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WORK IN GLOBAL CONTEXT

After introducing the history and current status of career development and intervention in the last chapter, it is necessary to discuss several pertinent issues to further understand why it is important to understand career development of individuals and why counselors need to gain knowledge and skills in career intervention. What does work mean to individuals? How is work related to a person's self-concepts and life in general? What factors have a significant impact on individuals' career development? There may not be readily available consensus in the answers to these questions; however, presenting various views and updated research findings to these questions assists us to gain better understanding what kind of role work plays in our lives and how it influences our well-being. Thus, this chapter will explore these fundamental issues from both historical and cross-cultural perspectives and present a synthesis of how work is related to individuals' self-concepts, life roles, and health in the global context.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing the reading and exercises provided in this chapter, you will be able to:

- describe the meaning of work across historical contexts and various cultures,

- recognize the relationship between the global economy and the changing work environment,

- explain the relationship between work and health,

- identify the interrelatedness of work and family roles,

- examine the personal and contextual factors influencing career development,

- develop an integrated view of career development in the diverse and changing work world, and

- apply an ecological career counseling perspective to career intervention for personal growth and change.

MEANING OF WORK

Defining *work* is not as easy as it seems to be. Does work have to be paid or compensated? Is taking care of family members without pay considered work? How about volunteering work? The definition of *work* is probably different for different people at different times. Back in the early days when women did not have the right to vote or work outside of the home, women might not have been compensated for their contribution to taking care of family members and house chores, but would their share of the family responsibilities have been considered work? It seems that we need to define work first before discussing the meaning of work.

Definition of Work and Related Terms

"What do you do for a living?" "Where do you work?" and "What kind of job do you have now?" are typical questions asked when people try to get acquainted at social occasions. Occupation is a popular item as part of the demographic background on almost any survey. These questions solicit the information about one's occupation, and the expected responses imply information such as social status, income level, and educational background. Therefore, the terms *work*, *job*, and *occupation* are used in daily life interchangeably to indicate one's employment status. In Chapter 1, we provided definitions of these terms without much elaboration. The following definitions provide more discussion from the perspective of how these terms are conceptualized in the discourse of career development.

> *Job*—an activity people do to satisfy basic needs, for instance, to pay the bills so that people can support themselves and families for a living. A job requires certain qualifications, or otherwise, the employer would not be satisfied with the performance, so paid employment is the core of *job*.

> *Occupation*—*occupation* is a title given to a type of job that a group of people share. In other words, the nature of the job is similar, the entry requirements are the same, and the occupation can be across different organizations and settings.

> *Work*—an activity people do to satisfy multiple needs of life; can be paid or unpaid, but with a purpose to produce something. David Jepsen (2013) listed three hallmark qualities of work: (1) work involves purposeful effort; (2) work requires skills and talent; and (3) work yields a lasting product (p. 24). From this perspective, work is certainly more than a paid employment although it can be one's employment. Blustein said, "working involves effort, activity and human energy in given tasks that contribute to the overall and economic welfare of a given culture. This includes paid employment as well as work that one does in caring for others within one's family and community" (p. 3).

Therefore, *job* and *occupation* can be conceptualized as the terms to mean paid work one does, while *work* may be paid or unpaid and can be either in employment settings or at home. Work provides more than just financial compensation; it provides a purpose of life for people, or it provides meaning of one's deeds that may satisfy multiple dimensions

for individuals. The next sections will review the meaning of work from both historical and cross-cultural perspectives.

Meaning of Work From Historical Perspectives

Most people agree that work and one's identity are closely connected in the modern world; however, this connection has only existed for a little over one hundred years, as people began to have a choice in regard to occupation. Before the Industrial Revolution at the end of the 19th century, people were identified not by their occupation, but rather, by their last name or residence or class (Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2013). The classification of occupation emerged only after more jobs become available as a result of urbanization and industrialization. For centuries, people inherited their family's tradition of making a living, whether it was farm work or craftsmanship. Niles and Harris-Bowlsbey (2013) also stated that in classical societies, one worked for survival and that work was viewed as a curse as it involved hard labor. Therefore, the association of work and individual identity was not warranted.

One important influence on the meaning of work is the Christian belief that work is a will of God to help the less fortunate and for spiritual purification. This tradition has dominated Western civilization for a long time until the Reformation initiated by John Calvin. The predestination of Calvin's doctrine has influenced the meaning of work to be shifted to success oriented (Niles and Harris-Bowlsbey, 2013). In other words, working hard to pursue upward mobility is accepted as the norm and morally justified. This value was known as "Protestant work ethic," which emphasized diligence, independent effort, and self-sufficiency as virtuous. Prior to big corporations emerging as the result of industrialization, people worked for themselves, and personal and family needs could be met usually through their own work. Savickas (2013) referred to this kind of value as "vocational ethic." In contrast, once people migrated to urban cities and worked for organized companies, self-sufficiency was no longer valued; instead, climbing the corporate ladder became expected for successful workers. According to Savickas, this change from working for oneself to working for hierarchical organizations set the discourse of the "career ethic" in the 20th century. People strive to move up the corporate ladder and reach tenure within the organization. One's occupational status therefore defines one's identity as well.

The link between work and one's worth, a commonly accepted social norm that still dominates the 21st century, is another important aspect of meaning associated with work since the end of the 19th century. The kind of work individuals do indicates their social identity and economic status. In other words, one's work or occupation is a reference for others to judge his or her socioeconomic status. Work was often associated with success, good character, and hard work when dual bonding (i.e., loyalty to each other and taking care of each other's needs) from employers and employees was still available (Gibson & Mitchell, 2006). However, as stability of work is no longer a common phenomenon, people have less control over their careers, and they may involuntarily have to frequently change jobs.

In such a situation, the centrality of work in one's life as well as the link between work and self-worth create a stressful situation as people without work experiences not only experience a loss of financial security but also harmed self-esteem and identity (Herr, Cramer, & Niles, 2004). Thus, it is necessary to examine the meaning of work to individuals from a contextual perspective.

In the modern society, working functions to provide people with a way to establish an identity and as sense of coherence in their social interactions and furnishes part of their external identity in the world (Blustein, 2006). Blustein (2006) further stated that working has very personal meaning that is influenced to a great extent by individual constructions and by socially mediated interactions with others. Working has been one of the constants in our lives. According to Blustein, work serves several psychological functions: (a) it provides means to survival and power; (b) it provides means for people to build social connections and interpersonal relationships; and (c) it provides a means to achieve self-determination, regardless of whether the motivation is intrinsically or extrinsically driven. In summary, work fulfills economic functions, survival needs, and sociological functions and provides individuals with a means of fulfilling needs for connection, achievement, structure, and purpose.

It is human nature to search for meaning, and people need to have a purpose for living and to get answers to the following questions for themselves: Who am I? Where do I stand in these many relationships? What is my worth? Do I make a difference? Guevara and Ord (1996) stated that these questions basically reflect the three types of meaning that work can provide to people. One is a sense of belonging; work provides a social network for people. How many people have social relationships with coworkers or build social connections through work? The answer to this question probably provides a glimpse of people's social lives. Another way to understand how work plays such an important role in one's social life is to calculate the percentage of his or her friends that are known through work relationships and how much of one's time is spent with colleagues. For some people, work provides the only means of interpersonal connection (Blustein, 2006). Similarly, Goldsmith (1995) asserted that people have a need for endorsement or social acceptance and that work provides an avenue to satisfy this need. The second meaning associated to work noted by Guevara and Ord is that people find or establish their self-concept through work. In other words, through one's work, one can find an answer to the question "Who am I?" Many career development theories (See Chapters 4 and 5) actually view work as the outlet of self-concept. People often feel more satisfied with work if they find their values and interests are rewarded through their work. In a sense, if work provides an opportunity for us to fully satisfy our needs and implement self-concept, we find the purpose for going to work and the meaning of why we work, beyond making ends meet. The third aspect of meaning given to work is a sense of worth, or in other words, the sense of making a difference or impact on this world. This sense of making a difference in this world is similar to human nature of wanting to leave a legacy or the desire to see one's worth. The work produces an outcome or product, which in essence provides a sense of making a contribution for the benefit of society. For example, a grandma at age 85 is much happier when she can do some sewing jobs for her children or grandchildren. Knowing this, her children find some alterations or repairs for her do, even though they don't actually need these jobs completed. However, this work gives the grandma fulfillment when she thinks or feels her work is useful to others. Finding a position in relation to the outside world, making connections with others, and contributing to the common good of society also reflect social identity and social gratification individuals can achieve through work (Goldsmith, 1995).

To some people, the meaning of work is their response to *calling*. A *calling* was traditionally referred to as being called by God to serve. In modern times, a *calling* is defined as work that is motivated by a divine drive to integrate one's work with some overall purpose

or meaningfulness of life (Dik & Duffy, 2009). People often feel much joy when they find their calling, and finding one's calling means that one's personal characteristics can be applied to work that benefits the common good of society (Block & Richmond, 1997). Similarly, the spirituality of work has gained much attention in recent years because many people feel a loss of self at work and like to find an integration of spirituality in the workplace. Research has found that for those people who felt a calling in their work, the subjective and self-referred criteria were more salient than external criteria set by others (Heslin, 2005). This finding illustrates the importance of having a sense of meaning in work.

Work, for most people, first satisfies the needs of survival; once the survival needs are accommodated, people need to find purpose and meaning in work to feel motivated and inspired. Work, therefore, provides direction, meaning, relationships, and identity for individuals. The trend in work went from having no choice (in the agricultural economy), to choosing an occupation (during industrial context), to finding meaning in work (postmodern time). This evolution accounted for the relationship between people and work in the United States and many Western cultures.

Meaning of Work From Cross-Cultural Perspective

The meaning of work exhibits variability across different times, geographic locations, and social strata (Hall & Mirvis, 1996). If there is one common feature of work across different cultures, it might be supporting oneself and family to live when basic living has to be supported through work. In other words, when survival is still a challenge, making ends meet is what work should and needs to be. Beyond satisfying survival needs, the meaning of work is subjective perception; therefore, the sociocultural context in which people live and work inevitably influences how work is viewed and its implications to people. Work then has a unique meaning that is derived from and embedded within specific cultural contexts and is shaped by individual experiences of working.

Social, economic, and political structure changes all impact the meaning of work or attribution to work experiences (Ardichvili & Kuchinke, 2009). For instance, in Russia, the centrality of work was less important during the economically stable period and became increasingly critical post breakdown of the Soviet Union when the economy underwent transition. Another example is the reunited Germany where the meaning of work shifted from a duty-bound morality to an individualistic value orientation. These kinds of changing implications of work to individuals were the result of changing socioeconomic contexts. When everyone was assigned a job in the state planning economy (e.g., in former Soviet Union and China before economic reform), choice and autonomy was limited, which led people to view work more as a duty and responsibility than self-fulfillment. Similarly, individuals in a collectivism-oriented culture often feel more responsibility to contribute the family or group interests rather than personal satisfaction.

Even in the same socioeconomic environment, people from various cultural backgrounds or socioeconomic statuses may experience working differently, and therefore their perception of work is different. When people have no or limited choices, like some new immigrants in the United States or people without a lot of resources (e.g., education, support from family, network), work provides a means to satisfy basic human needs. Thus, the meanings of work, such as identity or purposefulness as discussed previously, may or may not be endorsed by people in this situation.

LEARNING ACTIVITY 2.1

Divide the class into an even number of groups, and then give each group a different task. Even-numbered group members will respond to the question "If I win $10 million in the lottery, will I quit my job?" Odd-numbered group members will role play as cocktail party attendees, and each member can choose anybody they want to be (including themselves), and at the end, the group will discuss what information they are interested in knowing about others and what information they feel comfortable sharing.

A multinational study on the meaning of work (Meaning of Work International Research Team, 1987) examined the centrality of work in Belgium, Britain, China, Germany, Hong Kong, Israel, Japan, Netherlands, the United States, and Yugoslavia and found that the importance of centrality of work is much higher in China, Japan, and Hong Kong than European countries except Yugoslavia, which was in the middle range along with the United States and Israel. The data also showed that among six valued work outcomes, *Income* was ranked first for all locations. China is the only country ranking *Serving the Society* second and *Interesting and Satisfying* the sixth, which was almost the reversed order for other locations (Westwood & Lok, 2003). It is noted that the MOWIRT data was collected in the mid-1980s and that a lot of changes have occurred in the world economy since then. These changes in some regions, for example in China, were dramatic and significantly influenced people's lives; therefore, it is unknown whether the same pattern of valued work outcome would still exist.

The meaning attributed to work varies depending on social, economic, political, and cultural context. As the work economy is increasingly globalized, the impact of the changing global economy is worthy of examination. The next section will discuss the occupational structure change in global context and a changing work environment.

WORK AND GLOBAL CHANGING ECONOMY

Traditional work is typically geographically specified and time restricted. In other words, your work setting can be described as Ames, Iowa, or Bangkok, Thailand. Your work schedule is 7 to 3 or 9 to 5, depending on whether you work as a school teacher or office worker. However, in today's world, one might work from home in Ames, Iowa, but for a company with its main office in London, England, and further, one does not have a set schedule from 9 to 5 but rather works whenever it fits the time allowance of colleagues in a global setting. The changing occupational structure, advancement of technology, and globalized economy make this scenario possible.

Changing Occupational Structure on Global Context

For the last two decades, the United States, as well as the world, has witnessed significant changes in occupational trends, with some jobs phasing out and new jobs

surfacing on a very fast pace. Being employed in the post office was considered, for a long time, to be secure, as it is almost a lifelong guaranteed job. However, post office service clerk is one of the fastest declining jobs in the United States according to the labor statistics of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2017). The other fastest or largest declining occupations are related to machine operation, textile fields, switch board operator, farmers, data entry, and word processing typists. The recently published employment projection for 2016-2026 by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2017) revealed that health care and associated occupations accounted for a larger share of new jobs and are on a rising trend. Occupations with faster than average employment growth include personal care and service occupations, community and social service occupations, and computer and mathematical occupations. Of the fastest growing occupations, 18 require some level of postsecondary education for entry. It becomes apparent that the diminishing jobs are all being replaced by technology innovations; in other words, what used to be done by humans can now be more efficiently done by machines or computers.

Technology advancement and globalization are the main reasons for occupational structural change. Outsourcing has become a household term in the new millennium. Outsourcing is an example of globalization but also another example of the impact of technology. With information technology, a customer service call from the United States can be answered by a contract worker in the Philippines. In the late 20th century, many manufacturing jobs were moved from the United States to developing countries in South America or Asia. An occupational growth projection in 1999 stated that the fastest growing occupations for the future were computer engineers, computer support specialists, database administration, data processing, equipment repairs, desktop publishing specialists, medical assistants, paralegals, and personal care and health aides (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1999). The top five were all jobs related to application of computer science and engineering. Almost 20 years later in 2017, a computer-related occupation is still on the top of the list of fastest growing occupations, but at the ninth place, and it is software developer. The top 10 fastest growing occupations are in new technology (solar photovoltraic, wind turbine service technician), health care (e.g., personal care aides, home health aide), and data analysis and management (statistician, mathematician) (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017). The reasons for this change could be due to the aging population (need for health care), and these health care and service jobs cannot be outsourced because they require geographic proximity. One cannot have someone across the ocean aid a senior for bathing, for instance. The projected increase in jobs in data analysis and management is largely due to emerging needs of using big data for business decisions and services.

The shift of growth in manufacturing occupations to technology jobs and then to health and service-related jobs in the last five decades in the United States reflects the structural change in the economy, as result of technology and a globalized market and society (Andersen & Vandehey, 2012). Consider two of the most well-known products of the United States: iPhone and Hollywood movies. The production of both involves multinational professionals across the globe. However, outsourcing, downsizing, and corporate mergers have created unprecedented challenges for workers, as with the changes come the instability. The impact of instability on individuals will be illustrated in the later part of this chapter.

CASE ILLUSTRATION 2.1

JOSHUA AND SOPHIA

Joshua Wright, a 46-year-old White male, worked in a large equipment manufacturing company for close to 23 years. He started as an engineer, and then became a project manager, and then a sales manager. Five years after he began working for the company, he started an MBA program, and the company paid 90% of his tuition. At the beginning of the new millennium, he was assigned to work in South America as the regional director. He met his second wife there. Joshua and his wife moved back to the United States after working in South America for four years. Joshua could not find an appropriate position within the company. There were not a lot of higher level managerial positions available, and he seemed overqualified or even "outdated" for engineering jobs. He became a project manager again, but he often felt unsatisfied because he did not think his skills and experience were fully used. He started to consider finding a different job and did not mind relocation. Sophia, his wife, was native speaker of Spanish and had a college degree in literature. She tutored students in Spanish for some time, but she couldn't find a full-time job with health care coverage. Joshua has to stay in his project manager position because his family needs the medical insurance. Then, a headhunter approached Joshua and asked him if he was interested in working for a computer hardware manufacturing company as the sales director. The position did not require relocation but did require extensive travel both domestically and internationally, which meant that he would not be home for most of the time, sometimes including holidays because of the different holiday schedules in other countries. Joshua and Sophia had two teenage children, and they lived in a city where they didn't have other family members nearby (Sophia's family is in South America). Joshua took the position

because (1) it was a position that could provide him opportunity to fully use his abilities, which would make him happier; (2) it provided a higher income and fringe benefits, plus the perks related to being a frequent flyer provided by airlines and hotels; and (3) it also provided an opportunity for career advancement. Joshua worked in this position for six years, then, at age 52, he lost his job due to the company being purchased by another company from Europe and the international sector was totally reorganized and consolidated with the new parent company. Joshua tried very hard to find a new job but to no avail. Meanwhile, Sophia began receiving more requests for her tutoring work. She tutored not only high school and college students who took Spanish classes, but her largest group of clients was actually adults who wanted to learn the language, either for personal enrichment or for advancing careers. Many of her adult students told her that proficiency in Spanish could help them get a job or a better job. Sophia thought maybe it was the time for her to look for a full-time job.

Discussion Questions

1. How would you describe Joshua's career path in relation to globalization? What are advantages and disadvantages of the global economy for Joshua and his family?

2. What would you have recommended Joshua do when he was laid off from his second employer?

3. Would you suggest Sophia look for a new full-time job? Or, would you recommend she maintain the same flexible, part-time tutoring job and encourage Joshua to find a similar job to what he did before? What are the reasons for your recommendation?

Changing Workplace

Technology and globalization did not simply have an impact on the patterns of occupations shifting from industrial to service; the workforce is becoming more divers than

ever, too. Since the early 1960s, more women and racial/ethnic minority members have entered the workforce, and the participation rate by diverse groups in the labor force is increasing. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2017), the labor force continues to change in racial and ethnic composition with the percentage Asian and Hispanic workers growing much faster than the average; workers of Hispanic origin are expected to make up about 1 out of 5 workers in 2026. In addition, despite the forthcoming big wave of retirement of baby boomers, more workers actually postpone retirement for various reasons. Some delay retirement due to financial situations, as the economic crisis in 2008 adversely affected many people's pension plans and retirement investments, and some push back the timeline of retirement because they still enjoy the fulfillment that work brings them. In some cases, particularly in the declining fields, there are simply not enough qualified young people to fill the positions. The diverse workforce is also a result of globalization (e.g., cooperate mergers, outsourcing) with people representing different countries of origin, languages, religions, ethnicities, and other aspects of culture in one workplace. The diversity issues of career development and intervention will be further analyzed in Chapter 3.

Change is also occurring in work styles because of the technology availability and diverse workforce. An example is flexible work hours, due to various time zones and working from home. The Internet makes work more mobile and accessible to people. A teacher can grade her students' assignment via an online platform even when she is at a Virginia beach and her students are in California. The younger generation workers bring a very different style to work settings, as they are more technology savvy and used to instant gratification. A *60 Minutes* episode, "The Millennials Are Coming," reported that companies need to hire consultants to train new millennial employees to learn the basics of being a professional while at the same time training managers to work with millennials who grew up with the belief that they are special and can do anything they want. For younger generation workers, their priority is not necessarily work, as their parents or boomers have chosen; instead, they choose their lifestyle and friends as their priority.

The demand of work performance is also changing, as the result of the occupational trend change from manufacturing to technology to service. Traditional skills such as memory, typing, and mechanical abilities are no longer as valued as before because volumes of information can be easily searched on the Internet in one click. It is more important to know how to locate and navigate the information than remembering the information. Thirty years ago, a secretary needed skills in typing and dictating; today, a secretary needs to be able use computer software for word processing, spreadsheets, and databases well to qualify for the work. No office workers today can survive without using e-mail. Communication is essential in work settings considering the diverse workforce, multidisciplinary approach often required to solve problems, and distant locations of colleagues.

The changes in economy, work settings, workforce, and work styles signal the constant need for learning new skills to keep up with change. The interconnectedness of a global market shaped the structure of economies to be interdependent; therefore, one event at a region could cause a series of events in many nations. The uncertainty could negatively impact individuals' sense of safety and emotional status. The following section will explain the relationship between work and health.

WORK AND HEALTH

The relationship between work and health is complex and multidimensional. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health as "complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity" (World Health Organization, n.d.). What role does work play in achieving such-defined health? How does health impact one's work? Or verse versa, how does work impact one's health? It is commonly understood that one needs good health to perform work duties. In fact, poor health conditions, or limiting physical and mental health, negatively affects individuals' likelihood of being employed (Pacheco, Page, & Webber, 2014). On the other hand, work demands and conditions can also affect individuals' overall health (Kramer & Chung, 2015; Oginska-Bulik, 2005).

Work and Physical Health

In the modern work world, almost everyone feels stressed and tired regardless of what kind of occupations they have. Think of yourself as an example. When was the last time that you felt relaxed, energetic, and full of creative ideas that you wanted to try at work? The high demand for efficiency and productivity in work settings in the 21st century means that everyone needs to be held accountable for achieving efficiency and productivity. As a result, many workers have to work long hours to keep up with the demand. Another factor for people putting in more work hours is the increased or higher cost of living. Many people need to work more than one job to make ends meet, which means they need to work longer hours. Longer work hours means that there is less time to take care of one's other needs, for example, sleep time, interaction time with family and friends, and leisure activities. Research has found that longer work hours were likely to elevate body mass index (BMI) over time (Kramer & Chung, 2015). It is no surprise then that one's health could be compromised if work leads to deprivation of a healthy lifestyle.

The relationship between work and physical health is certainly not a one-way direction. Just as longer time and higher demands at work can potentially create stress and negatively affect health, unemployment or underemployment was found by the researches to be harmful to physical health (Anderson & Winefield, 2011). Losing jobs means interruption of steady income and possibly health insurance through the employer. Underemployment created uncertainty to individuals as well because of inability to provide sufficient resources. The issues as result of unemployment or underemployment, such as financial security, sense of identity, and connection to the others, can be overwhelming for people. The researchers found that both unemployment and underemployment are strongly associated with unhealthy behaviors, particularly with drinking (Anderson & Winefield, 2011). The cutback of healthy behavior (exercise) and the surge of risky behavior (binge drinking) can increase the likelihood of chronic illnesses such as hypertension, diabetes, and mental health.

Physical health is not only related to the loss of a job or inadequate employment but also to people who are working as well. Specifically, it seems that cardiovascular disease and digestive ulcers were commonly found among people who have job-related stress or job misfit (Faragher, Cass, & Cooper, 2005; Siegrist, 1996). It is interesting to note that the correlation between cardiovascular disease seems more robust with people who feel that they have made great efforts but received fewer rewards. This could be an indication of

interrelationship between mental health and physical health. As people feel less recognized or rewarded for their hard work, stress or negative feelings could impact their physical health. Job characteristics can affect one's physical health as well. For instance, a common understanding (perhaps a stereotype also) is that people working in manufacturing or other labor-intensive occupations tend to drink and smoke more often. Some researchers did find differences between workers in different fields in regard to risky behaviors and health conditions; that is, workers with more people interaction and responsibility for others' welfare were more likely to have hypertension and reduced risk of drinking (Alterman et al., 2008). On the other hand, physical health status can impact work performance. Fatigue can impair one's function. A meta-analysis of the relationship between job performance and one's overall health indicated that somatic complaints, high blood pressure, and obesity all negatively impacted employees' task performance either by self-reported evaluation or supervisors' ranking (Ford, Cerasoli, Higgins, & Decesare, 2011). Ford et al. (2011) further explained that high blood pressure had the most consistent negative impact on task performance compared to the other physical symptoms.

Work and Mental Health

As stated earlier, as physical and mental health are interrelated, it is not surprising then that an association between work and mental health exists as well. The relationship between mental health and employment status is, however, reciprocal, meaning mental health issues can be risk factors for unemployment but can also be the consequences of unemployment or underemployment (Olesen, Butterworth, Leach, Kelaher, & Pirkis, 2013). Many studies have found that loss of jobs or inadequate employment resulted in depression, anxiety, and increased drinking and drug abuse (Faragher et al., 2005; Mossakowski, 2008; Oginska-Bulik, 2005; Tsutsumi, Kayaba, Theorell, & Siegrist, 2001). Further, people with full-time employment had lower levels of stress and depressive symptoms, had healthier eating habits, exercised more, and consumed less alcohol or cigarettes (Rosenthal, Carroll-Scott, Earnshaw, Santilli, & Ickovics, 2012). These research findings provided support to the concept discussed earlier in this chapter about the centrality of work to individuals' lives and identities. Therefore, unemployment is even more detrimental to one's mental health than physical health. Some researchers have argued that the impact of losing a job bears similarities to one going through grief process (Herr, 1989). Unemployment and underemployment not only affect mental health of individuals but also families and communities (Pedulla & Newman, 2011).

Work performance is another area that has been examined for its association with psychological well-being. An old cliché, "Happy workers are more productive," is actually true in reality. Ford et al. (2011) verified that psychological well-being is more strongly related to work performance than physical health. Their findings based on meta-analysis of multiple studies found that depression, anxiety, and fatigue were negatively correlated to work performance and that life satisfaction is positively related to work performance. According to Ford et al., work performance is impaired probably because poor psychological health leads to cognitive deficits—for example, memory problems, learning, and executive functioning—typically required at work. Neglecting mental health then can jeopardize work productivity. Even more challenging is the invisibility of mental health disorders perceived in the workplace, resulting in a lack of support or intervention (Denman, 2015).

LEARNING ACTIVITY 2.2

Ask students to design a work environment they think would help workers feel happy and productive. Then, review the elements they included in their designs, and discuss why these elements are important to have for a satisfying work environment. The design should be comprehensive, in other words, the work environment is not limited to physical environment or work settings; it should also include policies and procedures to make workers perform to their best.

If work performance is more of a concern for employers, job satisfaction certainly is more of an individual concern and mission of career counselors. A satisfying job gives people a sense of happiness and fulfillment. Too often we have witnessed the same individual presents totally different attitudes about life and himself or herself when his or her job situation changes. For instance, a woman who enjoys interacting with people and fashion design was miserable when she worked at a printing factory where she had to wear a uniform and performed repeated tasks on a machine daily with minimum communication with coworkers. The same woman changed jobs and became a sales clerk in the woman's department of a department store, and she figuratively glowed at work and home. Unsatisfying jobs can lead to several mental health disorders, including depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem (Edwards & Rothbard, 1999; Faragher et al., 2005; Oginska-Bulik, 2005; Tsutsumi et al., 2001). A variety of situations at work settings may contribute to one's lack of job satisfaction. Misfit of the personal characteristics and job requirements can make people feel less satisfied, just as the woman who worked in a printing factory, illustrated earlier. If the job demands are high, yet the rewards are not, people may feel unsatisfied. If people work in an environment with no or low autonomy, they tend to feel less satisfied, as their sense of independence and control is not accommodated.

The complex and reciprocal relationship between mental health and work may require workers be aware of work-related stress or anxiety. In order to alleviate work-related stress and anxiety, in addition to being attentive to work schedules, workloads, and time balance, it is also important to seek support from families, colleagues, and supervisors. Relationships in work settings could be critical to the support and resources one needs to combat job-related stress. Research found that feedback received from supervisors about employees' work increased levels of job satisfaction and that workers receiving support from their supervisors had improved mental health compared to those who did not (Martin & Schinke, 1998; Stansfeld, Fuhrer, Shipley, & Marmot, 1999). In a similar fashion, harsh criticism was negatively related to job performance and satisfaction. Constructive feedback and support from supervisors signals care for workers and makes them feel valued and respected. Transparency is also essential. It is important for both employees and employers to engage in dialogue to understand each other's perspectives. In this respect, workers can see how their work performance is related to the entire organization's welfare and develop a sense of belonging, an element for meaning of work (Blustein, 2006).

As Herr (1989) once stated, "unemployment, problematic work relationships, and stressful work conditions play a significant role in the development of physical and mental health problems" (p. 8). The multi-aspect and multilevel relationship between work and

health reveals the importance of work in one's life and its central role in one's psychological well-being. It is evident that a happy and satisfied worker would have better performance at work and would suffer from a variety of physical and mental health problems if becoming unemployed or underemployed. At work, job-related stress and anxiety could impact one's health as well. The following section will discuss the relationship between job satisfaction and job stress.

Job Satisfaction and Occupational Stress

Since work plays such a central role in one's life and health, it is valuable for both organizations and workers to become aware of contributing factors to job satisfaction and job-related stress. Such information should be helpful to prevention and intervention of occupational stress, burnout, and health problems. According to the WHO, work-related stress is the response people may have when the work demands are beyond their knowledge and abilities to deal with or incompatible to their values and skills (WHO, n.d.). Occupational stress becomes a national and international concern as the cost of occupational stress is estimated to be huge (Dollard & Winfield, 1996). Workers' health, if compromised, leads to more absence from work, then to low productivity, and also higher costs of health insurance (WHO, n.d.). On the other hand, happy and satisfied workers can be not only productive but also creative and then generate more positive outcomes for themselves and their employers.

The risk factors for occupational stress can be classified into two categories. One is the work characteristics, meaning the work has high demands of attention, effort, hours, and emotional investment. For instance, working at emergency departments in hospitals typically is highly stressful because of the nature of the work. Some people might find such highly demanding jobs fit their personal characteristics and abilities well and do not feel the stress level is more than normal, but for some people, working at an emergency department is too stressful because of the lack of routine and stability. The risk factor category is the work environment, which includes two subcategories: organization support and interpersonal relationships. Research has found that employees feel anxious when no clear structures, expectations, or feedback are provided and when there is no predictable or clear information shared with workers for policy, decision, or career and professional development opportunities (Burke, 1976, 1993). The interpersonal relationships among coworkers, particularly, the relationship between supervisors and supervisees, could determine one's perception of friendly or unfriendly work environment.

Two theoretical models have been widely used for accounting for occupational stress: Karasek's Demand-Control-Support Model and Siegrist's Effort-Reward Imbalance Model. The Demand-Control-Support Model posits that high demand, low control, and low social support at workplace would most likely cause people to experience occupational stress. When individuals are requested to perform a task that is not within their capacity, are not in the position to make any changes, and receive no support from supervisors or colleagues and are still expected to deliver the product, they feel no way out. An example of this type of situation could be a school receptionist at the front desk made to deal with an angry parent who demands her child be placed in a different classroom, with an administrator who insisted that the staff in the principal's office should handle the issue, and this receptionist received no support from the school

counselors or other colleagues. Mark and Smith (2012) found that managers' support did have mediating effects on the relationship between work demands and stress level of workers. The same study also found that rewards and coping skills could have impact on one's mental health. The Effort-Reward Imbalance model proposed that workers would have work-related stress and health problems if their effort in the workplace does not result in adequate rewards. This proposition can be evidenced by the research about job satisfaction that identified opportunities to learn and advance up the career ladder, good salary, and respect of colleagues as the reasons for job satisfaction (Burke, 1976; Jawahar, 2012). It is evident that occupational stress occurs if the demands and tasks are beyond people's knowledge and skills and when they perceive lack of support, decision-making power, or rewards for their effort and performance. Simply put, when demands are high, and the rewards are low, workers tend to have decreased job satisfaction.

Not surprisingly, contributing factors to job satisfaction include reasonable work demands, some sense of control over what and how individuals accomplish the work, and receiving support from the organization and others. In addition, research has confirmed that job satisfaction is more likely when individual needs, values, and expectations were matched to the workplace (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984). This fitness between personal characteristics and work environment exemplifies another theoretical framework on occupational stress—the person and environment fit model (Caplan & Harrison, 1993), which depicts that poor fit between personal characteristics and the workplace increased the possibility of developing stress. Job satisfaction is more than just the absence of risk factors, and it reflects the meaningfulness one can find in his or her effort at work. Robert, Young, and Kelly (2006) argued that meaningfulness, a component in spiritual well-being, is associated with job satisfaction as it provides fulfillment and sense of accomplishment for individuals. Thus, job satisfaction, more than just the nonexistence of negative feelings in the workplace, provides people a sense of worthiness and sense of belonging. When satisfaction is absent, mental and physical health could be compromised.

Prevention of work-related illness is important to both individuals and society at large. A national organization, the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), as a section within Centers for Disease Control and Prevention(CDC), has the mission to address occupational stress and hazards. The coping strategies for preventing occupational stress should target building a better fit between individual expectations and work demands, providing channels for individuals to have their voices heard at workplaces, and offering support and promoting collegiality. Empowerment was found to positively reduce work-related stress and to improve job satisfaction (Andrew & Kacmar, 2014). Increasing individuals' problem-solving skills, resources, and coping strategies and soliciting support from work and social networks would help workers achieve job satisfaction as well (Mark & Smith, 2012). It is also important to make any prevention and intervention programs be appropriate in the multicultural workplace with a diverse workforce (Pasca & Wagner, 2011).

Employee assistance programs (EAP) are prevention and intervention programs at the workplace to help both employees and employers identify and resolve personal concerns; EPAs are a vital tool for maintaining and improving worker health and productivity (ODEP, 2018). EPA services typically include mental health services, referrals, substance abuse counseling, career counseling, counseling services for personal issues and family relationship, work/life support, and wellness and health promotion. Several researchers

suggest EAPs can set up policies, procedures, and practices to increase mental health literacy in the workplace, provide mental health training for employees, and promote the use of workplace support (Denman, 2015; Hancock & Page, 2013). Despite the evidence of EAPs to benefit workers in regard to retention, performance, and decreased medical costs, EAPs are underused (Hancock & Page, 2013). Counselors trained within wellness and strength-based models are well positioned to advocate for and promote implementation of EAPs in work settings.

PERSONAL AND CONTEXTUAL FACTORS FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT

The impact of the changing work environment and the complex relationship between work and health leads us to believe that a person's career development is shaped and influenced by both personal and contextual factors. Understanding the interaction of personal and contextual factors and their impact would better assist counselors conceptualize the challenges and barriers, as well as assets and resources of individuals in their career development and career decision-making process. Individual career development is a product of the interactive impact of psychological, biological, sociocultural, political, economic, educational, and historical influences.

Personal Factors

Personal factors are either innate characteristics from individuals' biological background or developed as the result of their growing up experiences, including family background and educational accessibility. Individuals' career paths might be variant depending on the extent to which they can implement or find an outlet for these features at work. These factors are important for individuals to become aware of since good understanding of oneself is a critical part of the career exploration process and essential for career development across the life span.

Genetic Factors

The physique of a person, such as height, weight, and skin color, are examples of genetic factors that are easily identified from appearance. There are some other genetic factors that are not so obvious. One's sensibility, motor skills, and disability categories and status, for instance, may not be easily known to the others or sometimes even to individuals themselves and may require professional evaluation. For instance, many people do not know that they have a learning disability until high school or college. In a general sense, most people have sufficient physical capacities required by common occupations; however, some occupations require such specific physical prowess that only certain people with innate talents can succeed (Isaacson & Brown, 2000). Almost everyone can play basketball for fun or exercise, but not everyone can play basketball as a profession; meanwhile, professional basketball players can do many other vocations after retirement. Gender, race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation all can influence how people make their career decision and path.

Psychological Characteristics

Whether one feels satisfied with her or his career choice and, consequently, whether she or he decides to stay or leave a job, is largely related to whether the job provides an avenue for the person to meet the needs, outcomes, and values one expects of work. Many of the career development theories (see Chapters 4 and 5) explain how one makes a career choice to fulfill needs out of personal desire and family obligation and expectations for one's life. Isaacson and Brown (2000) stated the personal psychological characteristics affecting one's career success include aptitude, interests, personality, and values. Aptitude, and specifically intelligence, and information processing ability are considered by the researchers to have an impact on one's career aspiration and path (Gottfredson, 2005; Sampson, Peterson, Lentz, & Reardon, 1992). Interests, a common studied and measured characteristic in career development research, is often viewed as the utmost factor for one's career aspiration, or at least the initial motivating factor. Many of the career intervention strategies also focus on discovering and defining one's interests in various occupations and then finding a career in which people can realize these interests. Despite the positive relationship between one's interests in occupations and chosen occupations, not everyone can work in a job in which they are fully interested in due to many other factors that can affect their career development. Personality and values are the other two common psychological constructs theorized and assessed by researchers to explain career choice behavior and work performance (e.g., Holland's Typology Theory and Super's Developmental Approach, which will be reviewed in Chapter 4). A very shy person probably will not choose sales as an occupation, just as an extroverted individual cannot imagine working all day alone in a cubicle without any human interaction.

Personal Resources

Personal resources can be understood as personal background factors that would influence individuals' access and preparation for entering into the workforce. These factors include a person's socioeconomic status, the sociocultural and socioeconomic backgrounds of the family, access to education and training, and the social network of individuals and their families. Socioeconomic status significantly influences a person's career planning and success through education opportunities and other learning enrichment opportunities (Isaacson & Brown, 2000). Extracurricular programs typically require investment by the parents; those students whose parents have higher earning power are more likely to be involved in off-school learning activities such as private tutoring, study abroad programs, and skill development classes (e.g., piano, ballet, figure skating). Access to education determines what kind of curriculum and learning experiences one has, which has been found by research to significantly influence self-efficacy and career choices (Brown & Lent, 2013). Because of the importance of educational levels and quality to career development, people's learning experiences are critical to their career aspirations and paths. Family dynamics and parents' work experience can provide vicarious learning experiences for children, too. In sum, personal resources are determined by many contextual factors in a person's life.

Contextual Factors

Sometimes people cannot choose the occupations they are interested in, not because they do not have interests or abilities, but because they do not have sufficient training or

credentials to meet the requirements. Or, even if they are able to make a career choice they like, by the time they complete the necessary training and are ready to enter the workforce, there is no job for them because the economy is gloomy. These contextual factors are beyond the control of individuals.

Work Requirements

The nature of work itself is a factor for individuals to consider in making career decisions. Some basic skills such as reading and writing are necessary for most jobs; and as discussed before, some minimum skills in using computer and online communication (e.g., e-mail, online posting) are becoming increasingly essential at workplaces now. Some jobs require specialized training, for example, being an aircraft pilot; some require much longer time in education before entering into the profession, for example, being a cardiologist; and some require certain physical or cognitive abilities, for example, being able to lift 75 pounds or being able to detect a pattern in a seemingly random string of numbers. The work environment can also influence individuals' career decisions—for example, outdoor versus indoor work, a routine time schedule versus a changing every day schedule, or working with machines versus working with people. These work requirements and conditions cause people to either consider or avoid choosing the occupation. Related to the work environment is the relationship and interaction among coworkers, or the organizational culture. The characteristics of the work environment, that is, if the work setting provides autonomy, support, respect, and comfort, are important to many people. Some people like to work in a relaxed work environment where codes for attire and communication style are more informal; however, not everyone likes a laid-back work environment. The nature of work requirements and working conditions as well environments are factors people consider in making their career choices.

Sociocultural Influence

There is nothing more important than sociocultural influences on people's career development as career development is a process of socialization. When one asks the question "What do you do for living?" at a cocktail party, people often use the answers given to evaluate the person's social status, because the type of occupations has certain ascribed values by society. People have developed stereotypes of occupations in regard to their typical characteristics, income, and prestige in the society. These stereotypical understandings of occupations are developed through observation of people working in the field either in reality or media. Accordingly, people are influenced by these sociocultural factors in their selection of careers (see details of Gottfredson's career development theory in Chapter 4). People typically choose an occupation that they feel is acceptable to their perceived self-identification in social status, including prestige level, gender role, and ethnic group. An example of sociocultural influence on one's career development can be found in the case that many women in the early decades of the 20th centuries worked as teachers, nurses, and secretaries if they chose to work, because back then, the social norms for women at work were in these occupations. As of today, young girls have many more choices than their grandparents because the society in most industrialized countries has evolved to accept female leaders, female doctors, female scientists, and female professional athletes, for example.

CASE ILLUSTRATION 2.2

TERESA'S DILEMMA

Teresa is a 48-year-old female, divorced and currently unemployed. She has three children, and two of her children are married and living on their own; the youngest is in her late teens. Teresa was born with a congenital heart defect, which was initially believed would prevent her from living beyond infancy. She underwent an experimental heart surgery at age three. She has had to exercise some caution about the type of physical activities she performs.

Her family was from the Appalachian mountain region and moved to an urban area for better job opportunities. She described her family as poor, uneducated, and living hand-to-mouth; her parents did not finish high school and did not seem to expect her to have any further education after high school.

She attended six different high schools in four years; she reported that she took mainly college preparatory courses because she enjoyed them. She earned acceptable grades and spoke to a school counselor about her wish to attend college, but the counselor was unsupportive. Even though she earned 27 on the ACT, she did not go to college; instead, she married right after her high school graduation. She married a man who had just completed army training and was sent to Vietnam after the wedding. After military service, her husband made his living either as a semiskilled construction worker or as a truck driver. He never provided a steady income and a continuity of benefits, especially health insurance, which made Teresa's heart condition worsen.

Teresa scored high enough on the civil service test to be hired at the post office for a period of two and a half years. She became pregnant and took a leave from the post office. After the child was born, she was rehired by the post office full time as a night worker and had to care for her child during the daytime. When forced to leave the post office, she joined a local dog club and began to give private lessons in dog obedience. This work schedule was flexible and allowed her to take care of her children. However, her long hours of work over an extended period of time aggravated her heart condition; she collapsed at work one day and then she had to cut back to part-time work, and later, she had to quit her job altogether. A year later, she went back to work as a courier for a multilocation automobile dealer. Even this job became too much for her, and she collapsed again at work due to a third-degree heart block. She underwent open heart surgery to correct her heart condition.

After her surgery, it was clear that she could not do any job involving physical labor. Her friends at the local dog club encouraged her to attend college. She then enrolled at a local college. During her junior year, her marriage fell apart. She and her husband were divorced during her senior year. She graduated with a double major in social work and sociology and GPA of 3.98. Her employment goal is to become a rehabilitation counselor. She is currently working full time on a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling at a state university. Teresa is worried about whether she can work full time again and if her health and her family situation can accommodate that.

Discussion Questions

1. What individual and contextual factors do you see from this case illustration that affected Teresa's career development?

2. If you were Teresa's counselor, what would you do to help her? What are some potential issues you think need to be addressed?

3. What are the assets and barriers Teresa has in her ecological system?

Socioeconomic Influence

During the graduation seasons of 2009 to 2012, if one watched the TV news on major channels such as NBC, ABC, or CBS, one would have seen pretty consistent reports: College graduates have a tough time securing a job; their starting salary is lower

than expected or than their counterparts of the previous years. With the housing market crash, and changes discussed in the section about work and the global economy, the U.S. economy went into recession. So many people lost their jobs that everyone knew someone either in their family or social network that got laid off from work. The labor market is a significant factor because people cannot enter the workforce if the demand for new workers is nonexistent, or people's careers are interrupted if their positions are cut. Besides economic factors, significant events could impact the supply and demand as well. For instance, there was an increasing need for hiring workers in transportation security after the September 11 tragedy in 2001 and in Internet security as online databases and business transactions become more commonly practiced. The labor market, economic situation, and historical context that individuals encounter during their life spans influence their career trajectories tremendously.

INTEGRATED VIEW OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT

As evidenced in the previous sections on the centrality of work in individuals' lives and its impact on health, career development cannot be separated from the development of a whole person and should not be viewed only for finding a matching career for the person; it should be viewed as an integral part of human development. The multifaceted nature of the relationship of work and other aspects of life needs to be understood. Career services to individuals also need to be integrated, addressing the dynamics and complexities of work and life.

Work and Other Aspects of Life

Family and Work

Family and work have a reciprocal relationship with each other. A happy family life could be helpful to satisfying and productive work; and fulfilling and satisfying work could result in a happy family life and quality relationships. This reciprocal relationship can be explained by the compensatory model, which indicates that better adjustment in one area compensates for poor adjustment in another area; or the spill-over model, that is, an individual's behavior and attitudes can be carried over between work and home settings (Schultz & Henderson, 1985). Better coordination of the conflict between family and work demand, such as work hours, schedule conflicts, spouse career, change in family structure, fatigue and irritability, can lead to high productivity. Having family members use EAPs could help to alleviate some domestic stressors and family-to-work conflict and eventually help work performance (Hancock & Page, 2013).

People who have supportive families and who have help with the household chores and who are able to obtain appropriate childcare tend to be more satisfied with their jobs (Rudd & McKenry, 1986). These people have more of a balance between work and home life, with support in the activities they engage in at work and home (Rudd & McKenry, 1986), have decreased impairment at work (Casey & Grzywacz, 2008), and less intention to leave their jobs (Haar, 2004). More dissatisfaction occurred when there was too much work that overflowed into home life, than when the balance was weighted with more

family involvement that might influence work life (Haar, 2004). If one can maintain a balance between work and home, the general health of the family is improved (Rudd & McKenry, 1986). If a person is able to have a supportive and intimate relationship with his or her family, he or she has an enhanced sense of well-being.

What occurs at home can sometimes interfere with work. If there is a lot of stress at home, it can lead a person to have a decreased sense of job satisfaction (Frone, Russell, & Barnes, 1996). Work can also interfere with family life, which in return can affect the way one feels about his or her job. If a person feels as though he or she is unable to commit enough time to being with his or her family, both physically with them in person and emotionally being there, then mentally, he or she has a decreased sense of wellness (Stevanovic & Rupert, 2009). Sandberg, Yorgason, Miller, and Hill (2012) found that marital distress is a significant predictor for depressive symptoms, health, and work satisfaction. Similarly, Sandberg et al. (2013) found that a high level of negative couple interaction is associated with less job satisfaction as these individuals tended to have more mental and physical problems. It is interesting that spouse work hours and size of the family can increase the chances of BMI elevation over time, indicating the importance of family interdependence in dealing with family and work demands and allocating time and resources (Kramer & Chung, 2015).

It is evident that separation of work and family life is not helpful to conceptualize one's career development. Work and family life affect each other positively or negatively depending on the attitudes and approaches used to manage the demands and challenges from each and how one coordinates the various roles one plays at these two different settings.

Work and Life Roles

Changes in the labor force lead to changes of labor division at home. With more women working outside of the home, men have increased their share of the household duties (Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 2008). Similarly, with an increasing number of dual-career families, the traditional gender role identification and designation for work and family is changing as well (Whiston, Campbell, & Maffini, 2012). People are more accepting of men staying home and taking care of children while women are the breadwinners of the family. However, the division of household labor is far from equal (Fitzgerald, Fassinger, & Betz, 1995); women still do the majority of household tasks and are the primary caretakers of the family, even in the dual-career families (Newman & Newman, 2009). Role overload, role conflict, and career-family conflict is the reality and challenge that modern workers need to face. "Hence assumptions about an ideal worker that link time at work and continuous availability with productivity need to be questioned and challenged. But such changes will only help gender equity if they also legitimize the personal responsibilities of all employees" (Bailyn, 2011, p. 107).

Role overload means that one has more responsibilities and duties than time and energy permits; in other words, time-related demands exceed the time management resources an individual has (Schultz & Henderson, 1985). For a working mother juggling the parent role, wife role, and worker role on a routine basis, any unanticipated event, for example, overtime at work, emergency business trip, sick child, or senior parent getting ill, could add an extra load to the already full plate. As a result, role conflict

becomes inevitable. Role conflict is "competing demands from different roles" (Zunker, 2012, p. 245). Balancing work and family roles is a task for men and women in dual-career families, in fact, for everyone in modern society. Unfortunately, not many organizations are family friendly (Reardon, Lentz, Sampson, & Peterson, 2000). Compared to other industrialized countries, the United States has the least favorable work environment and policy for working families. Despite the changing labor force composition, the world of work is still functioning with the mentality that one member of the family stays home and plays the single role of caregiver (Halpern, 2005). Suggested accommodations for making organizations more family friendly include emergency care, onsite childcare, flexible work arrangements and schedule, and childcare benefits (Zunker, 2012).

Role overload and role conflict do not only apply to dual-career families. As a matter of fact, many people deal with this struggle regardless of family status. Many people nowadays work and study full time at the same time. The juggling between various roles—student, worker, family member, and friend—is everyone's issue. Understanding the roles one has in addition to the role as a worker is helpful for a counselor to develop appropriate intervention strategies.

Certainty, Change, Transition, and Adjustment

The previous section reviewed the psychological impacts of unemployment or underemployment. The uncertainty and consistent change in the economy and labor market has a similar impact on one's psychological well-being. The traditional concept of work and home life being entirely separate entities with clear boundaries of time spent at work and at home is questionable. Technology, for instance, enables 24/7 access to work, and consequently, distress if workers cannot effectively cope with technology (Atanasoff & Venable, 2017). Use of technology and the global workforce also mean some employees have to work constantly due to different time zones. Hard work and loyalty to one's employer would pay off; such belief was probably true in the past but not anymore. Working at one place until retirement becomes less likely. Instead, chronic job insecurity, corporate restructuring, and discomfort associated with different role designations at work and home than tradition roles are reality; however, rules and practices are not catching up (Moen & Roehing, 2005). Counselors cannot follow the old framework of vocational guidance, making a career choice for the lifetime. Rather, counselors need to help clients develop life span transitioning.

According to Fouad and Bynner (2008), there are two kinds of transition: voluntary transition is driven by personal goals, and people usually have time to prepare for it; involuntary transition is typically enforced by situational or environmental constraints, and people often have no choice or time for the transition. Due to economic changes, the school-to-work transition often takes longer for youth nowadays than it did for their parents or grandparents. In addition, the younger generation will encounter more transitions as well, meaning people will move from one job to another and will move in and out of employment more often because of the instability of the work world. People experiencing these changes face multiple psychological challenges. Fouad and Bynner (2008) suggested that helping professionals should help individuals build capacities, including higher adaptability and self-awareness to prepare for transitions, and also that institutions need proactive programming for youth and adults to make voluntary transitions.

Integrated Services

The interconnectedness of various roles people have during their life span and the complex relationship of work and family life requires counselors to view career development beyond just occupation choice and career decision making; instead, helping clients with career concerns a framework that integrates personal and contextual factors that would impact a person in his or her exploration of self, identity, and meaning of life, as well as making a living. Artificial separation of various aspects of people's lives is not helpful to clients (Blustein, 2008). The counseling profession is distinct from other helping professions with its roots in vocational guidance and helping people at disadvantages to adjust to contextual demands (as illustrated in Chapter 1). Counselors are in the unique position among all the helping professionals to be able to provide integrated services to clients because counselors are the only helping professionals who are trained to understand both career and mental health issues as required by the training standards within the professional organization and accreditation standards (Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs, 2016).

The call for integrated services that address both mental health needs and career issues has been ongoing for a long time. Spokane (1989) proposed that personal adjustment and career adjustment need to be addressed simultaneously when making a difficult career decision; a well-adjusted career decision leading to a good job will lead to psychological well-being. From a different perspective but with the same goal, Herr (1989) called for career counseling as a mental health modality because mental disorder symptoms might be due to poor personal work environment fit (Herr, 1989). For instance, a worker who experienced lack of appetite, difficulty sleeping, and low energy seemed to have depression, but with further exploration, it was found that his boss was demanding, aggressive, micromanaging, and often assigned him work that he did not have the capacity or resources to accomplish. He had these symptoms because he was constantly worried that he would be fired. This scenario illustrates that counselors need to conceptualize clients' presenting issues from a more integrated perspective of both mental health and career issues. Niles and Yoon (2011)

MULTICULTURAL BOX 2.1

In Case Illustration 2.2, Teresa had good score on the ACT but chose not to go to college. In fact, when she went to her school counselor in high school and wanted to learn what majors she should consider in college, her school counselor said, "I don't think attending college is a good choice for you. You should consider a trade school and get a job within a year or two. College is not for girls like you." What is your reaction to her school counselor's words? Why? What was wrong with Teresa's school counselor's words? Reviewing Teresa's occupational history, what factors influenced her decisions? How would you categorize these factors?

Tips for Consideration: sex, socioeconomic status, gender role, values, social expectation, historical context, interaction of personal and contextual factors.

also discussed the opportunities for mental health counselors to help clients in a more holistic approach.

To promote career counseling integrated with mental health counseling, competency development is needed in counselor training programs. Niles and Pate Jr. (1989) suggested the following: (1) foster a sense of enthusiasm about career counseling; (2) help students to understand that work influences clients' lives; (3) do more research about the interrelationship and outcome with and without integration; and (4) provide professional development opportunities for developing the knowledge and skills in comprehensive counseling services. A national commission for promoting this competency development in counselor education programs was founded by the National Career Development Association (the national professional organization of career development) and the Association of Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES; the national organization for counselor education) to advocate for enhancing integrated services to all clients.

THE ECOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE OF CAREER INTERVENTION

Integrated services require the counselor to conceptualize the client's presenting issues from a broad perspective, taking into consideration the various personal and contextual factors that would influence one's career development and career decision making. With the ever-changing work environment, helping clients become their own advocates and agents to navigate the complex and changing dynamics of the economy, workforce, and work settings is essential. The ecological career counseling model proposed by Cook, Heppner, and O'Brien (2002) suggested that optimal career intervention should find the accordance of individual and contextual factors of a person's ecosystem, in other words, help individuals become change agents to use their resources to maximize their potential and minimize the barriers to live a fulfilling life. Ecological career counseling emphasizes the importance of change agency and the meaning-making process for individuals in their career development.

Change Agency of Individuals

The concept of being a change agent for oneself, proposed by the ecological career counseling model, echoed the idea of several other scholars to address the instability of the work environment in the 21st century. Savickas (2013) recommended that life-design and developing life-course competency, not planning, should be the goal of career intervention. It is clear from the previous discussion that matching a fit career for a person is not sufficient anymore (Russo, Guo, & Baruch, 2014), as rarely can one hold a job for a lifetime. To be prepared for uncertainty requires self-awareness and adaptability (Savickas, 2013). Another way to conceptualize the goal of career intervention is to enhance *flexicurity*, flexibility and security, particularly for those who are at risk of being in and out of jobs because of lack of resources (Sultana, 2012). It is equally important to encourage lifelong learning and to be aware of the

resources and assets as well as barriers in the ecosystem one has or needs to develop so that one can increase his or her career adaptability and flexicurity. For instance, the policy for career education in the European community requires the curriculum to provide guidance for youth to gain learning and application skills that will benefit them to be lifelong learners and workers. The acknowledgment of the necessity of lifelong learning would help policy makers endorse and implement policies to facilitate prevention and intervention programs targeting development of attitudes and skills for lifelong learning.

Understanding one's assets and barriers in the ecosystem is necessary for becoming a self-change agent. What constitutes assets and barriers varies for different people at different settings and times. It is contextualized and time bound. For instance, having the skills and training in nuclear technology during the cold war period in the United States was an asset for securing a job; however, at the end of the 20th century, those working in the nuclear industry lost jobs and had a difficult time finding other jobs because of the downturn of that industry. Age and experience could be assets or barriers depending on what kind of career or specific positions one is trying to find. Ecological career counseling could be helpful for individuals developing adaptability and flexibility by identifying barriers and turning the barriers into assets.

Meaning Making in Changing Environment

Earlier sections of this chapter illustrated the meaning of work to people from historical and cross-cultural contexts. Work evolves from meeting survival needs to a choice, and to meaning search and identification (Blustein, 2006). With the changing economy and technology advancement, the work world is becoming increasingly unpredictable and unstable. One job for a lifetime is not realistic anymore, from either a societal or personal perspective. People are in constant search of meaning of their worth in this world through work and other aspects of life. In other words, career development is a journey to live one's autobiography (Savickas, 2005). The construction of this journey is personal, and satisfaction must be determined by one's own meaning-making process (Cook, Heppner, & O'Brien, 2002). Both personal characteristics and contextual influences, as well as the interaction of the two, shape individuals' meaning-making process.

In the midst of the constantly changing work world of the 21st century, one needs to identify his or her niche in this dynamic and diverse world. As noted previously, work and health have a complex and reciprocal relationship. The research also found that a meaningful and purposeful life could lead to positive role identity and role salience, which ultimately impacts mental and physical health (Thoits, 2012), and particularly, that subjective career success mediates one's physical and mental health (Russo, Guo, & Baruch, 2014). Blustein (2006) also suggested that internal criteria for success lead to greater autonomy and control and allow for a protean career (Hall & Mirvis, 1996), an individualized career path unique to each person. It is clear that career counseling is no different than mental health counseling; that is, counselors need to empower clients to find their own voices and meaningful connection to the outside world and to thrive beyond survival.

Summary: Challenges and Opportunities

The centrality of work to humans indicates the importance of having a satisfying career as it provides for survival needs, sense of worth, self-identity, and health. With the changes in work environment, due to technology, globalization of the economy, and diverse labor force, unpredictability and uncertainty have become the norm for career development. Transitions, from nonwork to work, from work to no-work or underemployment, between family roles and work roles, are inevitable. The interaction of individual characteristics and contextual factors presents both challenges and opportunities for people to explore their purposeful and meaningful career and life. To address these challenges, individuals need to develop an understanding of their personal niche in relation to others in the multisystem affecting their career development; and counselors should work with individuals to create opportunities for constructing meaningful careers that effectively optimize their resources and reduce the barriers.

Keystones

- Work plays a central role in people's lives and provides people a sense of belonging, identity, and recognition, in addition to financial rewards.

- The meaning of work changes over time and varies in different cultural contexts.

- The globalization of the economy and technology advancement have led to drastic changes in occupational structure and trends of requirements for entering into the workforce.

- The workforce is increasingly diverse in regard to almost every aspect of demographics, with the younger generation of workers demonstrating different work styles.

- Work and health have a multilayered, complex, and possibly reciprocal relationships; and lack of one impacts the other.

- Both personal and contextual factors, and interplay of these factors, influence the trajectory of a person's career development.

- Because of the complex interaction of individuals in relation to work and other roles of life, career development needs to be understood from an integrated view, and career services need to be integrated as well.

- The ecological career counseling model, advocating for self as a change agent and meaning searching and identification, provides a framework for integrated career intervention.

Additional Resources

Hall, D. T., & Associates. (1996). *The career is dead—Long live the career: A relational approach to careers*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Job Stress Network: http://www.workhealth.com

Millennial workers: http://www.cbsnews.com/news/the-millennials-are-coming

NIOSH (National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health): http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/stress

World Health Organization: http://www.who.int/occupational_health/topics/stressatwp/en

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