

Theory of career construction psychology essay



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The purpose of this case study is to apply Savickas Theory of Career Construction to a volunteer client Yelonda J. Complete a narrative interview using the structured interview questions in the Career Style Interview, and employing the six steps. Discuss interpretations, observations and obtain her feedback.

The theoretical foundation of Career Construction theory (CCT) has its beginnings from Constructivism, and according to Sharf (2009) Constructivism is a psychological approach that has developed out of a postmodern philosophical position. It has been stated the Postmodernism period was a “ reaction to modernism”, in that it highlighted differences in individual views rather than a one-sided, rational scientific view of modernism. (Sharf 2009) Constructivist saw individuals as creators of their own destiny, and constructivist counselors sought to help clients discover that meaning and resolve any discrepancy. (Sharf 2009)

According to (Sharf 2009, p316) the constructivism approach was greatly affected by the changing of the work environments in the 1970's. Employees were no longer staying with one position for their whole work life, as companies were becoming “ less loyal” to employees and watching out for own bottom-line by “ downsizing” their workforce to “ part-time”. Employees soon discovered they needed to take charge of their future and looked to career counselors for help. According to (Busacca, 2007) constructivist career counseling attempts to answer one question “ how can an individual negotiate a lifetime job changes and not lose a sense of self?”

Career construction theory (CCT) came about to help individuals develop meaning out of their career choices and actions. CCT address how an individual's "career" is made from its personal and social constructs. These constructs are not actual real reality, but an individual's representation of that reality. CCT defines career as an objective and subjective construct. Objectively speaking, career is a listing of positions from the past to present. Subjectively, career is the personal meaning or a pattern of experiences form past, present, future. (Savickas, 2005, p43)

CCT is made of three distinct perspectives and each seeks to determine how the individual views their life and career working together. (Busacca, 2007) These perspectives also help career counselor see how each individual views, makes adjustments and creates from their life experiences. These perspectives are life theme, career adaptability, and vocational personality.

The Purpose and the Suppositions

The purpose of CCT is to help the individual discover the subjective meaning in their work. In helping the individual discover this type of meaning, Career construction approach (CCA) stress the importance of the relationship between the individual and the counselor.

Life themes

In the previous career development theory we covered, Holland's inventories were used to obtain critical information about the individual, and make predictions of a career path and likely hood of success. Career Construction theory takes advantage of individual narrated stories to discover meaning behind the content. (Busacca, 2007) It has been stated " pattern is the

primary unit of meaning". " By consciously organizing and binding together these discrete experiences, a unifying life theme patterns" (Savickas 2005, p 58) " pattern becomes a fundamental and essential way of being because it provides a way for individuals to see themselves and what is important in the world." (Savickas, 2005 p58)

During a session an individual is encouraged to tell of work positions, experiences and develop a story linking career related experiences from the past to the present. The individual becomes the focus of attention as they narrated the counselor through their work and life stories. The counselor plays a less active role and listens for patterns in the individual's stories and life theme should begin to surface. (Busacca, 2007)

Career Adaptability

Once an individual has discovered a life theme, how they go about coping with the process of connecting with social expectations and " how" they construct their careers is the next step. (Savickas, 2005) Career counselors begin to ask questions of the individual such as " How did you decide on that career?' This is an important question to ask, because it relates to how the individual is choosing to cope or react to their social expectations. (Savickas 2005) stated adaptation was the interaction of " self" and " society" and it is this interaction where an individual develops their attitudes, beliefs, problem-solving and coping mechanisms. He went on to discuss four stages of adaptation resources. These resources are concern, control, curiosity and confidence. (Savickas, 2005)

During the career concern stage, a career counselor focuses on whether an individual was concerned about their future. A statement commonly made by individuals in this stage would be "Do I have a future?" A lack of career concern has a likelihood of becoming indifference which usually reflects a feeling of pessimism about the future. Career concern is important because it helps the individual to relate their current activities to future endeavors. The goal of this stage is the building of continuity of past and future career activities. (Savickas, 2005) (Busacca, 2007)

The career control stage, a career counselor focuses on whether the individual feels or believes they are responsible for their careers. A statement commonly made by individuals in this stage would be "Who owns my future?" The lack of career control has a likelihood of becoming career indecisiveness and can lead to attitudes of indecision. The goal of this stage is deciding by clarifying choices. (Savickas, 2005) (Busacca, 2007)

The career curiosity stage, a career counselor focuses on whether the individual discovered fit between self and the world of work. A statement commonly made by individuals in this stage would be "What do I want to do with my future?" The lack of career curiosity has the likelihood of becoming naïve about work options. The goal of this stage is exploration, learning about self and clarifying values. (Savickas, 2005) (Busacca, 2007)

The career confidence stage, a career counselor would focus on whether the individual displayed self-esteem, self-efficacy and encouragement. A statement commonly made by an individual in this stage would be "Can I do it?" A lack of career confidence has a likelihood of becoming unmotivated

and unwilling to obtain goals. The goal of this stage is increase self acceptance, develop problem solving abilities and encourage the willingness to try even when things look dark. (Busacca, 2007) (Savickas, 2005)

Vocational Personality

According to (Savickas, 2005) an individual's personality begins in the family, neighborhoods, and school. As that individual grows up, their characteristics are displayed everyday while doing housework, completing hobbies and playing games. CCT views these characteristics possibilities or “hypothesis” to explore for the discovering meaning. Unlike Holland's RAISEC which use an objective person-environment fit, CCT uses a subjective approach in demonstrating to the individual how they are similar to others in a given field, and share common feelings and ideas about work related activities.

Account of Session with Yelonda J.

Observations of Yelonda J.

Counseling Session with Yelonda J.