



## Editorial

### Career and Livelihood Planning: Ideas across a decade

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*The Indian Journal of Career and Livelihood Planning (IJCLP) is a peer-reviewed publication, established to support the development of culture-resonant theories, models and methods of career guidance and counselling, with a specific emphasis on developing world contexts (Nag, Arulmani & Bakshi, 2012; Editorial).*

This is the tenth year of the publication of the Indian Journal of Career and Livelihood Planning! In the first part of this anniversary Editorial, I will present some of the key themes that have appeared in the journal over this last decade. In the second part, I will provide a summary of the papers carried in this, the tenth volume. In many ways, they together capture ideas that were flagged earlier in the decade and remain just as relevant today.

The journal began with an intention to focus on low-and middle-income countries (LMIC) and 46% of papers have come from within the diverse settings of Bangladesh, Botswana, Egypt, Nepal, and India, with references to programmes in LMIC contexts such as Jamaica and South Africa, in the conceptual papers. But, the IJCLP has been more international in coverage. Studies from high-income countries also feature including papers from the Netherlands, Norway, and Japan, and there are some multi-country papers with comparisons between LMIC and high-income countries.

The journal has carried studies that have followed a range of methodologies. Qualitative studies have typically used thematic extraction from interviews and focus group discussions (e.g., with traditional healers: Albert et al., 2015; with retired educators: Mokgolodi et al., 2016). Another thread across the volumes is studies reporting document analysis. Examples include analysis of policy documents and dispatches by multi-lateral agencies such as the International Labour Organisation. Intervention studies carried in the IJCLP have been within school and university settings, or within the home. Research designs have included the quasi-experimental pre-post design (e.g., school-based intervention in Nepal and India: Shreshtha et al., 2018 and Viray, 2017 respectively) and qualitative approaches using interview and focus group discussions (e.g., a parent intervention in the Netherlands: Oomen, 2018). The focus of interventions has typically been on self-awareness and the world of work, or a more specific focus such as thinking about 'purpose in life' (Valles, 2012); 'compassion' (Jagadeeshan, 2017) and the United Nation's sustainable development goals (Arur & Sharma, 2019). Other methodologies in papers include secondary data analyses (Kim & Mimura, 2019), and advanced statistical models to understand career development needs (Banda et al, 2020). Capturing personal career journeys, IJCLP has carried narratives examining what world events have meant for the writer (e.g., Apartheid: Watt, 2020) and their family (e.g., Brexit: Chant, 2016). Throughout, the context-responsive nature of careers and livelihoods comes through.

A range of theoretically important papers appear in the journal. These include the cultural preparedness approach by Arulmani (2012), an interpretation of systems theory for uncertain times by McMohan (2020) and interviews with Tony Watt (2014) and David Bluestein

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(2015). Strong arguments for recognising the theoretical depth of concepts available in the global south appear across multiple volumes (e.g., Watson, 2013; Arulmani, 2014; Robertson, 2017; Sultana, 2018). Complementing these are papers rooted in theorising within the global north (e.g., Kavale, 2012; Goodman, 2014; van Brussel, 2019) and papers on methodological debates by (e.g., Bakshi 2014).

Career and livelihood issues for individuals with special vulnerabilities has been a recurrent theme. These papers focus on special educational needs (e.g., Aravind & Nag, 2013; Kversoy & Kversoy, 2018; Mazumdar, 2019); indigenous and tribal communities (e.g., Sangma & Arulmani, 2013; Chakma, 2020) and the socio-economically vulnerable (e.g., Kumar, 2013).

Turning now to this volume of the IJCLP (Vol. 10), the papers again differ in scope and methodology.

Anne Holm-Nordhagen presents findings from a qualitative study where teachers were invited to participate in classroom-delivered career counselling lessons. The aim was to examine what happens when teachers join as active partners with career counsellors. The collaboration spans planning, execution and evaluation of a 'career learning programme'. Two career counsellors and four teachers are followed through lessons in three secondary-level classrooms. Several notes are made of the facilitating role that the teachers played, and their success was attributed to advanced pedagogical skills as well as expert knowledge about participating students; areas that career counsellors may not be as skilled in or knowledgeable about. Holm-Nordhagen synthesises the key findings from this study in these words: *The key concept in the narrative on this collaboration is that the teacher is the oil in the engine*. More exemplars are needed of how to structure data collection on processes that underpin classroom collaborations. In addition, the nature of collaborations for making linkages between school subjects, careers and planning for the future is under-theorised. Holm-Nordhagen provides insights for both.

Sachin Kumar reviews India's recently-adopted National Education Policy (2020). This is a policy, as with earlier policy documents, that was adopted after country-wide consultations. Rather than focussing on its strengths and weaknesses, this paper carefully pieces together information scattered across the document to form a picture for planning and implementation. The focus is especially on career practitioner training. This is timely given the country's ambition to have a counsellor in at least half of the schools or school clusters in the country by 2025, and complete coverage by 2030. Kumar lists several areas that India must catch-up with including scaled-up assessment as well as in-person and online counselling. In contrast to the call for 'horizontal connections' in the Holm-Nordhagen paper, Kumar finds 'vertical integration' from school into undergraduate and post graduate education as the gap that can undo the policy's ambitions. Reading between the lines, this is an all-encompassing document and, in this regard, is not unlike policy documents coming up internationally, especially in low- and middle-income countries: guidance and counselling find mention but details for implementation are far from clear.

Yousef Khalifa Aleghfeli's conceptual paper brings together the grey and academic literature to examine the concept of Educational Resilience. The topic is especially relevant since recent communiqués from multilateral agencies show a sharp increase in the use of the term Educational Resilience. This trend is perhaps understandable given that COVID-19 has upended preferred ways of supporting student learning in schools, colleges, internships and universities, to name a few. However, research on person and institutional resilience has a long history, and much of this has been in the context of the individual and their response to difficult circumstances. While the recent grey literature also engages with the term as related to 'vulnerability to disruption risk', it takes a broader view addressing policy level factors that

are yet to be co-opted into theorizing on resilience, leading Khalifa to conclude that there is a need for 'a more robust conceptualization of educational resilience'. I suggest, the field of career and livelihoods planning is uniquely placed to aid in this conceptualization. For example, consider the insights that could be afforded with longitudinal studies set up to examine the mediating and moderating factors, across-time and at multiple levels, that influence people's career and livelihood trajectories when there is guidance and counselling offered, whether these are spontaneous through families and communities or mandated and delivered within schools and institutionalized services.

A. Vijay's qualitative study in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu is a good paper to transition to after the reading on educational resilience. Vijay's paper brings to us the voices of teachers, school heads, teacher trainers and state-level resource persons' experience. The paper captures what it takes to offer student support and understand student decision making in real time. The focus of the learning and decision-making processes is related to science learning among secondary school students. Science tests are high stakes because they lead to, in this particular context, what are considered as high prestige careers. A sustained disruption to science teaching therefore is a particularly keenly felt disruption both by students, their teachers and this community. A key conclusion of the study is that the pandemic disruption 'will have a future effect in selecting science for further studies', even though STEM subjects are celebrated in this community.

The final paper in this issue by William A Borgen and Roberta A Borgen continues on the theme of COVID-19 disruptions, interpreting the coping shown by graduates in a university in British Columbia, Canada. Like the literature covered in the Khalifa paper, Borgen and Borgen draw on ecological systems theory to analyse disruption effects. They, however, go further by using theoretical frameworks related to transitions, stress and coping, and career engagement. The paper uses popular survey tools to capture the semantics of living through the pandemic: word clouds summarise students' feelings and thoughts related to, for example, to old ways of being planful and new ways of staying connected. A repeated theme extracted from the data is the 'roller coaster' of positive and negative emotions, and one key inference is that there is a demand for unprecedented 're-alignment' at the level of career engagement. In their conclusion, the authors return to the systems perspective to state that 'interconnectedness of all of the systems that impact our life and work roles is more important than ever before.'

Engagement with work, career and livelihood is closely tied to the socioeconomic, cultural and psychosocial context within which this engagement occurs. The IJCLP aims at offering a platform upon which this most fundamental of human engagements could be discussed and examined. We encourage you to continue to contribute your ideas and research to our journal.

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