

Illusion of Career Development Theories - For the Departure of Developing a Demonstrative Career Development Theory –

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Abstract

Traditional approaches to career development theories typically placed emphasis on understanding the critical inherent traits of the individual, matching the people and organization.

However, lack of analysis on the career affected by social and economic context making psychological career theory useless. The purpose of this paper is to provide a critique of the longestablished career choice and development theories, and to suggest directions for future studies.

First, we will discuss the definition of career and browse the actual circumstance of labor market in Japan. Second, we will review the literature inside the mainstream of career. Third, we will present a critique of the research and highlight weaknesses and limitations between the realities. Finally, we will specify the refinement needed to improve. We'll take the examination of literature review as a step forward in the future research.

Equivocal career

The root of career derived from Latin “carrus” and “carruca”. The former term meant a kind of two-wheeled wagon for transporting burdens as well as the latter one understood as a sort of four-wheeled traveling and state coach (Lewis, 1980, p. 295). Nowadays, the term career became ambiguous. Surplus meanings of career in both popular and social science literature be found. It recognized as a concatenation of promotions, an enduring sequence of jobs, professional people, the synchronous combination of roles throughout the whole life and et cetera (Wakabayashi & Itou, 1985; Hall, 2002).

Koike (1977) defined the career as an in-house progression relying upon efficient on-the-job training¹ (p. 4). Development of specific skills and in-house promotion also underlined by Doeringer and Piore (1971), strong advocates of internal labor markets theory. In Japan, work has a propensity to fill up male employee's life, an individual career will blend with the company's personnel strategy and, almost fully, integrated into an organizational career (Wakabayashi., Gallagher., & Graen, 1988, p. 1). It appeared on the employment with massive new graduate in April without asking their existent knowledge, abilities and skills. A comprehensive conception of career, including training, job rotation, advancement

or whatever, will be totally arranged by HR department of Japanese firms. Under a relative long-term employment scheme, the psychological contract (Schein, 1980) had been widely sustained for decades. We anticipate that reformation of employment principle and deregulation of labor policy would have a significant impact on such organizational career. The way we approached to career by creating highlights in the change of labor market and social economic context would be unlike the accomplishments that psychological theorists and practitioners had done.

Otherwise, Japanese regarded the word career as the specific cadets getting through the firstclass civil service examination, and then assigned to the central government. These public servants, especially in juridical-, economic- and administrative-related category, supposed to be climbing to a high-ranking position, such as an executive administrator and technocrat, at a quick pace than the rest of successful applicants. Career in Japan not only had remarkable implications for selecting and nominating prospective candidates in public sector, but also in private enterprise.

What on earth determine the career?

Career illustrated an individual's entire life. Work, however, predominated over the quality of most people's life (Hall, 2002, p. 12). More and more policy makers in western world and Japan attempted to lower the rate of unemployment by removing restrictions of employment, approving diversification of working patterns. They praised the flexible labor market offering more and better job opportunities, meanwhile, neglected frequent job changes made career mobility. Also, people who engaged in atypical employment with poor work condition hindered from keeping their standard of living. It was inevitable that deterioration of employment will become obstacle to career development. Part-time employment, for an example, became a notable issue in the U. S. and the rest of world.

It seemed inevitable that increasing part-time jobs could prevent the employee from developing a sustainable career as if former counterpart in America. The percentage of part-time employment at total employment in America was barely 13.2 in 2004. Part-time employment had been around 1 in 5 total employment in Belgium, Canada, Germany, Ireland, New Zealand, Norway as well as one-fourths in Australia, Japan and the U. K. (OECD, 2005, p. 254). In Netherlands, it even reached a high rate of part-time employment at 35% in contrast to just 13.4% in France where having mass strikes and demonstrations against the controversial youth job law, *contrat premiere embauche*, in 2006.

What we could comprehend the actual circumstance of labor market through the part-time employment surrounding was nothing more than the tip of the iceberg. Less prior research approached to career from a viewpoint of supply and demand of labor force. It was doubtful of Parsons' trait and factor fit model implementing particularly dynamic supply-demand imbalance of human resource in turbulent times. We felt apprehensive about a given individual could locate a

given environment that will let him apply or develop his or her abilities and skills while more and more unsustainable labor force employed within a high rate of labor turnover as Holland considered. Also, we could not stop having misgivings about how people develop their career stages in an extremely unreliable employment condition as Super advocated, even with a bare possibility for promotion and had insufficient training to activate their future employability.

Identifying a given individual's personality and aptitude in a certain organization, environment was the way that most psychologists applying to approach the career. We, again, recognized their respected contribution to the development of career theory and application to career counseling and personnel orientation. Yet, as we designated above, engagement of people's career without taking the existing conditions of labor market into consideration remained the fragment and incompleteness.

Career development and transformation of labor market in Japan

One of the distinctive characteristics of labor market in Japan than other countries has been the long-term employment, principally male employees who working for large-sized corporations. Long tenure with the company inspired organizations to improve their human resources and emphasize subordinates' career development making a large contribution to the organizations. Providing opportunities for in-house training and continuous learning, which will promote the stability of employment, was the traditional role that Japanese firms typically brought into play (Mogi & Wang, 2005, pp. 15-17).

Japanese company, however, were hard hit by the depression in the 1990s. To reduce personnel cost and to enhance organizational flexibility, a concept termed portfolio of human resources has been introduced (Japan Business Federation, 1995, pp. 30-34). The law of temporary workers and dispatched workers widely deregulated by the administration to answer the business circles' call since it enforced in 1986. Only 13 kinds of business authorized to enroll temporary staff had replaced by a prohibition of 26 types of services from December 1999. Ban on controversial "temp to perm" abolished in the following year. Restrains on tenure of temporary workers prescribed for 3 years at maximum in the initial stage had loosened to unlimited, and manufacturing-related business were applicable to hire temporary workers at the first time since March 2004.

Deregulation of labor-related laws and regulations as well as the diversion of employment and so on had a crucial impact on the labor market and the individual's career development consequentially. In spite of more or less 1.4 million employees excluding the executive of corporation expanded in the past decade, approximately 4.5 million regular staff decreased, meanwhile 5.9 million non-regular counterparts increased corresponding to the Labor Force Survey (Detailed Tabulation). As stated by the Monthly Labor Survey, the rate of part-time workers rose from 14.5% to 25.3% between 1995 and 2005. The trial calculation of the proportion of male temporary staff's annual average cash

earnings to male regular peer was around 55.1% in 2005, based on the Basic Survey on Wage Structure.

Japan also had a sharp deterioration in its labor market of the youth. Its unemployment rate of young people between the ages of 15 and 34 had doubled in the past one and half decade. The rest of them, certainly, got their respective jobs. A forgettable dimension we would like to call people's attention to is the proportion of young manpower to the gross provision for temporary staff. Indeed, more than two-thirds of them are younger than 35-year-old. In excess of fourth-fifths of agency workers contracted less than one year while their tenure of detachment more than one year were in the majority in accordance with the Investigation into the Actual Conditions of Dispatched Worker conducted by the MHLW in 2004. We wonder whether the youth could recover missing earnings, even career opportunities for more training and a prospective future.

Trait-and-factor fit, matching model: Frank Parsons

The precursor of putting the image of career decision making into practice in the Western world can be traced its history back to the Greek philosopher Plato, who facilitated evaluation and made recommendation to people's occupational choices (Zytowski, 1967, pp. 53-55). In the Eastern world, the wisdom of Lao-tse have counseled for centuries that "in work, do what you enjoy" (Mitchell, 1988, p.8). Afterwards people even had an attempt applying science-like methods of graphology, palmistry, phrenology and physiognomy to qualify each individual for a fitting work by investigating their differences of characteristics in the late 1800s (Hartung & Blustein, 2002, p. 42).

Many researchers and practitioners (e.g., Davis, 1969; Brown & Brooks et al., 1990; Hartung & Blustein, 2002), in general, thought Parsons' trait and factor fit as one of the roots of career theory and practice. Frank Parsons, the founder of vocational psychology, launching the initial formal career counseling center, namely Vocational Bureau at Boston in 1908. And he also credited with founding the career counseling and the relative domain of vocational psychology along with counseling psychology (Aubrey, 1977; Whiteley, 1984; Salomone, 1988; O' Brien, 2001.). Notwithstanding Parsons, recognized as an engineer, teacher, lawyer, social reformer (Stephens, 1970) and the new middle-class doctor, architect, and journalist concurrently, was well educated (Zytowski, 2001, p. 58), he was concerned about the less-educated, the poor and working class citizens, the immigrants (Davis, 1969; Stephens, 1970; Zytowski, 2001). Hartung and Blustein (2002) noted that Parsons and Shaw, his cofounder of the Vocational Bureau, advocated for taking advantage of the scientific method to approach social problems, such as children leaving school prematurely (p. 42), the youth, women, the poor, the disadvantaged who are discriminated, oppressed (Davis, 1969, p. 23). Stephens (1970) perceived that, with great solicitude about the unfortunate, Parsons urged a sequence of reforms in business, education, such as the Civil Service House he established in 1901, and other social system to help workers choosing jobs coordinated with their abilities and interests unaccompanied by

exploitation, and discrimination, and to make the needy fully empowered on their vocational and social roles (Davis, 1969, p. 23). The solution for people selecting a vocation, also a choice that Parsons (1909) regarded as the greatest decision (p. 5) of their lives, formulated as his threefold scheme.

In the opinion of Parsons, ideal career choice based on matching personal traits, such as abilities, resources, personality, with job factors like wages, environment and so on to create vocational success. Swanson (1996) acknowledged that Parsons' matching model as the beginning formal model of career decision making and indecision, and up to date, its function of making a wise occupational choice remained an essential concept for contemporary career development and counseling (pp. 103-104), occupational choice theories (Brown & Brooks et al., 1996; Savickas & Walsh, 1996; Sharf, 1997). Moreover, the model served as a cornerstone for later trait and factor career counseling approaching and personal-environment fit career theories (Williamson, 1964; Swanson, 1996). Also, Brown & Brooks et al. (1990) articulated Parsons' statement had been summarized initial framework for conceptualizing career decision making, although his study cannot be precisely interpreted as a formal theory. The fundamental tenet of Parsons' trait and factor model has been guided people to take the fitting job as specified by identifying few stable traits related to dissimilar requirements of jobs systematically (Hewer, 1963). The outcome of a congruent match with people' s abilities and interests connecting to the appropriate environment will lead to job success and satisfaction (Savickas, 2002, p. 150). Incidentally, Parsons laid stress on choosing a vocation than securing a job.

As we argued above, most of new graduate in Japan employed as regular workers in the absence of fixed-term contracts, disregarding their specialty and major. They had been educated, placed to a particular department shortly afterward. In general, Japanese employee had weak determination of his or her own career. The HR division absolutely had the initiative of making a reshuffle of the work force from newly engagement, placement to retirement. Less possibilities of deciding their occupation had in such labor market. There had been more complex, discouraging factors ahead beyond their expectations even if they got the position on the basis of elaborate synthetic personality inventory, like the MMPI.

The resignation usually took place after undergoing disillusionment with the work (Dunnette, Arvey, & Banas, 1973; Wakabayashi, Minami & Sano, 1980; Wakabayashi, 2006), also as well known as reality shock (Vroom & Deci, 1971; Hall & Schneider, 1973). The so-called 7-5-3 phenomenon represented the actuality of the youth labor turnover in Japan.

On the other hand, to improve the youth' s eagerness for working or just to find a job, many (e.g., Japan Institute of Labor, 2001) appealed to young people for having a dream of working. Despite of the significance of having an ideal on working, we really wonder about such the job they want to take met the demand of labor market. If not, we doubt that young man kept to discover their ideal vocation while they were occupied as the ordinary employee or followed the career counselor instruction to pursue their fantastic goal of life matching their

characteristics of personality, even worked as the inappropriately named freeter or NEET. Be aware of oneself and the surrounding environment will likely be beneficial in doing career counseling as Williamson (1939, 1965a, 1965b) and his colleagues (Williamson & Darley, 1937; Williamson & Biggs, 1979) cited. As stated by a longitudinal follow-up research, development of entire career had been affected by the first job and the initial vocational life (Yoshitani, 1988), the achievement at the first three years as a new employee (Wakabayashi, 1987, p. 9).

And the most important, one's background and the then social, economic and educational contexts also had an intangible influence on the career. The career that an individual satisfied still could be certainly well developed by a sequence of adaptation and endeavors, nonetheless, the first job hadn't suited the inherent qualities and characteristics (Okutsu & Hori, 2005, pp. 56-64) the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory.

A ethnic phrase adopted to describe the condition of young peoples early quit. Labor statistics showed that new graduates educational attainment at junior-, senior-high school and university had been left their first jobs at the rate of 70%, 50% and 30% respectively within three years.

The coinage combined the English word free with the German word for worker *arbeiter*. The term does not precisely defined, in general, it means people who are not employed as regular staff and making their living as non-regular employees. Check the definition and estimation from the 2003 White Paper on the National Lifestyle by the Cabinet Office and the 2003 White Paper on the Labor Economy by the MHLW for further details.

The term first defined as people who are aged between 16 and 18, also not in education, employment or training by the Social Exclusion Unit, the U. K. in 1999. In Japan, it recognized as people who are aged between 15 and 34, school graduates and unmarried, not in the labor force and engaged neither in schooling nor in housework, according to the 2004 White Paper on the Labor Economy, the MHLW. Illusion of Career Development Theories (Mogi Wang) Undoubtedly, Parsons was an important figure at the dawn of occupational guidance. Not only contributed to the weak inside of the society in his short journey of life, but also left us a theoretical framework of career counseling. While Swanson (1996) insisted upon the trait and factor fit applying to the changing social and economic situation (p. 104), we regarded it as nothing more than a method of doing consultation with the job applicant. Moreover, its utilization of setting people to work, reducing the rate of labor turnover at the initial stage of employment, even leading people career to the psychological success was disputable. For instance, Parsons' trait and factor fit almost could not offer any solution for the so-called freeter and NEET to play a consolation match at the placement for regular workers in Japan.

The military service John L. Holland served as an interviewee of draft board between 1942 and 1946 prompted his interest in the theory of career. He speculated that people could be divided into several types at that time. Thereafter, studying at the University of Minnesota, famed for its school of trait and fit, made

Holland's model similar to person-environment fit theory (Weinrach & Srebalus, 1990, pp. 37-38). Undergoing a series of revisions, Holland's (1973, 1985, 1997) assumption was based on that, an individual's personality expressing his or her occupational interests, and characteristics could be identified by preferences for school subjects, extracurricular activities, hobbies and work. Srebalus, Marinelli and Messing (1982) revealed that Holland's theory had represented the influence of stable personality characteristics on career development (pp. 32-33). Slaney, Hall and Bieschke (1993) perceived that Holland has a distinct attempt to organize the recognition of people systematically, and to match each given individual with appropriate occupational environment. Assumptions below constituted the core of Holland's theory. Holland, et al. (1969) contended that people in the U. S. culture, could be classified into one of six dominant types: realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising or conventional. Weinrach and Srebalus (1990) explained the more one resembles any given types, the more likely one is to manifest some of the behaviors and traits associated with the type. In Holland's (1973, 1985, 1997) revision of studies, he adopted a concept of subtypes to complement his original theory. In addition, all organizations also could be categorized into one of six environments as the people had, and dominated by each given type of personality. People with a given type tended to look for an environment with the same type of personality, and his or her behavior relied on the interaction between the both sides. Finally, above assumptions illustrated as a hexagonal model for defining the psychological resemblances among types of personality, environments and their interactions. Since Holland's original theoretical explanation in the 1959 publication of *A Theory of Vocation Choice* with an abundant demonstrative researches conducted in the following decades among nations, his typology and hexagonal model stands as the most influential one of the extant theories (Isaacson & Brown, 1999, p.26), whatever theory or practice widely used by researchers and counselors simultaneously (Weinrach & Srebalus, 1990, p. 67).

In spite of Gati (1984) supposed that a more complicated, manifold, comprehensive scheme is effective in forecasting people's vocational choices, Holland insisted what he pursued was an structural-interactive theory, like his simple typology and hexagonal model remaining simple and practical (Weinrach & Srebalus, 1990, p. 47). On the other hand, to meet people's need for coping with their environment, Holland profiled the three-letter codes to provide more complete descriptions of people's personality patterns as the above-mentioned revisions of his studies. Holland's typology have widely supported within a massive researches and publications by he and his colleagues (Brown & Brooks et al., 1990, pp. 48-52). The Self-directed Search instrument developed as a scale to determine each person resemblances to one of the personality patterns. The SDS in particular and Holland's model in general was designated sexist (e.g., Weinrach & Srebalus, 1990, p. 64; Brown, 1990, p. 347). The results were even unchanged

after removing possible sexual bias (Gottfredson, 1978). Sex seemed to have an influence on career choice and personal orientation, not merely an artifact of the measuring experiments (Hall, 2002, p. 65). Despite of Holland attempted to take variables, such as educational attainment, sex, social class of people into consideration, lots of personal- and environmental- incidents still operated upon his work.

Patton and McMahon (1999) added that, besides the happenings in people' s journey of life, their parents, social and environment context, gender, age, political and economic climate, interests, abilities, geography and many other events also affected career. Bright and Pryor (2005) cited the assumption of Holland' s person-environment fit were fairly static and unchanging without any outbreak of unplanned events by proffering the vignette Ping-Pong Balls and Puppies. One career was hardly predicted and developed without taking account of factors excluding personality. Due to a group of people with similar Holland' s codes diverged their career paths from one to another over time (Morrison, 1994). Bright, et al. (2005) showed people' s career was significantly influenced by unplanned occurrences. Okutsu and Hori (2005) had gain the similar result in Japan as we mentioned above (pp. 56-64).

Therefore, we assume that career does under the influence of the unpredictability of various elements over the whole life. Most psychologists including Parsons, Holland and others were solely concerned with inherent traits and were hard to deal with the relationship between the individual aptitude and personality with the career. It was regrettable that they neglected social and Illusion of Career Development Theories (Mogi Wang) economic context in the turbulent time. What we afraid of are, part-time workers and temporary staff increased suddenly as we indicated above, could people pursue their career success and satisfaction in a sequence of unsteady short-term jobs. Second, we question if one characteristics of personality as trait-and-factor theorists revealed as a crucial point to one' s career could fit each position and its organization. Finally, we wonder could people have any options to reject the numerous floating jobs voluntary and would they just be enforced to accept the fluid employment for survival.

Also, Holland' s theory was substantially criticized for lack of a completely explanation about how people became the types they are (Osipow, 1983, p. 112). Holland simply asserted that types tend to reproduce themselves. Brown (1990) stated failing to provide any specific statement about possible development of the personality had became the critical weakness of Holland' s hexagonal model (p. 348). In addition, Arnold (2004) criticized Holland' s theory were inadequate conceptualization of the person and environment, inadequate measurement of the environment, and the workplace converted into variety and diversity as well as the content of job changed rapidly in actuality.

The presupposition about types of people' s personality tended to reproduce themselves and the more an individual belonged to a given type, the more behavior the individual acted like the type as Holland assumed making the point of view

stood at the supply side of labor market, turning a blind eye to keep job hunting and job wanted in equilibrium. Paying no attention to organizations' HR strategy easily made the imbalance between both sides in the quantity of labor force and the irrelevant manpower that didn't meet the demand of labor market. In brief, Holland approached to career adopting the conception of person-environment fit, thinking of congruent with the people and organization from the viewpoint of job seekers, disregarding the quantity and quality that organizations requested.

The mismatch between supply and demand of work force, and the technical gap between accomplishments the present workers had and the future workers required for research and development converged at rigid Japanese companies. Conversely, more Japanese corporations were accustomed to secure the would-be human resource from the relatively flexible labor market rather than training their extant subordinate to meet the demand before now. Hence, we actually doubt that could people become employability accompanying with innovation of technology and development of business administration over time without conventional in-house training, even any assistance from their supervisors or HR section. Another, solution of many fitted a given job or organization while no opening could be offered for anyone is still uncertain. So, measuring and identifying the pattern of a person's personality could be an useful method seeking for a fitting job as person-environment fit theorists believed, meanwhile relying upon the analysis of inherent traits and then missing more essential external factors working on one's career seemed incomplete.

Although not a little weakness in Holland's typology and hexagonal model, his achievements and contributions toward career theories should be respected. Holland was credited with studying person-environment fit and career choice. His typology characterized as a learning (Miller, 2002, p.43), structural theory (Weinrach & Srebalus, 1990) in contrast to the description of Super's model as a developmental (Miller, 2002, p. 43), and humanistic one (Super, 1990). Weinrach (1996), even, commends that both of their studies dominated the career development literature, and it was almost inevitable to complete a study in the the field without encountering their work.

In the late 1930s, Super started his studies as an employment counselor in Ohio. Thereafter, to realize why do young people choose a particular job from many others, how do they accommodate to the transition from school to work and maintain themselves in the vocational position etc., Super (1957) and his associates conducted a study of career patterns by using a prospective, longitudinal, case-study design to inquire the interaction between personality and work. After observing vocational guidance from a viewpoint of different psychology, he shifted his attention to career choice in a developmental perspective. He suggested a concept of development on career (Super, 1957) that differed from precious studies (e.g., Holland, 1973) regarding career as a selection of the initial job, rather than as a developmental process in sequence of occupational positions through the part or whole life (Super, 1980, p. 282). He (1990) later clarified career decisions had been incorporated with mini-decisions in varied career stages, not something that

happened once in a lifetime as the traditional career counselor widely perceived (p. 220). Super's contribution toward the realm of career development was remarkable due to he explored many different fields of academia related to career development theory (Nevill, 1997, p. 288), with interdisciplinary insights of sociologists, political scientists and economists (Herr, 1997, p. 240), from the differential-, developmental-, phenomenological-, and the contextual-perspective (Savickas, 1997), in a view of multiple contexts (Blustein, 1997, p. 260). According to Corsini (1984), Super was most often associated with career development theory and its applications (p.388).

Super identified self-concept or self-concepts that later refined, playing a vital role in the process of career choice and development. He then affirmed life could be divided into several age-related stages with given tasks should be accomplished, a conception of developed or matured, during a specific age range. He focused on the event happening over life and factors causing a person matured or immature developed in a sequence of life stages as following: growth, exploration, Illusion of Career Development Theories (Mogi Wang) establishment, maintenance, and decline stage (Super, 1957).

The life-span, life-space approach to career development sought to incorporate life-stage and role theory into a comprehensive picture of multiple-role careers with their determinants and interactions (Super, 1990, p. 211). He presupposed that each given individual had played one or more roles, i.e. son or daughter, student, worker, spouse, homemaker, parent, leisure, citizen at a given age or life stage, and these life roles had lived out in different theaters, namely in the home, school, workplace and community, simultaneously. As this approach introduced, career choice and decision making was no longer emphasized as a decisive requirement to achieve satisfying career solely, but an event in his late adolescence stage.

Besides, Super developed the life-career rainbow graphic device for portraying the synchronous combination of life roles with life stages (Super, 1980, p. 288; Super, 1990, p. 211; Hall, 2002, p. 56), and conceptualizing multiple dimensions of career, the contemporary involvement in, and the emotional commitment to each role. Super noted some biological, psychological, and socioeconomic variables might affect people's self-concept and role-playing over their life and career in the late 1980s. He (1990) then proposed the archway model synthesizing life-career rainbow model with dynamic interaction of the individual and society. The base of this graphic device consisted of biological-geographical foundations of human development, psychological characteristics and structure of the society could act on the individual.

Overall, Super traversed the phenomenon and explanation of people's career choice and development in a comprehensive, multi-disciplinary perspective, he then conceived a sequence of constructs to describe his plentiful concepts. Whereas Super's studies broadened and dominated the field of career development, the weakness in his work also revealed. The typical judgment on

Super had been the various concepts not defined precisely (Brown & Brooks, 1996; Hall, 2002, p. 60), yet did not have a consideration for contextual involvement among these phrases (Brown & Brooks, 1996; Herr, 1997, pp. 238-246). Moreover, it would be essential to refine the applicability to Super' s theory in divergent culture, gender, socioeconomic environment and labor market while the circumstance had greatly differed from the past decades that Super' s initial study finished. And like Herr (1997) stated, Super realized the differences among gender, ethnic, culture, socioeconomic as personal- and social-factors to be reckoned with the process of career development, and emphasized on his studies as well as lesser of these examined. The practice of employment in Japan was also modified in the way of America. We doubt whether Japanese people could develop their career gradually and adapt to the labor market with decreasing job stability and increasing mobility.

Finally, career decision had been incorporated with several mini-decisions in varied career stages as Super noted. There was some doubt about the career decision making determined by the individual or the organization in Japan. On the other hand, notwithstanding that most Japanese companies occupied the new graduate all together in April, and advanced them to high position periodically, part of them hired by the temporary employment agency, not a few people couldn' t get a job or lost their jobs involuntarily and still some female restricted to work as atypical staff with a fix-term contract reluctantly after maternity leave and etc. We deeply worry about their future development of career due to they are partial of the society where having a bare possibility for the unfortunate and disadvantaged to live their career lives over again. Yet, would the so-called freeter and NEET care about their own career lives was in doubt. What would career development theorists think about these people? We just wonder if we could desert them as the underdog in the competitive labor market consequently.

To be exact, the term career is still uncertain. Most approaches to career were from a psychological perspective, but varied from trait-and-factor fit, person-environment fit and later Holland' s typology to Super' s development theory. The common weakness also similar to the insufficient explanation of social and economic context influenced people' s career development in the turbulent time. Besides, a bare solution to career of the unfortunate on a theoretical basis was incredible. We really wonder whether career counseling and personal orientation based on these theories will contribute to career development and is going to be useful for the labor market. The gap between theory and practice is wider than we thought. The initial concern that Parsons launched the Vocational Bureau seems to forget for a while. We' ll take this literature review as a step forward in the future research and be concerned in people' s career, especially with the counterpart of the disadvantaged.

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My review has been necessarily brief and selective, intimate details of the specific term and concept referred to the original publications. I am grateful to professor Mogi for helpful comments on an earlier version. I alone am responsibility for any errors that remain.