people into types. Type is defined as a conglomeration of traits, which can serve as a measure for categorising people into groups. In Holland's formulation, there are *six types of personality trait groupings*. These are the realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising and conventional (RIASEC).

The *realistic type* is the person who is most comfortable being involved in activities that are concrete and based on clearly defined systems and norms. Conversely the realistic type of person is not comfortable in social contexts that require interpersonal skills, expressive ability and situations that require the expression of emotional sensitivity. Engineers, machine operators and mechanics are examples of professionals who would fit into Holland's realistic type.

The *investigative type* is analytical in orientation and enjoys drawing conclusions from systematic and objective observations. Repetitive and routine

activities are likely to be avoided by this group of people. Researchers, doctors, detectives are examples of the investigative type.

The *artistic* type thrives on being expressive and original. This type tends to be unconventional and deeply sensitive to personal feelings, thoughts and ideas. Activities that are orderly and mechanical are likely to be unattractive to this group. Actors, designers, musicians, authors would demonstrate the characteristics of the artistic type.

The *social* type is strongly oriented to human interactions. These people are sensitive to human needs, nuances of emotions, thinking patterns and other aspects of human behaviour. Activities that occur in non-human situations (e.g. working with machines and tools) are likely to be avoided. Counsellors, nurses, teachers, social workers would fit into the social type.

The *enterprising* type is typically self-driven. An individual from this group would enjoy organising people, objects and resources to create systems and structures for the attainment of goals and targets. The enterprising type is likely to be uncomfortable in work situations that are repetitive and do not allow for leadership or the expression and implementation of personal ideas. Sales people, managers, politicians are said to possess the characteristics of the enterprising type.

The *conventional* type tends to find the highest level of comfort in situations that are organised and predictable. They are likely to enjoy activities that require routine and repetition. Unpredictable, disordered situations and activities that require innovation are likely to be avoided. Accountants, bankers, receptionists would fall into the category of the conventional type.

In Holland's formulation, work environments can also be classified into the RIASEC framework. This is because people belonging to a particular career

area manifest similar personality traits and therefore create an environment that is dominated by these traits. Holland therefore categorises careers and occupations according to the RIASEC model.

#### *B. Proposition 2:*

Secondly Holland indicates that in response to the preferences of the six personality types, six corresponding work environments have evolved. People tend to gather around others who possess personality traits that are similar to themselves. Therefore, work environments develop characteristics based on the dominant traits of persons who make up that environment.

#### *C. Proposition 3:*

When making career decisions, personalities and environments are involved in a reciprocal search for 'fit'. People are inclined to seek work environments that will allow them to implement their personality characteristics. People look for environments that will allow them to: express their talents, pursue their interests, express their attitudes and beliefs, play roles and deal with problems that are agreeable. Environments welcome people whose interests, attitudes and beliefs fit into the features of that environment

#### *D. Proposition 4:*

The next proposition made by Holland is that patterns of behaviour result from the interactions between personality type and environments. Knowing a person's personality and environment type will allow for the prediction of: suitable vocational choice, potential for achievement, possible depth of satisfaction and degree of fit.

### **2.3.2. Person-Environment Interaction**

Holland's theory is therefore based on the interaction between a person and his or her environment and has been called the person-environment (P-E) interaction model. According to Holland's typological

theory therefore career choice behaviour is the result of a dynamic, reciprocal interaction between personality types and work environments. People who belong to a career create an interpersonal environment, which is an extension of their personality traits. New entrants into the world of work are themselves driven by the need to find a work environment that allows them to express their own

personality traits. Career choice behaviour then is the conglomeration of activities that lead people toward work environments into which they are able to comfortably fit. Figure 2 gives some examples of how careers and personality types fit together according to Holland's RIASEC Model.

**Figure 2: Careers and Personality Types according to Holland – some examples**  
Adapted from: Holland, 1985

Personality Type	Suitable Careers
Realistic	barber, truck driver, draftsman, machine mechanic
Investigative	marine scientist, software designer, clinical psychologist, dentist
Artistic	designer, sculptor, author, actor
Social	social worker, nurse, judge, priest
Enterprising	politician, real estate agent, salesman, manager
Conventional	accountant, receptionist, banker, typist

### 2.3.3. Secondary assumptions

#### A. Calculus

Holland has arranged the six RIASEC types according to a hexagonal structure. The ordering of the six types along this hexagon follow a certain order that is based on the nature of the relationship between the six types. According to Holland, each type exhibits high levels of certain traits and lower levels of other traits. For example the conventional type

is high on the desire to conform and fit in to existing systems. The artistic type on the other hand shows a high tendency toward being non-conventional and unorthodox. The traits that characterise the conventional type and the artistic type of personalities are quite a distance away from each other. According to Holland's notion of calculus, the way traits are grouped, result in the placing of personality types close together or on opposing ends of a continuum.

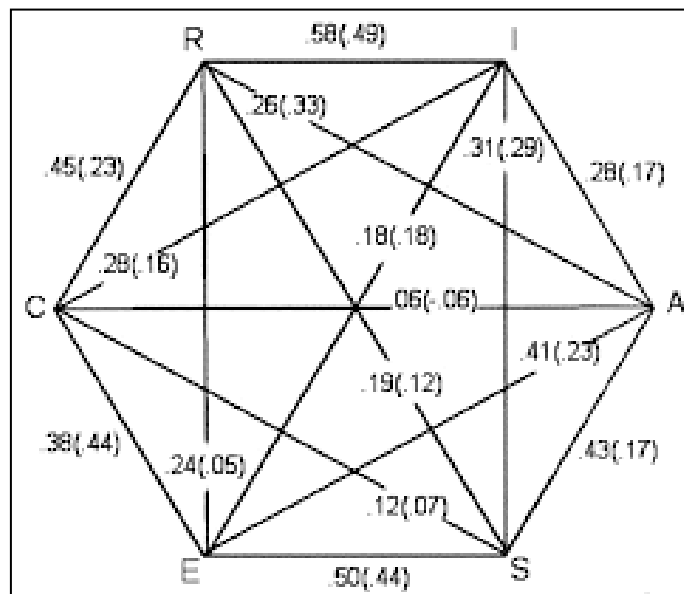
#### B. Consistency

Consistency follows from the notion of calculus. Holland proposed that there are six personality types and corresponding work environments. The relationships between these six types of personality are represented by a hexagonal figure where the types are presented in a fixed order: R, I A, S, E, C. In other words, Holland makes the assumption that certain types are *more closely interrelated* with each other. According to the RIASEC model for

example, the artistic and social types share a higher degree of commonality in their orientations than those with artistic and conventional personality traits. Consistency is the correspondence between the personality types present in an individual's three-point code (described above). Therefore a person with an ASE code is said to present a more consistent profile than someone else with an ISC code.

Figure 3 illustrates Calculus and Consistency

**Figure 3: Calculus and Consistency – The Relationships between Types**  
Adapted from: Holland, 1985



### C. Differentiation

Some people manifest traits that are a comfortable fit for a specific type proposed by the Holland model. During career counselling, 16 year old Radhika came across as a self directed person who enjoyed identifying important goals and organising people, objects and resources to attain these goals. These traits would together draw her close to the enterprising type in Holland's model. People like Radhika who clearly 'fit into' a type are said to be well differentiated. Conversely others may exhibit traits that correspond with many types. Radhika's classmate Deepak on the other hand was a person who enjoyed making observations, analysing data and being creative. However Deepak was not a person who enjoyed unconventional and unpredictable situations. Deepak would be described as being poorly differentiated because his traits parallel many types in Holland's model. In similar manner Holland's model assumes that work environments could also vary along a continuum of differentiation. Accordingly some occupations maybe clearly differentiated while others may not easily fit into a minimum number of Holland's six types. In

other words, differentiation is the indicator of the extent to which a person has clearly defined (well-differentiated) interests.

### D. Identity

Individuals vary on the extent of clarity and stability they have achieved with regard to their interests and goals. Individuals whose interests are still in fluctuation are said to be lower down in the process of identity formation. Those who are clear about their interests and career goals are said to be closer to identity achievement. Similarly environments could also vary in the extent of clarity and stability of their identities. A work environment may require the worker to perform a number of work roles. It is possible that these work roles conflict with each other. Such a work environment is said to be lower in the clarity and stability of its identity.

### E. Congruence

This is perhaps the cornerstone of the Holland model. Congruence describes the extent of agreement and conformity between the individual's personality type and environment. Take the example of Rajeshwari an 18 year old, who is of the



artistic type and currently studying to become a fashion designer. In Holland's model the congruence between Rajeshwari's personality type and work environment is likely to be high. Rajeshwari unfortunately could not complete her course in fashion design and financial reversals forced her to discontinue education and begin working. She had the opportunity of working as an assistant in a design studio, but chose instead to take up a government job as a clerk because of the greater security and higher salary. The congruence between Rajeshwari's personality type and work environment has significantly decreased. A higher degree of congruence would have been preserved had she taken up the job of a design assistant. Congruence is the degree of fit between the person and his or her work environment. Holland (1959), predicts that the failure to establish a career in an occupation that is congruent with one's three-point personality code, would result in low job satisfaction, stability and achievement.

#### **2.3.4. Methods for Career Counselling based on Holland**

One of the most attractive outcomes of Holland's typological theory of career choice is the development of concrete systems and methods for career counselling. Holland has developed and standardised a variety of tests and counselling systems that can be readily applied in a counselling interaction. Some of the most popular of these devices are the Vocational Preference Inventory (VPI), the Self Directed Search (SDS), My Vocational Situation (MVS) and the Vocational Exploration and Insight Kit (VEIK). These devices first of all help the individual identify his or her personality type. The career aspirant is assigned a three-point code which describe his or her occupational personality. Assume for example that a person's scores are highest for the Artistic (A), Social (S) and Investigative (I) categories. This person would be assigned the three-point code ASI. The career aspirant can then match personal profiles with the relevant occupations using tools such as the

Dictionary of Occupational Codes (Gottfredson, 1981) or the Position Classification Inventory (Gottfredson, 1981). Based on this method, the career aspirant can identify the primary career choice which can then be backed up with secondary and tertiary choices.

#### **2.3.5. Impact and Relevance**

Holland's model has generated an enormous amount of research and study. Information from these investigations indicates that some of Holland's propositions are empirically supportable. Evidence to support other propositions however has been mixed.

The congruence hypothesis has perhaps generated the largest amount of research and controversy. According to Holland's model, information about the congruence between personality type and work environment should enable us to predict the outcome of the individual's career development. In other words low congruence would have outcomes characterised by low job satisfaction, while high congruence would have more positive outcomes for career development. Reviews of the voluminous research into the Holland model (e.g. Spokane & Oliver, 1988) have indicated that many aspects of career development (e.g. persistence, career choice, job satisfaction) show a close correlation to Holland's assumption of congruence. Other variables (e.g. self-concept, sociability) show low and non-significant relationships to congruence. It has been found that prediction of academic achievements based on the RIASEC types is also fairly weak. The model predicts that students who are of the investigative and social types would be the highest academic achievers while the realistic and enterprising types are likely not to fare very well on purely academic tasks. Studies have found (e.g. Schneider & Overton, 1983) that it was the artistic and conventional types who earned the highest grades. It has also been found that academic performance did not vary significantly across the RIASEC types for females.

Similarly difficulties have been encountered with reference to the idea of differentiation. A question that remains poorly addressed is the validity of the assumption that a given individual will actually fit into a particular segment of the RIASEC hexagon. Those who are poorly differentiated according to the Holland model, would not find counselling inputs based on this model to be very useful. A similar question may be raised with respect to differentiation in work environments. Quite a large number of careers do not neatly fit into the RIASEC model. India for example is a developing economy and new employment opportunities are created at a high frequency. A large number of these opportunities require the individual to play multiple roles and the world of work is characterised by a high demand for workers who are capable of multitasking. This implies that employers seek workers who are able to demonstrate a combination of traits.

Another important question that has emerged is with regard to the consistency of the different career counselling techniques that rest on the Holland model. Research (Walsh et al, 1983) that compared two instruments (the Self Directed Search – SDS and the Vocational Preference Inventory – VPI), found for example that black and white women in the same occupation showed close similarity in type when assessed on the SDS. However, on the VPI black and white women in the same occupation tended to be more different from each other than similar. Results such as these raise the possibility that differences could exist between the two most commonly used instruments to measure Holland types.

A final question that has not been adequately addressed is the cross-cultural relevance of Holland's model. The model has been developed in the West and a significant portion of the research investigating its effectiveness has been on Western samples. Investigations into implementation of the counselling tools developed by Holland and his colleagues in other parts of the world present findings

that are ambiguous and it is not clear whether the model is relevant to non-Western contexts. An interesting study tested the VPI

on 172 natives of India (Leong, Austin, Sekaran, & Komarraju, 1998). The findings indicated that congruence, consistency and differentiation did not predict job or occupational satisfaction. Furthermore, the frameworks within which the Holland instruments have been developed, do not allow for an easy fit into Indian ways of thinking. Leong et al (1998) found for example, that they could not use the VPI "as is", because it included occupations that would be considered too low for some members of their sample to even consider. These researchers go on to suggest that Holland's approach could be limited by cross-cultural boundaries. If at all these interventions are to be used, they would require to be comprehensively re-standardised to suit the Indian situation.

In summary, the Holland model may be described as an extension of the Trait approach to career counselling and to a large extent the model is characterised by the advantages and limitations of the Trait Factor approach. The greatest offering made by the Holland model is its contribution to the practice of counselling. The model is not merely an exercise in theorising about career development behaviour but is driven by the importance of translating theory into practice.

**Some researchers suggest that Holland's approach could be limited by cross-cultural boundaries. If these interventions are to be used, they would require to be comprehensively re-standardised to suit the Indian situation.**

## 2.4. The Developmental and Life Span Oriented Approaches

The principles that govern human development have been central to theory development and practice in Career Psychology. Career Developmental Theorists such as Eli Ginzberg, Donald Super, Linda Gottfredson and others put forth the idea that *occupational development keeps pace with the individual's maturation*. As with other aspects of human development, career development is also described as occurring in *stages*. Each of these stages present *career developmental tasks*, the successful resolution of which is critical to the passage into and comfort in the next stage of career development (Super, 1957). Career developmental tasks are expectations of what is thought to be *typical* of a person at a given stage of development. For example, the typical career development task before the high school student in India is to choose between science, commerce, humanities and vocational streams for further education. Furthermore, career developmental tasks are what society would like to see happen at a particular stage of career development. For example, a middle class home is most likely to expect their child to have chosen to go to college after high school, while finding a job is what a large majority of lower income families would be likely to expect from their children on completing high school.

### 2.4.1. Key Concepts: The Stages in Career Development

Eli Ginzberg and Donald Super describe career development to occur in stages that stretch across the individual's *life span*. According to this school of thought, career development is closely interlinked with the individual's *physical, cognitive, emotional and social maturation*.

The initial stage in career development occurring during childhood has been called the period of *Growth*. In the beginning the child's cognitive maturation

is at a level where fantasy rules her perceptions and interactions with the world. Time perspectives have not yet become tangible and the child's expressions are often not rooted in reality. Five year old Mamtha's 'career plans' provide an apt illustration! Visiting friends asked Mamtha, what she wanted to become. Much to the chagrin of her parents she looked up and said 'I want to become like 'tatamani''. It turned out that tatamani was an old lady who sat at the street corner selling sweets. Tatamani and Mamtha were great friends and the little girl wanted to become 'like her'.

As development continues *reality orientations* become stronger. That there is a 'future' and that there are different kinds of jobs in which one could specialise, become more real to the child as he or she grows up. It is perhaps during these years that the rudimentary foundations of the individual's *vocational self-concept* are laid. According to Super, the rest of career development reflects the individual's attempt to implement this vocational self-concept.

The individual then moves into the period of *Exploration* - a crucial period in the career development sequence because this period also coincides with the onset of adolescence. Resolving the identity crisis is perhaps the most important task faced by the individual at this stage of development. Finding the answer to the question *Who am I?* lies at the heart of the identity crisis. Career choice is an essential aspect of discovering one's personal identity. From the point of view of career development, this is the time when the individual has the opportunity to informally 'try out' and explore various career possibilities. These opportunities could emerge spontaneously in school, through interactions with friends, information from the media and so on. A vital point to be noted is that while exploration will present the individual with information, the validity of this information is not known. It is very likely for example that certain careers become popular during a certain period while others are not spoken about as frequently. Exploration

might lead the individual to believe that certain careers are 'good' careers while others are not. It is important therefore that the family or the school formally create opportunities for systematic career exploration. Facilitating interactions with career counsellors, promoting self-discovery, organising work experience programmes, are examples of career development activities that make significant contributions to helping the individual deal successfully with the career developmental task of exploration.

Take the example of Suhail a student in class 10 who couldn't see the relevance of studying chemistry. As part of the careers education services offered by his school, he was placed for an internship in a well-known factory that made chocolates. Suhail returned a week later, transformed! He had had the opportunity to explore and experience for himself a variety of careers within this industry. The fact that he was allowed to create his own chocolate had really caught his fancy! This exposure gave Suhail deep insights into the world of work and he concluded his report to the class saying "I realised that chemistry is also about food!"

The story of Sunitha provides a counterpoint. She and her family had all along thought that she would become a doctor. She had even written the entrance examination and secured a seat in a medical college. Taking the advice of her career counsellor, she spent a few days with her family doctor to explore the world of medicine. A few days later, Sunitha went back to her counsellor and said, "I realise only now that being a

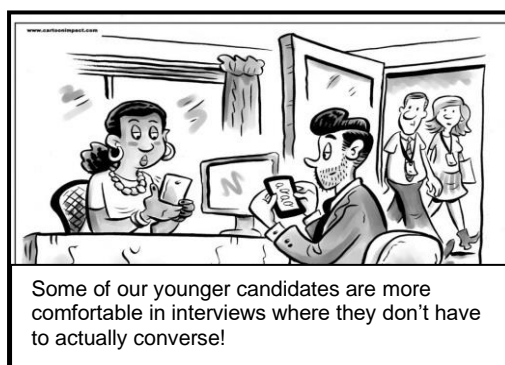
doctor goes beyond a white coat and a stethoscope around your neck! Everyday, I would have to work with those in pain. I don't think I want to do that." Sunitha went on to become a designer.

The next stage in career development has been called the period of *Establishment*. Occurring during early adulthood, this is a time when the individual actually makes a career choice and establishes him or herself as a worker. The career direction that is chosen could be influenced by the individual's experiences during the preceding periods of Growth and Exploration. For example, if during childhood the person grew up to believe that medicine and engineering are the 'best' careers it is likely that this person will make an effort to establish him or herself in these career areas. If during the earlier periods of career development the individual did not have an opportunity for adequate career exploration, decisions are likely to be made on the basis of a restricted range of careers.

*Maintenance* is described as the next stage in career development and is a time mainly of building one's life as a professional in the chosen area through continuous adjustments and efforts to improve one's position.

The final stage is the period of *Decline* when one's outputs as a worker are said to decrease and preparations for retirement begin.

Each of these five stages have further sub stages. Figure 4 gives a summary of the stages of vocational development according to Donald Super.



**Figure 4: Stages of Vocational Development according to Donald Super**  
Adapted from: Super, 1957, 1980

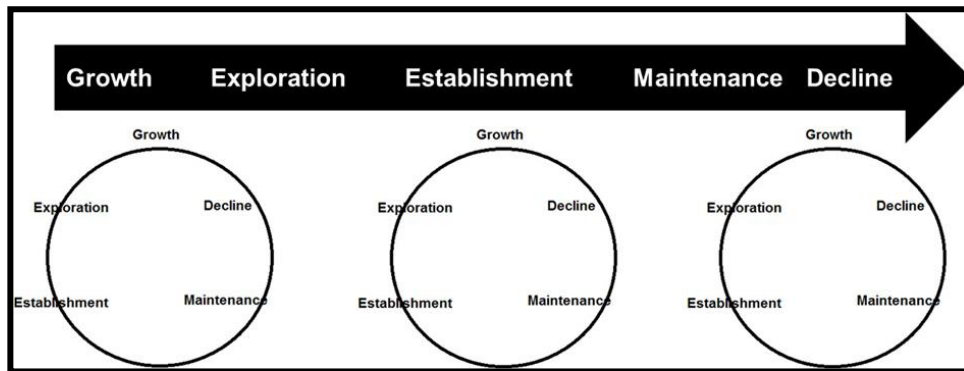
<b>Career Developmental Stage</b>	<b>Approximate age range</b>	<b>Orientations and career developmental tasks</b>
<b>Growth</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevocational</li> <li>• Fantasy</li> <li>• Interest</li> <li>• Capacity</li> </ul>	<b>0 – 14</b> 0 – 3 4 – 10 11 – 12 13 – 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not oriented to work, career or vocation</li> <li>• Thoughts about career are fantasy based</li> <li>• Likes and dislikes begin to colour thoughts about work</li> <li>• Career thoughts are influenced by ideas of personal ability</li> </ul>
<b>Exploration</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tentative</li> <li>• Transition</li> <li>• Trial</li> </ul>	<b>15 - 24</b> 15 – 17 18 – 21 22 - 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Able to express career choices tentatively</li> <li>• Choices are increasingly oriented to realities and facts</li> <li>• Initial career commitment and first job</li> </ul>
<b>Establishment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trial</li> <li>• Stabilisation</li> </ul>	<b>25-44</b> 25 – 30 31 – 44	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job changes could continue as experiences accrue</li> <li>• Settles into a job and finds stability</li> </ul>
<b>Maintenance</b>	<b>45 – 65</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growth and development within the chosen career area</li> </ul>
<b>Decline</b>	65 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparation to leave the work force</li> </ul>

**2.4.2. Key Concepts: Super's Life Span and Life Space Approach**

An important development in Super's later writings (1980s) is the view that work is embedded within other life roles. Super (1980) presents his 'Life-Career-Rainbow' that incorporates life span and life space dimensions. The *life span* dimension is linked to the *developmental stages* in the individual's life. *Life space* on the other hand is related to the *multiple contexts and roles* that characterise an individual's life. Taken together life span and life space factors describe the individual's current status of career development and forecast the future career trajectory of that individual. This brings us to the important concept of *career maturity*. The developing person faces career developmental tasks at each stage in his or her development. Exploiting the opportunities offered by these tasks and acquiring the ability to meet the demands of these tasks results in career maturity. For example career exploration is a career developmental task that makes its appearance during childhood. The

individual. The passage through the stages of career development – from growth to exploration and then to establishment and maintenance are described as 'maxi-cycles'. According to Super a significant amount of development also occurs within each stage and each stage is characterised by a series of 'mini-cycles'. The individual faces developmental tasks linked to growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance and decline at each stage. As shown in Figure 5, career development therefore is a life long process of making several decisions characterised by a recycling through the stages of growth, re-exploration and re-establishment. gain in career maturity that accrues at this stage provides the foundation for progress into the next stage of career development. The absence of opportunities to meet a career developmental task in effect inhibits the maturational process and causes a career maturation lag. For example if the child was not given opportunities for exploration, she arrives at the next career developmental stage in a state of immaturity for the tasks that face her at this stage. Lapses such as these have a

**Figure 5: Donald Super's Maxi-Mini Cycles of Career Development**



cumulative effect on career development that ultimately reflect in the way important career decisions are made during late adolescence and adulthood. Take the example of an 18 year old boy in India. The important career developmental task before him is to choose between several specialisations and commit himself to one particular stream of career development. If this young person did not have the opportunity for career exploration when he was a child, he is likely to be developmentally immature to face the task of career decision-making that is currently before him. Yet, the pressure to make a decision in the typical Indian situation could be relentless and he must make a commitment. Given the lack of opportunities for career exploration, this young person's career decision is likely to be made on the basis of a narrow and restricted view of the world of work.

In a nutshell, the developmental approach indicates that every individual faces a set of career developmental tasks. These tasks are specific to a particular stage of development. Career maturity is the achievement of mastery over these career developmental tasks as they appear at each career developmental stage.

## **2.5. Circumscription and Compromise**

Linda Gottfredson (1981), expanding on these ideas describes career development

to be a gradual narrowing down of occupational possibilities according to emerging self-concepts. Circumscription and compromise are two important constructs that describe this process.

### **2.5.1. Key Concepts**

A. *Circumscription* involves the inclusion and elimination of occupational alternatives through an age graded developmental sequence. Gottfredson (1981), points out that children between age 6 - 8 years eliminate or choose occupations on the basis of sex-type preference. Between the ages of 9 - 13 years, children begin to recognise prestige differences among jobs and social class. Children at the high social level begin to recognise that they are expected and able to pursue higher level jobs. Those from lower social classes realise that there are lower-level jobs, which are accessible to them. Discussing the interaction between ability and social class, Gottfredson (1981) asserts that pronounced differences in social class and ability level in educational and occupational aspirations are found among high school students. More able students aspire to higher-level jobs and within all ability groups, higher social class youngsters have higher aspirations. Toward the end of high school, when youngsters begin to implement their choices in actually seeking training and avenues for specialisation, they become more sensitive to which particular occupational paths are most readily available to them. It is at this point that the

issue of compromise enters the career choice process.

*B. Compromise* is a process of closing the gap between the ideal and the reality in the world of work. Problems in obtaining or completing training are initial barriers the young person faces and these barriers may require the person to sacrifice occupational aspirations. According to Gottfredson (1981), when a choice compromise is needed, one's field of interest is compromised first, followed by prestige. Sex type preferences are least likely to be compromised.

### 2.5.2. Impact and Relevance

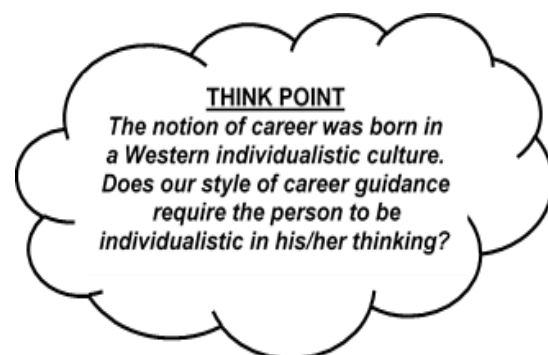
The main contribution of the developmental and life span oriented theorists is their elucidation of the sequences of the developmental stages and associated career developmental tasks that lead to entry into the world of work. According to this school of thought career development progresses in a 'normative' manner that ties in with the individual's development as a person and a member of a certain society. Accordingly, career development is a process of maturation. These theories provide a valuable framework within which career development could be examined. Constructs such as career developmental tasks and career maturity that are intrinsic to the developmental approaches are robust enough to have become the pillars upon which a multitude of career development techniques have come to rest.

However these approaches seem to propose the existence of an invariant sequence of stages, through which the individual must move. As critics have pointed out, decisions do not seem to be taken in this cool and rational way between clearly defined age ranges, in real life. An important point raised is that the developmental models ignore the vast range of individual and contextual differences. Research has found that the resolution of developmental tasks and the commitment to career choices is not

related only to the normative aspects of career development, such as quality of exploration, decision-making skills and occupational knowledge (Blustein & Ellis, 2000). It has been pointed out for example that the attitudes of significant others in the adolescent's life could have a stronger impact on his/her career orientations. Social expectations directed toward the young person could play a significant role in the direction he or she takes when making the transition from education to the world of work. Blustein & Ellis, (2000) makes the point that the resolution of career developmental tasks is in effect influenced by the simultaneous operation of various historical factors (e.g. economic slump or boom) and cultural factors (e.g. prestige attributes of an occupation). In other words, 'non-normative' factors that are not related to the process of maturation could play a significant role in career development.

### 2.6. Career Developmental Theory: Relevance to the Indian situation

On generalising the career developmental theories to the Indian context it appears that the theory departs in several ways from the Indian reality. The Indian adolescent usually enters the final year of high school (Class 10), between the age of 14 to 15 years. Completion of Class 10, in the Indian educational system signals the beginnings of specialisation. Indian students who complete high school roughly fall into three categories:



- *Group 1* comprises students who wish to and are able to go on for *further education*. The career developmental task facing this group is the necessity of having to make a choice between three pre-specified groups of subjects, namely, the Science, Commerce or Humanities streams of specialisation. Each of these streams lead toward a family of careers and 14 year old is expected to have developed reasonable clarity regarding the career family for which he or she is best suited.
- *Group 2* comprises individuals who choose to undergo *vocationally oriented courses* that prepare the student for direct entry into the world of work on completion of the course. Here options chosen lead to narrow band of careers and an even higher degree of career choice crystallisation is expected of the high school student.
- *Group 3* mainly comprises students from low SES backgrounds who *cannot afford* to remain financially unproductive and have to enter the world of work as unskilled workers.

According to the developmental theories, career developmental tasks such as these are expected at around the age of 17 - 18 years. In the Indian situation however, the young person is presented with these tasks much earlier and perhaps much before he or she is ready to deal with them. Socio-economic and psycho-social factors could place the Indian young person in a situation where he or she is required to make career decisions almost three years earlier than expected by the developmental theories. It may well be that the individual is not vocationally mature enough to deal with these tasks and perhaps is even unaware of the long term outcomes of decisions taken at this stage.

The framework offered by the developmental perspective, where 'readiness' is juxtaposed against 'tasks', is particularly useful and perhaps relevant

across different cultures. It is at the next step, namely, the proposition that career development keeps pace with cognitive maturation that a departure is in evidence. Our research has found that a variety of non-normative factors such as contextual realities, economic factors, educational systems, socio-economic status and social-cognitive environments play a significant role in altering the normative trajectory of career development.

In summary, 'developmental tasks' and 'readiness' are concepts offered by the developmental model that have a high degree of relevance to understanding career development in *any cultural context*. It is when the developmental model becomes prescriptive, that its relevance diminishes. What is important to note is that

career development does occur and developmental tasks are resolved in all cultural contexts. This resolution may not however occur at the time, stage or manner that is prescribed by developmental theory. Non-normative factors that are not directly linked to the process of maturation play a significant role and in a sense 'short circuit' normative career development.

The developmental model offers a valuable framework that researchers in developing economies such as India could use. Filling in this framework would imply the identification of specific career developmental tasks, points of readiness and stages of development that must be investigated 'locally', within a specific context.

<p>Socioeconomic status, type of schooling, culture and such <i>non-normative factors</i> which are not directly related to the process of maturation, significantly influence development.</p>
---



## 2.7. Social Cognitive Theory

Social Cognitive Theory has its roots in the earlier Social Learning Theory formulated by Albert Bandura and subsequently linked to career guidance by John Krumboltz. The theory essentially points out that humans are thinking beings who are in dynamic and intelligent interaction with their environments.

### 2.7.1. Key Concepts

#### A. Observational Learning

*Observational learning* is an important construct that has particular relevance to career development. This is a form of learning that results from the individual's *observation of the behaviour of others*. To illustrate, let us take the example of Sajjini an 18 year old girl who was just about to complete her higher secondary level of education. Although Sajjini wanted to study further and develop a career for herself, she had resigned herself to her parents' belief that it is better for her to get married as soon as possible. Sajjini's friend Veda was also in the same situation. Veda however was determined to follow a career. She made her wishes known to her parents who were initially extremely resistant. Veda persisted, and finally convinced her parents that they should all at least visit a career counsellor. In the end, Veda's parents agreed with her and she began to plan a career for herself. Sajjini observed Veda's behaviour and she noted the positive outcome of her efforts. Sajjini realised that she too could attempt to begin a similar interaction with her parents. Veda became Sajjini's model and the learning that has occurred in Sajjini's life is called observational learning.

At the heart of the idea of observational learning is the assumption that the individual's thinking or cognitive faculties play a vital role in interacting with the environment. The ability to pay attention, understand the information that results from attending to something and storing this information in memory are key

cognitive faculties that underlie observational learning. Sajjini was drawn to Veda's behaviour (she paid close attention to everything Veda did), she was able to understand the meaning and reason for Veda's behaviour and finally she internalised these observations.

Children's behaviour is strongly influenced by their *observations of adults or significant peers*. The effects of observational learning may not be immediately seen. Children could manifest the effects of such learning when they find themselves in the appropriate context or when they finally reach the age when the behaviour is required.

Career decisions are made in a social context. At the most obvious level is the impact that *role models* have on career choice. At more subtle levels, *attitudes prevalent in a community* toward career preparation and toward specific careers influence the career development of the individuals who are a part of that community.

### 2.7.2. Social Cognitions and Career Beliefs

Social cognitions refer to patterns of thinking that have become habitual across social groups (Bandura, 1989). Social cognitions have played a significant role in the evolution of work as well. Mindsets engendered by social and moral frames of reference give a particular colouring and interpretation to the meaning and purpose of work. Prevailing ideologies create *social-cognitive environments*. Within these environments, positive or negative values can be attributed to work in general as well as toward occupational clusters. These social-cognitive environments foster the evolution of a *work ethic*: a set of social norms that describe a particular approach to work. For example a certain work ethic may place a positive moral value on hard work based on the belief that work has innate value and must be pursued for its own sake. Similarly another social-cognitive environment may promote a work ethic wherein some forms of work maybe

attributed with a higher level of prestige than others. A work ethic is the result of a collection of social cognitions about work, which then guide and influence people's work behaviour.

Attitudes, opinions, convictions and notions come together to create mindsets and beliefs that underlie people's orientation to the idea of a career. We use the term career beliefs to refer to this conglomerate of cognitions about career decision-making and career planning (Arulmani & Nag-Arulmani, 2004). These patterns of beliefs maybe internalised not only within the minds of single individuals but also in the community as a whole and transmitted to the young in that community through a process of social learning. The effectiveness of career counselling can crumble if prevailing career beliefs are left unaddressed.

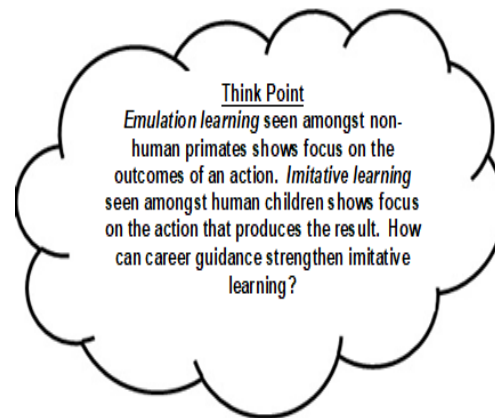
Career beliefs and their impact on career development will be discussed in greater detail in a later chapter.

## 2.8. Cultural Theories of Career Guidance

'Culture' remains an elusive term to define perhaps because it has multiple meanings and has been viewed from a multiplicity of disciplinary vantage points. A comprehensive articulation is provided by Sultana (2017) when he describes culture "...as deeply held ways of meaning making that permeate all levels of one's life and one's relationship with others..." (p.451). Arulmani (2014) points out culture is integral to the ways of living of all human beings, and therefore, work itself becomes a construction of culture (Arulmani, 2014). Today, career psychology is also moving towards increasingly greater focus on culture-resonant theories of development (e.g., Arulmani, 2014; Leong & Pearce, 2014). There have been calls for: developing a multicultural mindset, placing culture at the forefront of career psychology and viewing career psychology as a 'cultural enterprise' (Stead, 2007, p.181). As a consequence, mainstream theories are being examined

for their cross cultural relevance and validity.

Clearly, progress has been made in integrating culture with career psychology. However, these developments have also been critically appraised. One concern



emanates from a trend in the careers literature, of the term 'culture' being confounded with proxy categorical variables such as race, ethnicity, language, religion, countries and continents resulting not just in confusing usage but also oversimplification. Therefore it is important to decipher the constitutive dynamic between psychological processes and socio-cultural contexts and acknowledge the bi-directionality that exists between the person and culture.

We will discuss the modalities of integrating culture with career guidance in a later section.

## 2.9. Work as career – the Indian context

As we have seen earlier, most theorising pertaining to career development has occurred in Western cultures and economies. An Indian model of career guidance is yet to emerge. However, we have also seen that culture is a strong influence on career development. It is important that we understand these cultural underpinnings in the Indian context, in order to gain deeper insights

into how social cognitions and habitual ways of thinking influence career development as it occurs in our day and age.

Beginning with the first Industrial Revolution, sharp divergences are noted between Western and Indian orientations. Work behaviour began to be increasingly influenced by social, religious and economic philosophies that defined the structures of a given society. These philosophic orientations led to a parting of ways between Indian and Western conceptions of work behaviour. Some of the most characteristic differences that have persisted over time and continue to differentially influence work behaviour in India and the West are discussed below.

### **2.9.1. Individualism vs. collectivism**

The protestant work ethic brought the individual and his or her productivity onto centre stage in the West. The emphasis was and continues to be on the individual and his or her desires, interests and attitudes. Freedom of choice therefore has been a value deeply cherished by the Western worker. Conversely, work behaviour in the Indian environment was strongly influenced by the prevailing social philosophy that demanded that the role of the individual be subordinated to the collective. Independent decision-making was not directly nurtured, self-assertion could be perceived as selfish and divergence from family and parental directions could be taken as disobedience. Just as kinship influences influenced work behaviour in West during pre-industrial times, ties with the community have continued to play a powerful role in the individual's orientation to work in the Indian environment.

### **2.9.2. Ability vs. birth**

Occupational role allocation in the West came to be closely linked to the individual's skills and abilities. Coupled with the freedom to choose, mobility across occupations became a function of the individual's effort and talents. The system of varnas combined with the

triguna system in India, also allowed for occupational classification on the basis of the individual's nature. Within certain limits, people could move between varnas according to the quality and type of work

The knowledge, ideas and systems emanating from non-Western epistemologies merit more than indulgent descriptions as "alternative" or "indigenous" approaches. These repositories of wisdom must be acknowledged as in fact being "mainstream" thought for a given culture.

they performed. The caste system however drastically changed this orientation and the work one was expected to perform was determined by the caste one was born into. Abilities and talents were no longer important. Instead the accident of birth determined the work one was allotted. Although the overt influence of the caste system has begun to fade, this class and prestige based approach to work roles continues to have a subtle but strong influence on work behaviour in the Indian situation.

### **2.9.3. Dignity of labour vs. occupational prestige**

In the pre-industrial period work in the West was equated with toil and drudgery. Those who worked were relegated to the lowest classes of the social order. The reformed work ethic drastically changed this attitude. Work regained dignity and was imbued with worth. As a result the value of labour both in economic and social terms increased. The dignity and inherent value of labour is an attitude that continues to strongly influence Western orientations to work. In India however, largely as a result of the influence of caste, the situation was different. Occupations were placed on a hierarchy of prestige and status and the social group that one was born into controlled entry into a particular occupation. Even today, certain jobs continue to be thought of as menial in the

Indian situation, while others are placed at a higher level of prestige. The average, middle class Westerner would routinely clear the family garbage or dig a garden pit and fill it with manure. In India however, it is a small minority who would be willing to perform jobs such as these, without relegating them to another class of people.

The features Indian work environments range from the pre-industrial to the ultra modern. Career guidance must stretch to meet the needs of young people right across this spectrum.

## 2.10 Conclusion

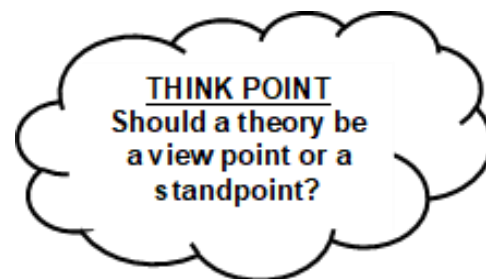
It is clear that philosophic influences have had different impacts on the evolution of work behaviour in Western and Indian environments. To be noted is that the social-cognitive environment within which work behaviour developed in the West was quite unlike the environment that prevailed in India. Although trade and commerce was vigorous in India, the manufacture of goods remained largely unmechanised, smaller in scale and predominantly localised to guilds, within a deterministic society. These features continued to characterise work behaviour in India until the colonising efforts of the West began. Approaches to work in the West on the other hand were influenced by philosophic and technological revolutions. The Western world moved toward a mechanised and industrialised work environment, characterised by an individualistic approach to work.

Career Guidance first emerged as a strongly felt need from within an industrial, mechanised and individualistic work culture. The occupational choices before the young person in pre-industrial India were restricted. In a context where one's occupation was determined by birth, preparing for an occupation was a relatively simple activity. An occupational

structure that was dominated by caste influences did not promote awareness of personal potentials or of the links between occupation and personal inclinations. Since one's occupation was almost certainly going to be the family trade or industry, choice was not likely to have been a matter for deep consideration.

The impact of Western influences through colonisation and its ramifications on Indian social and economic life are well known. The forces of industrialisation and mechanisation have had a similar impact on work behaviour in the Indian context as they have had in the West. Work has grown from being merely linked to survival needs or to community dictates to something far more complex, requiring increasing amounts of specialisation and training. As in other parts of the world, work in India now carries connotations related to gender, socio-economic status, prestige and self-actualisation. Yet, even a cursory glance at the way career choices are made in India reveal various paradoxes.

At one level work in India continues to remain linked to survival, carrying connotations of earning a livelihood to take care of one's basic needs for food, clothing and shelter. Fate more than choice seem to remain determining factors. At another level, work is viewed as the vehicle for the satisfaction of higher order needs such as actualising personal potentials, expressing oneself and aspiring for things that one has learned to value.



The important point to be noted is that work in modern India has grown from automatically following in the pre-determined footsteps of one's predecessors and offers the possibility of building a career. A sensitive career

counselling programme could bring about the awareness necessary to inspire young people to begin career planning. Indeed today, the question 'what would you like to be when you grow up' is not as innocuous as it seems and carries connotations of choice, decision-making, specialised study, excellence and competition. Formal vocational guidance services have been described to be a part of economic development, where the division of labour that follows

industrialisation eventually extends to a point where traditional mechanisms of role allocation start to break down and formal guidance services are required to supplement them. Vocational Guidance and Career Counselling in India are currently at this stage of development. Guidance and counselling that would facilitate effective career decision-making therefore assumes a special urgency in the Indian situation.

## REFERENCES

References marked with \* are linked to the original paper. Click to read the paper.

Arulmani, G. (2014). The cultural preparation process model and career development. In G. Arulmani, A. J. Bakshi, F.T.L. Leong & A. G. Watts (Eds.), *Handbook of career development: International perspectives* (pp. 81-104). New York, USA: Springer International.

Click here for paper:

<http://thepromisefoundation.org.managewebsiteportal.com/files/documents/524ac801-1c33-4a58-b432-d22fd9f9049a.pdf>

\* Arulmani, G., & Nag-Arulmani, S. (2004). *Career counselling: A handbook*. New Delhi, India: Tata McGraw-Hill Publishing Company Limited.

Click here for open access book manuscript:

<http://thepromisefoundation.org.managewebsiteportal.com/files/documents/524ac801-1c33-4a58-b432-d22fd9f9049a.pdf>

Bandura, A. (1989). Human Agency in social cognitive theory. [Nil]. *American Psychologist*, 44(9), 1175-1184p.

\* Blustein, D. L., & Ellis, M. V. (2000). The Cultural Context of Career Assessment. *Journal of Career Assessment*, 8(1), 370-390.

Click here for paper: <https://www.thepromisefoundation.org/files/documents/f49fbc6a-1a45-4db9-8ed4-8a72798d1758.pdf>

\* Gottfredson, L. S. (1981). Circumscription and compromise: A developmental theory of occupational aspiration. *Journal of counselling psychology monograph*, 28(6), 545-579p.

Click here for paper:

<http://thepromisefoundation.org.managewebsiteportal.com/files/documents/7a914a84-8680-4deb-adc3-849655061c4b.pdf>

Hackett, G., & Lent, R.W. (1991). Advances in Vocational Theory and Research: A 20-Year Retrospective. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 38(Nil), 3-38p.

Holland, J. L. (1959). A theory of vocational choice. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 6(1), 35-45.

Killeen, J., & Kidd, J. (1991). Learning outcomes of Guidance : A Review of Recent Research., 1-36p.

\* Leong, F., Austin, J. T., Sekaran, U., & Komarraju, M. (1998). An evaluation of the cross-cultural validity of Holland's theory: Career choice by workers in India. *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, 52(3), 441-455.

Click here for paper: <https://www.thepromisefoundation.org/files/documents/921d28b3-e7d3-4de7-8d9c-c7f549fea861.pdf>

\* Leong, F. T. L., & Pearce, M. (2011). Desiderata: Towards indigenous models of vocational psychology. *International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance*, 11(2), 65-77.

Click here for paper: <https://www.thepromisefoundation.org/files/documents/52e0f829-1cc9-46cb-819c-7917b66e4c3a.pdf>

Schneider, L. J., Overton, T. D. (1983). Holland personality types and academic achievement. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 30(2), 287-289.

Spokane, A. R., & Oliver, L. W. (1988). Outcomes of Vocational intervention. In *Handbook of vocational psychology* (pp. 99-126p).

Stead, G. B. (2007). Cultural psychology as a transformative agent for vocational psychology.

*International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance*, 73(3), 181-190.

\* Sultana, R. G. (2017). Career guidance in multicultural societies: Identity, alterity, epiphanies and pitfalls. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, 45(5), 451-462.

Click here for paper: <https://www.thepromisefoundation.org/files/documents/4189b4a9-f89b-416f-8ef0-d46fbb402d63.pdf>

Super, D. E. (1957). *The psychology of careers. An introduction to vocational development*. New York: USA: Harper and Row.

Super, D. E. (1980). A life-span, life-space approach to career development. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 16(3), 282-298.

Walsh, B., O'Hildebrand, J., Ward, C.M., Matthews, D.F. (1983). Holland's theory and non-college-degreed working black and white women. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 22(2), 182-190.

## SELF-LEARNING EXERCISES

**Word Limits:** All questions have word limits. This is also an assessment of your ability to express yourself concisely and with precision. Please note that you are expected to stay within the word limit.

**Originality:** All questions are designed to assess your originality. While you are welcome to refer to books, the internet and other resources, verbatim reproductions of answers will not be scored.

### Theories of Career Psychology

Q1. Use your notes to answer the following questions:

Q.No	Question
1	<p>Accurately matching people to specific occupations is an important aspect of career guidance. Which of the following theories are best suited to facilitate this activity:</p> <p>Theory of Circumscription and Compromise. Social Cognitive Theory. Developmental Theories. Trait-Factor Theory.</p>
2	<p>Personal attributes unfold within a certain social cognitive environment. Which of the following would this statement be best linked to:</p> <p>Career beliefs-Fatalistic Beliefs. Career beliefs-Thinking Habits. Career Beliefs-Persistence Beliefs. Social Cognitive Environment-Holland's Hexagon.</p>
3	<p>The link between maturation and career development is best described by which of the following:</p> <p>A person can be in the second year of engineering and still not be sure of which career he/she is best suited for. A person's persistence beliefs strongly affect his/her clarity of career choice. The consistency of personality traits demonstrated by the person. The family's preoccupation with streaming their child to enter the IIT.</p>
4	<p>The Senior Vice President of a company would most likely best fit into which of Super's 5 stages of development as per his maxi and mini cycles:</p> <p>Growth. Exploration. Establishment. Maintenance. All of the above.</p>
5	<p>Which of the following best describes "Circumscription":</p> <p>A. Rajesh does not want to consider nursing as a career because his community believes that it is for girls. B. Puja would fare better at fashion design than electronic engineering since her drawing skills are better than her mechanical skills. C. Sunder had to choose a vocational pathway rather than a university pathway because of financial constraints. D. Although she is in the second year of medical education, Shalini is unsure if medicine is the career for her.</p>
6	<p>Holland's notion of calculus is best linked to which of the following:</p> <p>Personality types can be identified easily. Personality types can be arranged according the extent of differences between them.</p>



	Holland's hexagon can be extended in other cultures to an octagon. The Realistic personality type is most different from the Investigative personality type.
7	The person's readiness to make a choice, prepare and plan for career development, is best linked to which of the following concepts: Career Preparation Status-Career Maturity. Persistence Beliefs-Career Preparation Status. Developmental Lag-Labour Market Cycles. Personality Traits-Career Preparation Status.
8	Super's stage of "exploration" is best characterised by: Applying for a job. Preparing for retirement. Talking to a professional to learn more about a certain career. Winning an award for an achievement at work.
9	Which of the following is an important criticism of the Trait-Factor Theories:  These theories do not account for developmental stages. Certain careers are closely related to genetic heritage. Career Beliefs can influence the manifestation of a potential into a career. Traits cannot be measured.
10	According to Holland, the depth of satisfaction a person can derive from a career depends on the: extent to which a person's difference from others can be accurately defined. closeness of the "fit" between personality type and environment type. extent to which negative career beliefs are controlled. type of culture a person is born into.

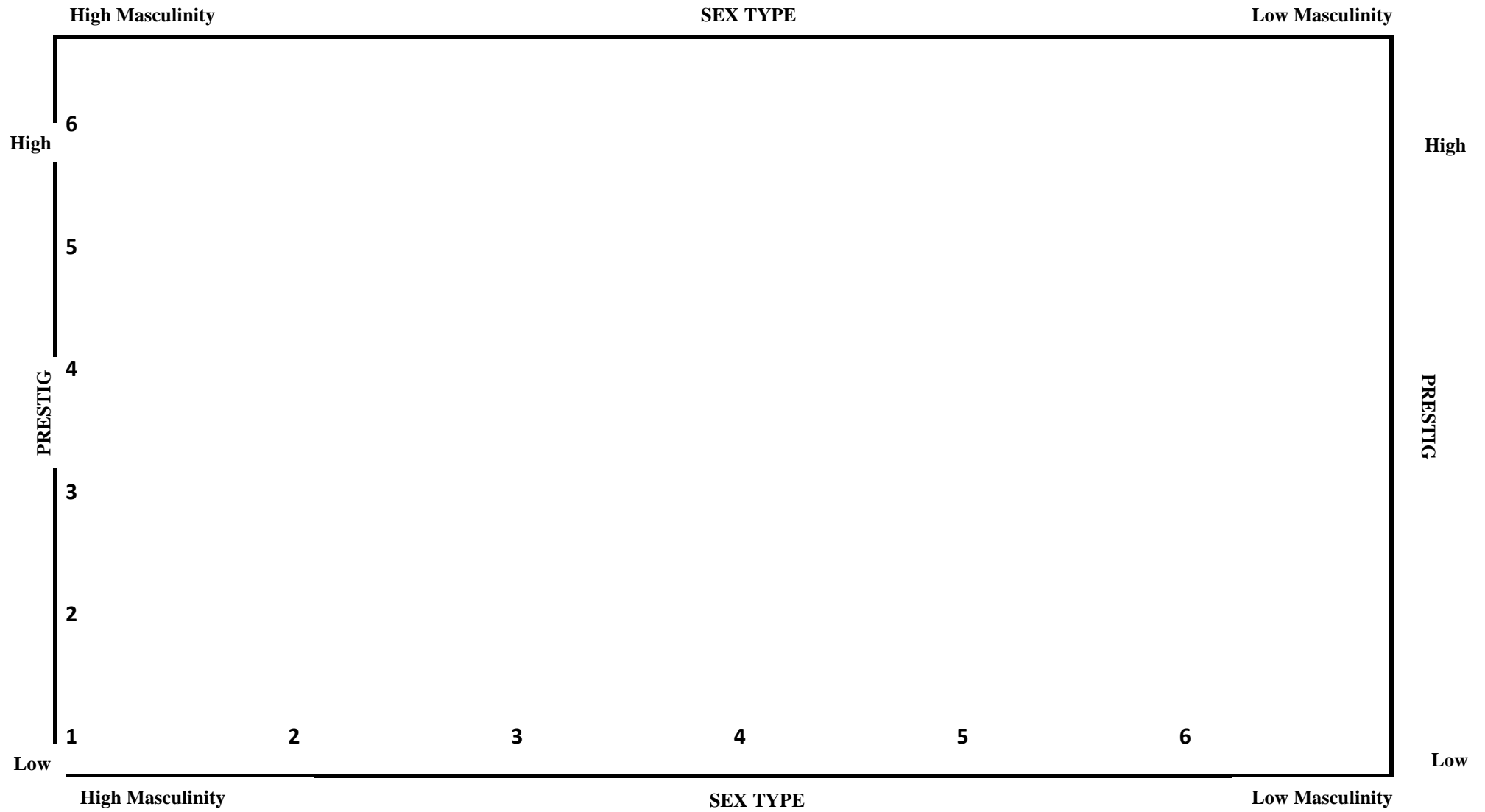
Q.2. Construct your personal Cognitive Map of Occupations. Given below is a list of occupations. Use the rating scales to honestly rate each occupation for "prestige" and "masculinity". Plot your Cognitive Map of Occupations on the template provided.  
(1 x 10 =10 marks)

	Occupation	Prestige Rank	Masculinity of the profession
1	Accounts Clerk		
2	Allopath		
3	Architect		
4	Ayurved		
5	Bio Technologist		
6	Carpenter		
7	Chartered Accountant		
8	Chef		
9	Computer Scientist		
10	Cook		
11	Counsellor		
12	Economist		
13	Editor		
14	Engineer		
15	Farmer		
16	Florist		
17	High School Teacher		
18	Hotel Manager		
19	HR Professional		
	Lawyer		
21	Library Scientist		
22	Nurse		
23	Police Inspector		
24	Preschool Teacher		
25	Psychologist		
26	Public Relations Officer		
27	Scientist		
28	Secretary		

**Rating scale for Prestige of the Occupation:**  
1 = lowest prestige  
2 = low prestige  
3 = somewhat low prestige  
4 = high prestige  
5 = very high prestige  
6 = highest prestige

**Rating scale for Masculinity of the Occupation:**  
6 = lowest masculinity  
5 = low masculinity  
4 = somewhat low masculinity  
3 = high masculinity  
2 = very high masculinity  
1 = highest masculinity

29	Shop Keeper		
30	Social Worker		



Q.3. Go over Super's Life Span approach and answer the following questions:

- A. Define career development stage in your own words (50 words).
- B. List 1 career development task for each of the career development stages listed by Super, typical for the Indian context.
- C. As indicated in your notes: "An important point raised is that the developmental models ignore the vast range of individual and contextual differences". Write a 50 word note on contextual factors typical to your context that could influence career development.

Q.4. Go over Gottfredson's theory of circumscription and compromise. Describe circumscription and compromise in your own words (100 words). Click here for paper: <http://thepromisefoundation.org.managewebsiteportal.com/files/documents/7a914a84-8680-4deb-adc3-849655061c4b.pdf>

Q.5. Go over Leong et al's evaluation of the cross-cultural study of the Holland model and write you opinion of its relevance to India. Click here for paper: <https://www.thepromisefoundation.org/files/documents/921d28b3-e7d3-4de7-8d9c-c7f549fea861.pdf>