

Blustein's perspectives on the psychology of work



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Introduction

Beyond work and jobs, careers are a sequence of positions held along a lifespan with the intention of creating a space for everyone to express their self-concept and find meaning and reinforcement (Super as cited in Blustein, 2006). Within Chapter 1 of *Psychology and the Psychology of Working* Doctor David Blustein is exploiting the opportunity to reappraise the relationship to the study of working and seeks to explore the strengths and limitations of existing research that examined the formulations of working, vocational behavior, and career development. Blustein brings to the table a new psychology of working that encompasses a comprehensive array of relevant issues facing professionals in the 21st century (Blustein, 2006,). Blustein supports that with the advent of personal computers and other forms of information technology, we are no longer able to separate our work lives and home lives by occupying physically distinct spaces (i. e., office and home)(Blustein, 2006).

Limitations

In the earlier research of vocational guidance, the cynosure was on assisting individuals to find the best match between their interests, abilities, and the requirements of a given position or job (Blustein, 2006)). This approach is commonly named the trait-factor (or later as the Person-Environment fit) model, was based largely on the growing sophistication in psychometrics and testing (Blustein, 2006). Blustein discuss the limitation of the Person-Environment Fit and the utility of person-environment fit models for individuals with some degree of choice in their work lives. It is imperative to

highlight a major findings in Blustein's research is that we are far from clear about how individuals from inner city ghettos, Native reservations, shantytowns in South America, and the rest of humanity's complex mosaic approach their working lives. Moreover, the models that we have developed to date assume that boundaries exist to clearly demarcate domains of life experience (Blustein, 2006).

Another view of work developed by scholars who have sought to understand the broader or more macro-aspects of working in pre-industrial and early industrial societies. Some of these ideas formed the basis for contemporary economic systems, including both capitalism (Locke, 1690/1975) and socialism (Marx, 1867). It is important, though, to note that both of these economic systems, developed by wealthy aristocrats, did not involve the input of the vast majority of workers influenced by these economic systems, particularly when they are implemented in extremely rigid ways. Questions about the how often workers have volition in their lives are still prominent in contemporary discourse

Also (Blustein, 2006) discovered that most scholars within vocational psychology and industrial and organizational (I/O) psychology simply did not have the life experiences of poor and working class individuals or of persons of color on their collective radar screens. In part, this research was due to the tendency for most psychologists to have emerged from the middle class (or to have disavowed their working class origins). Moreover, there was not a formal or informal inducement to study the experiences of people who had little, if any, volition in their working lives.

Blustein's perspective

As discussed in the previous section, earlier research have developed previous psychologies of work from vastly different social conditions, when the needs of society were very much rooted in an industrial era that fostered a great deal of regularity and constancy in work lives (Blustein, 2006).

Blustein (2006) research focuses on the psychological experience of working, embedded in an explicitly contextual framework; this framework developed into an inclusive and comprehensive taxonomy constructed around three core functions that working has the potential to fulfill (p. 21) working as a means of *survival and power*, work as a means of *social connections* and work as a means of *self-determination*. Blustein seeks to inclusiveness in his work that seeks to create and establish space for poor, working class individuals. This was not limited to social status but to those marginalized due to their gender, sexual orientation, psychological and medical health issues, and racial or ethnic status.

Conclusion

Doctor Blustein research purpose is to help the psychology of work, previous contributions, definitions, and rubric that assisted in defining the definition, the limitations of each of the contribution, and the Blustein offer his perspective on the psychology of work. The largest opportunity for growth from the previous research is its abandonment to include the poor, working class, and people of color; which limits the data of previous research which leads to an inclusive taxonomy or framework. In closing (Blustein, 2006) conveys that in subsequent chapters he hopes to foster a study of working

that is pragmatic, fair, and facilitative of an equitable social justice that is the birthright of each human being.

References

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