Career support for migrants: Transformation or Adaptation?

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ABSTRACT

The complex interfaces created by migration not only challenge core beliefs about the purpose of career guidance and counseling but also about the precise nature and level of the support required for migrants. However, the issue has had little academic attention. Whilst traditional theories informing the practice of career guidance and counseling implicitly reflect a commitment to social equality, they were developed in relatively homogenous Western capitalist contexts that were strongly individualized, masculine, secular, action and future focused. As career guidance and counseling services in more individualized countries seek to meet the needs of a growing number of clients from more collectivist cultures, the universal relevance of such models is increasingly open to challenge. This article explores three core challenges posed by migration for the theory and practice of career guidance and counseling. The first relates to the very purpose of these types of services for migrants; the second, to the way in which migration requires a realignment of the relationship of theory with practice; and the third relates to the need to redefine service delivery models for this client group. The extent to which notions of "quality" in services are culturally dependent will also be considered, together with the potential for general service improvements being stimulated by the provision of high quality services for migrants.

Keywords: migration; careers practice; multicultural; theory, practice.

Introduction

An era of growing population mobility has scattered migrants across the world. Since the 1940s, for example, the United States (US) has attracted increasingly large waves of inward immigration which, by the 1990s, had become as large as those a century before (Neagu, 2009). However, it has been argued that more recently there has been a shift away from immigration to a country of permanent residence, toward temporary migration, because the global distribution of work has created demand for certain types of jobs, with less likelihood that migrants will move and settle in one country (Savickas, 2008).

In all countries, migration is a highly sensitive political issue, as governments seek to balance the needs of the labor market with social equity - often in the face of popular resistance. This tends to rise during recessions when fear of competition for jobs, downward pressure on wage rates, demands on social welfare and threats to cultural identity become more prominent. The United Kingdom (UK) is an interesting case, both because of the scale of recent migration and the extent of ethnic and cultural mixing. After the enlargement of the European Union (EU) in 2004, more than one million Central and Eastern European migrants arrived in the UK, when rights to live and work in the EU were granted to nationals of the Accession 8 (A8) countries (Poland, Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia, Slovenia, Slovakia, Hungary and the Czech Republic) (Pollard et al., 2008). This movement was probably the largest immigration in British history, as a proportion of the host population, changing not only the shape and nature of migration, but also the nature of the impact on the host country. At the same time, though independently, Britain saw a rapid rise in ethnic and cultural mixing. Those who described themselves as of "mixed" ethnicity in the 2001 Census (15% of all non White British people) were the youngest of the minority ethnic groups and were predicted to grow rapidly over the next decade (Bradford, 2006). A third factor is the dispersal of migrant and minority groups. Historically, migrants tended to concentrate in single communities, while other areas remained broadly "White British", but more recently, there has been a much greater pattern of dispersal. This has resulted in the arrival of migrants in rural communities with no recent experience of migrants, while many urban areas have seen the rise of "super diversity", with many nationalities and ethnic groups in a single area. Sixteen or more languages are spoken in a third of Local

Authorities (these are administrative areas for local government), with more than 300 languages spoken, overall, in British schools (Vertovec, 2006).

Whilst the overall effect of the current global economic recession on migration is yet unknown, it seems unlikely that the numbers of migrants will decrease dramatically. Forecasts from both the United Nations (UN, 2006) and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2008) suggest that although flows may reduce or reverse temporarily in response to economic cycles, population mobility will rise in the long term. For example, in times of economic recession, some migrants will return to their home countries to escape lower wages or unemployment (like Polish migrants who have returned recently to their country of origin from Ireland and the United Kingdom). The reduction in the levels of migration because of changing economic conditions is especially true for irregular migration (like the Mexico-US migration), which is particularly sensitive to the availability of jobs. However, the scale of economic inequalities amongst countries globally, combined with demographic factors (like the ageing of the populations in developed countries, and population pressures in the global South), will probably ensure that migration flows do not fall in the longer term (Castles, 2009). In the UK, for example, current projections suggest labor shortages as large as 5 million jobs within a decade, resulting from the retirement of the large age cohort born after the Second World War, coinciding with declining numbers of school leavers[1].

Migration is not, of course, a single homogenous phenomenon. Migration for marriage, retirement, lifestyle and education exist alongside higher profile economic migration (Castles & Miller, 2010), with varying implications for social equity and career guidance and counseling needs. Within this range of different types of migration, economic migration embraces a wide continuum. At one end are the highly skilled migrants, often not recognized as migrants at all, working in fields like IT and finance in occupational roles that need to be filled to enable host countries to maintain their

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[1] The UK Commission Employment and Skills predicts demand to fill 12 million jobs in the UK over the next decade (UKCES 2008), but Census data show only 7 million young people in age cohorts which will enter the labor market during that period.

competitive position in a global knowledge based economy. Such migrants usually have internationally recognized professional and/ or academic qualifications, are fluent in a number of languages, are often multi-culturally competent and are typically working for multinational organizations (Brown et al., 2008). This group operates in a labor market that is already global, where international movement is the norm and where career guidance and counseling support is likely to be provided by employing organizations or occupational sectors. A range of social attitudes is apparent in the discourses around these migrants, often combative and competitive in nature, talking about a "war for talent", where the goal is to seduce the "top talent" into selling their labor to the highest corporate bidder (Brown et al, 2008, p.13). Often these discourses interact with other political agendas, where, for example, sending countries (sometimes supported by potential receiving countries) try to discourage migration by highly qualified people like doctors, who would otherwise deprive the donor country of healthcare services, endangering welfare and aid policy.

At the other end of the economic migration continuum are those in low skilled, largely manual, jobs. Some have entered the country illegally, have overstayed visas, or have had applications for asylum refused. As a result, they can only find work in the black or grey economy. Others have entered legally, but are significantly over-skilled for the jobs they occupy, because of their poor language skills, discrimination or because their overseas professional qualifications are not recognized. For many in this latter group, even low skilled jobs in the developed world (from fruit picking and cleaning to personal social care) offer better economic rewards than professional work in their country of origin. Clearly, better career guidance and counseling might improve the deployment of such migrants, with the potential to benefit the individuals, their families and the wider economy. However, the ability to access services will be constrained by the law and by political acceptability, as well as awareness of their existence. For workers at this end of the spectrum, a pejorative discourse is often evident, with migrants (especially illegal, irregular and low-skilled migrants) commonly regarded as a threat to society, with repeated warnings in the media that porous borders threaten the loss of jobs for the indigenous population and increase crime levels. Another concern is the perceived threat to cultural identity, especially when migrant numbers rise rapidly, become concentrated in particular areas, or become particularly visible. Societal discourses

on migration reflect these sensitivities. In the UK, resistance has been shown to be strongest when communities already suffering economic disadvantage experience large inflows of migrants (Commission on Integration and Social Cohesion, 2007).

Negotiating the balance between separateness and integration is a key task for all migrants, who will differ in the degree to which they want to integrate and the speed with which they do so, together with the extent to which the host community is willing to assist. Work is a key location for integration and career guidance and counseling services have a powerful potential role to play as mediators between the migrant and the unfamiliar world of work in the host country. An interesting analysis of these issues was offered in the UK by a Commission on Integration and Social Cohesion, (2007)[2]. The Commission examined strategies for securing community cohesion where large migrant communities were interacting with large host communities (in this case, declining working class industrial cities, themselves experiencing increasing economic and social distress). It identified four key factors: ensuring a degree of stability and security; helping migrants and their host communities to see themselves as contributors to an evolving shared future (rather than defending entrenched visions of historic cultures, often idealized by the indigenous population); ensuring an understanding of civic rights and responsibilities; and ensuring similar access to services, and trust in fair treatment. Since a key part of a career guidance and counseling encounter is discussion of how to deploy prior experience and qualification productively in a new environment, it might be expected that an holistic approach to careers guidance and counseling would contribute to all four of these - especially to the second and third, by seeing occupational decisions in the context of broader notions of integration and identity. Yet there is little evidence that careers policy, or practitioners have explicitly considered this role.

Some migrants also face real tensions between the individualist expectations of the host community and the more collective approaches of the culture of origin. A model of career guidance and counseling which puts the full development of the individual first may sit uncomfortably with a

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[2] The Commission was set up to investigate the causes of serious intercommunal disturbances in a series of industrial towns in Northern England in the early 2000s

culture that places responsibility to family, community or divine ordinance above self realization. This is perhaps the most striking illustration of the need for cross-cultural competence, calling for careers practitioners to become familiar with value systems that are different from their own (Bimrose, 1998). For example, Ibrahim's model of value orientations was developed to compare value emphases and value orientations in different cultures. Categories are identified that are common to all humanity: human nature (good, bad, immutable); human relationships (lineal-hierarchical, collateral-mutual, individualistic); relationship of people to nature (harmony, subjugation and control, power of nature); time orientation (past, present, future); and activity orientation (being, being-in-becoming, doing) (Ibrahim, 1985, p.629). These categories should be used in practice to 'establish clearly how the client views the world .... to understand the nature of the specific crisis and its apprehension by the client .... to establish mutually agreed-upon goals and processes....' (Ibrahim, 1985, p.630). One application of the human orientation dimension of this model would be, for example, to encourage practitioners to be mindful that some cultures have developed a strong relational emphasis, where the interests of the extended family, or even community, take primacy over an individual's preference. Consequently, the focus of the career intervention shifts from the preference of the individual client to the broader concerns of family and community. Thus, a full understanding of personal philosophy, or worldview, can only be achieved by placing it 'within the context of the client's primary subculture and how his or her values relate to the majority culture' (Ibrahim, 1985, p.630), whilst an understanding of individual worldviews also 'helps in focusing on within-group variation' (Ibrahim, 1991, p.14).

This article explores these and other key issues around the theory and the practice of career guidance and counseling support for migrants. First, it examines the ways in which the delivery of such services to this client group challenges core assumptions and beliefs about the very nature of career guidance and counseling services. This leads on to an exploration of the ways in which the delivery of career support to migrants indicates a re-alignment of theory with practice. Finally, it explores the implications of the particular needs of migrants for different models of service delivery.

Migration challenging the key purpose of careers support

The varied circumstances in which migrants navigate their way into and through labor markets indicate, vividly, how different groups will require different levels and types of career guidance and counseling support that take account of context. There is, however, little evidence that these needs are being accommodated, either by the career guidance and counseling professions or those who organize services.

The OECD notes that terms like information, advice and guidance, vocational guidance, vocational counseling, career counseling and career development are used to describe a range of activities, which they include within the term 'career guidance' and define as:

Services intended to assist people of any age and at any point throughout their lives to make educational, training and occupational choices to manage their careers. Career guidance helps people to reflect on their ambitions, interests, qualifications and abilities. It helps them to understand the labor market and education systems, and to relate this to what they know about themselves. Comprehensive career guidance tries to teach people to plan and make decisions about work and learning. Career guidance makes information about the labor market and about educational opportunities more accessible by organising it, systematising it and making it available when and where people need it. (OECD, 2004, p.19)

The emphasis on employment in the OECD definition is broadened in the more holistic perspectives of the North American professional association, the National Career Development Association (NCDA) and the International Association of Educational and Vocational Guidance (IAEVG), whose missions, respectively, are 'to promote the career development of all people over the life span' and 'to assist personal choices and decisions for meaningful pursuits and occupations'. The expansion of the definition for career support evident in the missions of the two professional associations probably partially reflects the expanding role of career guidance and counseling for people across the lifespan as healthy life expectancy continues to rise. Irrespective of which definition of key purpose is selected, the themes of personal development, individual choice and individual potential are central. Implicit is a strong social equity agenda, with an emphasis on supporting all individuals to achieve their full potential. Not only might the centrality of individual autonomy to these key purposes be somewhat alien to those from cultures other than Western, but

the consistent failure of career guidance and counseling services to accommodate the specific needs of certain groups of migrants militates against the core principle of social equity.

Labor market experiences of migrants

Scrutiny of the experiences and job prospects of many migrant groups in countries across the world begins to reveal the nature and size of the challenge they pose to career support. A recent study in the US, for example, indicates how patterns of occupational placement of skilled male migrants in the labor market vary both over time and by country of origin, when education and other human capital characteristics are kept constant. Although migrants from countries with low occupational placement rates progress faster than those with better placement rates around migration time, they do not manage to catch-up fully, compared with those who started with an advantage (Neagu, 2009). This supports findings on the labor market performance of migrants in the UK, where ethnic minority groups are the most disadvantaged (Dustmann et al., 2003), where differences in labor market participation between and within groups are evident, and where discrimination is a common experience (Bloch, 2004). Moreover, it would seem that this situation is likely to persist so long as employers are able to continue to offer employment to migrant workers on the basis of 'maximum hours for the minimum wage' (MacKenzie & Forde, 2009, p.156).

In the light of this type of evidence, the relevance of career guidance and counseling practice, with an emphasis on personal development, choice, rationality and self-actualization seems highly questionable for many migrant groups. Although within group differences clearly exist (for example, women migrants often suffer more labor market disadvantage than migrant men), as well as between group differences (like some migrants regarded as the 'top talent' being actively sought out by multinational companies and occupying privileged positions), most migrants will not have the luxury of selecting an occupation that best suits their personal profile, abilities and qualifications. Rather, they are likely to have to accommodate to available opportunities and take whatever action is necessary to ensure economic survival. Like many of the most disadvantaged amongst native populations, they are particularly likely to depend for advice and support on informal networks of friends and families, yet this support from people who are themselves already

disadvantaged may give access only to a narrow and perhaps heavily biased body of information, as well as powerful cultural steers.

Relevance of the matching paradigm

Despite the lived experiences of many migrants, who constantly find their opportunities constrained by the societal structures in which they find themselves, a dominant influence on current career guidance and counseling practice continues to be a paradigm that emphasizes individual autonomy, assumes rational choice and marginalizes the influence of context. Derived from the academic discipline of differential psychology, the three part talent matching or trait-and-factor approach proposes that occupational choices are made when people have achieved first, an accurate understanding of their individual traits; second, knowledge of jobs and the labor market; and third, made a rational and objective judgement about the relationship between these two groups of facts (Parsons, 1909). It is worth noting that the goal of the originator of this approach was to help young people (mainly young men), including many migrants to the USA from Europe, make vocational choices (Leung, 1995). This matching theory of vocational choice has been extensively developed and refined over a significant time period (e.g. Holland, 1973, 1985 & 1994), with its continuing influence on the practice of careers guidance noted by Krumboltz (1994), who suggested that most current practice was 'still governed by the three-part theory outlined by Frank Parsons (1909)' (p.14). Savickas (1997a) concurred: Parsons' paradigm for guiding occupational choice remains to this day the most widely used approach to career counseling' (p.150). This view is supported by empirical findings from a five year qualitative case study into the effectiveness of career guidance and counseling from the UK that strongly indicates that career professionals in England remain heavily reliant on this approach to their practice (Bimrose, et al., 2004; Bimrose & Barnes, 2006).

The continued popularity of the matching approach to career guidance and counseling can be explained, partly, by its practical appeal. It provides professionals with a clear rationale, a framework for practice that is easy to implement, as well as providing a wide range of assessment tools and computer-aided guidance systems. The role of the career professional is unequivocally defined as

'expert', being invested with specialist knowledge about the labor market, who is also able to use a range of methods to assess individual suitability and capability for the labor market. Further, the underlying philosophy of this approach has suited policy makers, since it lends itself to the servicing of labor market requirements (ensuring the best fit between people and job vacancies) and, for publicly funded careers services, is affordable (a career matching intervention can be one-off and relatively brief). Consequently, it has been embraced enthusiastically by policy makers and barely questioned by the majority of practitioners. However, the theory does contain serious flaws. Its usefulness in current labor market conditions has been questioned, since matching assumes a degree of stability in labor markets that is no longer evident (Mitchell & Krumboltz, 1996). The volatility of many occupational environments, together with the increased pressure on individuals to change and adapt to their circumstances, makes a simple matching process less relevant (Osipow & Fitzgerald, 1996). Limitations on its use with women (Farmer et al., 1998) and for gay and lesbian development (Mobley & Slaney, 1996) has also been highlighted, nor are the decision-making processes commonly used by individuals thought to resemble the rational and conscious process that is often assumed by a matching model (Krieshok, 1998; Krieshok et al., 2009).

The experiences of many migrant groups provide powerful support for these critiques, with the concepts of individual choice and rationality often seemingly irrelevant. Many migrants are likely to be marginalized in jobs that under-utilize their true abilities and their prospects are bleak. Ironically, many come from countries where labor markets were more stable (if limited) and notions of destiny and lifelong careers might make matching models more appropriate. However, the labor market realities confronted by migrants, together with their lack of homogeneity raises questions about the purpose of career guidance and counseling support that is likely to be appropriate for this particular client group.

Alternative approaches?

One précis of the history of career theory maps a process of development and transformation that began during the latter half of the nineteenth century and has continued up to the present day. Fundamental changes in the social organization of work stimulated the emergence of practices designed to support individuals in transition and that have continued to evolve. Theory

followed practice, resulting in a metamorphosis from a paradigm with matching at its heart, through the career development movement, to the current emphasis on career story, with personal narratives structured around life themes (Savickas, 2008). This post-modern paradigm shift offers an alternative and more appropriate purpose for career guidance and counseling practice with migrants. Constructing personal career narratives around life themes has the potential to build self-confidence, establish a degree of stability and create meaning, rather than concentrating on the human capital of individuals (the labor market currency of which is often context specific). The challenge, however, seems to be the -alignment of practice with theory for their benefit of this client group.

Migration stimulating a re-alignment of theory with practice

Migrants have multiple forms of identity, with fixed variables like gender, disability, ethnicity and age interacting with a variety of more fluid cultural, social and other factors. Given the potential intersection of factors resulting in what could be described as cross-cutting disadvantage, multiple forms of social disadvantage will often be suffered by a single individual (for example, an older, female migrant is vulnerable to disadvantages associated with ethnicity and gender as well as age). Such fixed variables have tended to be treated separately in the counseling literature: for example, gender, race, age, disability, socio-economic status, religion (Arrendondo et al., 2005), with some theoretical approaches focusing on a specific variable for career guidance and counseling practice, like gender (Bimrose, 2001; Bimrose, 2008). An holistic, interpretative and integrative approach is indicated for effective career guidance and counseling with migrants, which contextualizes the client and encourages a collaborative approach, providing practical strategies and encouraging advocacy. Multiculturalism offers one such possible framework (Bimrose, 1996; 1998).

We suggest that a serious response to the challenges presented by migration might imply three kinds of change in the alignment of theory and practice: a shift to a multicultural approach; a focus on career adaptability; and a more active advocacy role for practitioners.

A multicultural approach to practice?

A broad definition of multiculturalism embraces a wide range of social variables, including: gender, sexual preference, disability, social class, age, religion, ethnicity and has been described as a 'metatheoretical approach that recognises that all helping methods ultimately exist within a cultural context' (Ivey et al., 1997, p.134). In this respect, it appears to be a highly suitable framework for meeting the career guidance and counseling needs of migrants. Indeed, some of the most pertinent critiques of the theory of career guidance and counseling services for migrants are those that challenge its applicability from a multicultural perspective. For example, Leong and colleagues (1998) suggest that culture specific determinants of occupational choice should be studied as alternatives to the 'Western assumption of vocational interests being the primary determinants' (p.453). Yet a ten year content analysis of multicultural counseling in the *Journal of Counseling and Development* revealed that of the 102 articles reviewed during the period 1990 - 2001, only three per cent related to immigration: 'Particularly surprising was the minimal attention to immigration and acculturation' (Arredondo et al., 2005, p. 159), with the importance of attending to contextual factors in future research and publications emphasized. Even where attention has been focused on the particular needs of migrant groups, this has tended to be on refugee and/or asylum seekers, leaving out the broader group of primarily economic migrants (for example, Century et al., 2007; Lee, 1999; Mulcahy & Mulvey, 2002).

To demonstrate the complexity and inclusiveness of the multicultural construct, the Dimensions of Personal Identity Model was introduced in the Multicultural Counseling Competencies document (Arrendondo et al., 1996). This model indicates fixed dimensions (like age, gender and race); fluid or dynamic dimensions of an individual's identity (like geographic location, education and work experiences); and contextual and socio-political factors, many of which are out of the control of the individual, but have a direct impact (like being a migrant). The model indicates how fixed dimensions (e.g. ethnicity and gender) interact with socio-political factors (e.g. sexism, racism, ageism), which may influence the individual's access to the fluid or dynamic dimensions (e.g. education, work experiences) of an individual's identity. This is a useful analytical framework for helping both career guidance and counseling professionals and their migrant clients to make sense of the situation in which the migrant client finds him- or herself, including future prospects in

the receiving country context. In so doing, it deflects blame, or suggestion of inadequacy, away from the individual.

Over its relatively short history, multicultural counseling approaches have shifted their focus from culture shock and acculturation to culturally sensitive approaches to practice, multicultural competencies and racial identity. Adoption of multiculturalism into practice has not, however, escaped criticism. It has, for example, been criticised for ignoring questions of power relations and for emphasizing cultural difference, rather than focusing on the similar predicaments of ethnic minority groups, like racism and sexism (see, for example, Moodley, 2007). It does, however, start with awareness of differences amongst and within clients; stresses the importance of family and cultural factors affecting the way clients view the world; challenges practitioners, theoreticians and researchers to rethink the meaning of counseling and to pay attention to cultural and family concerns. An appealing and very practical feature of a multicultural approach is the explication of the skills and competencies required by career guidance and counseling practitioners for effective practice. These competencies are expressed within three broad key categories: self-awareness; skill development; and the acquisition of relevant knowledge and understanding, with clear methodologies available for their development (Bimrose, 1998, Bimrose et al., 2005). Consideration has also been given to the type of training approach that would be needed to support career guidance and counseling practitioners in developing their abilities and confidence to offer multicultural careers counseling (Arthur & McMahon, 2005; Flores & Heppner, 2002; Vespia et al., 2010). Within the broad framework of multiculturalism, career professionals working with migrants could benefit from an understanding of particular strategies that might improve the prospects of these clients. Developing career adaptability could be one such example.

Career adaptability

The concept of the post modern career is prevalent in the current careers literature. Illustrative of the post modern focus is the emphasis given to adaptability and identity (Savickas et al., 2009). It could be argued that migrants represent a client group for whom adaptability and

identity are crucially the key tasks for career intervention, perhaps as a priority over placement into employment, although the client may him or herself be strongly focused on finding a job.

Adaptability in the context of career progression refers to: 'the quality of being able to change, without great difficulty, to fit new or changed circumstances' (Savickas, 1997b, p.254). Career adaptability is a relatively under-developed concept in the careers literature and one that is still being explored and refined. Introduced around three decades ago, it was initially proposed as a replacement for the concept of career maturity and was described as 'the coping behaviours necessary for dealing with career development tasks at any life stage' (Super & Knasel, 1981, p.194). Although there is not yet final agreement on the definition of career adaptability, many interested in studying the concept agree that it refers to: 'the readiness to cope with the predictable tasks of preparing for and participating in the work role and with the unpredictable adjustments prompted by changes in work and working conditions'. (Savickas, 1997b, p.254). To become career adaptable, you would need to 'look ahead and look around' (Savickas, 1997b, p: 257). Career adaptability is about: being disposed to think routinely about the future; being prepared to engage in an ongoing process of self-reflection; developing the skills, knowledge and understanding needed to cope with change; and being open-minded about opportunities that come along.

Advocacy

A third change, in addition to working within a multicultural framework and providing migrant clients with the support and encouragement necessary to develop coping strategies like career adaptability, calls for career guidance and counseling professionals to espouse, proactively, a social justice approach, requiring advocacy. Many migrants are likely to require some form of direct intervention by the career guidance and counseling professionals to achieve the changes that make the difference to their life chances, like combating employment discrimination. The type of activist, or advocacy approach to practice indicated by the needs of some migrants has been illustrated by a description of 'downstream helping':

The story goes that a person walking alongside a river sees someone drowning. This person jumps in, pulls the victim out, and begins artificial respiration. While this is going on, another

person calls for help; the rescuer jumps in, pulls the victim out, and begins artificial respiration. This process repeats itself several times until the rescuer gets up and walks away from the scene. A bystander approaches and asks in surprise where he [sic] is going, to which the rescuer replies "I'm going upstream to find out who's pushing all these people in and see if I can stop it!" (Egan & Cowan, 1979, p. 3).

This vignette emphasizes how career guidance and counseling professionals have grown too accustomed to working 'down river', confining themselves to work with individual clients when it may be more appropriate, at least on some occasions, to work 'up-stream', with the structures and systems that are causing the distress (Leung, 1995). The ethics of investing sometimes significant resources in attempts to rescue individuals, after which they are sent back to the same systems that were the source of their original difficulties, are also raised by an advocacy approach to practice. A human-systems framework is required that ranges across micro-levels, such as the family, to macro-levels, exemplified by employment structures or international political systems (Egan & Cowan, 1979; McMahon & Patton, 2006).

Essentially aligned to a social action and social justice approach to practice, three types of advocacy in counseling (also relevant for career guidance and counseling), have been identified as: here-and-now advocacy, where a response is made to an immediate situation; preventive advocacy, referring to action taken to prevent injustice against a group of individuals; and citizen advocacy, which encourages others to take on social issues (Toporek & Liu, 2001). This is contentious in the counseling literature, since advocacy raises concerns about developing client dependency and imposing a paternalistic approach on recipients of services. There are also issues related to confidentiality that need to be addressed, with the adoption of this type of approach leading to professionals challenging the established standards of practice and even professional codes (Romero & Chan, 2005). Undoubtedly different competencies would be required by practitioners (Tororek et al., 2009) and would change the nature of the professional service offered. A specific example relates to advocating on behalf of migrants directly with employers, because the routine integration of employer work into practice would deflect resources away from a focus on working on a one-to-one basis or with groups of clients.

Redefining service delivery

Re-defining the purpose of career guidance and counseling practice for migrants and re-aligning theory with practice are both necessary prerequisites for delivering better services to clients. But the shape and structure of services delivered would also need re-thinking.

Models of service delivery

There are three broad ways of responding to migration in the design of career guidance and counseling services. The first is to integrate migrants into a broadly homogenous service, which implies adaptation to reflect the distinctive needs of migrants, in the same way as services may seek to meet the needs of disabled clients, or people with low skills. Such an approach may have wider benefits, as is sometimes the case where improvements to public services designed to meet the needs of disabled people, improve services for all. A second option is to regard migrants as clients who are so different that they need entirely separate services. Some will feel that the complexity of the issues which many migrants face, where career decisions are interlocked with issues of discrimination, legal status, cultural identity, housing, and access to welfare, is beyond the expertise of conventional career guidance and counseling services. A third option would be to add specialist support or referral networks to existing integrated services, just as some services work with the specialised needs of unemployed, or older clients. Precisely which of these routes is taken, and who decides, will depend on many factors, including the economic, political and cultural contexts in which services are located and a variety of historical and institutional factors, including the degree to which services are state provided, the scope of service and their resourcing.

The role of the State

Countries vary greatly in the extent to which they see the planning and provision of career guidance and counseling as a role for the State, and what parts of the broad spectrum of "careers" are included (OECD, 2004) Where all or some of career support services are seen primarily as a state function (as in most European countries), it is for the State to plan, commission, or coordinate

services. On the other hand, where some, or all, of career support services are seen as a matter for a free market, with a high element of private sector delivery (as commonly in North America), there may still remain a residual role for the State to ensure access for those who are unable to purchase career guidance and counseling in the open market. In the former case, services for migrants are likely to involve some attention to the interlock of career guidance and counseling with migration and employment policy. In the latter, some or all migrants may, or may not, be seen as one of the vulnerable groups in need of public support to ensure equity of access.

Scope of services offered

One other variable is the scope of the service offered. At one end of the range are narrowly defined "employment services" which are strictly limited to finding jobs, and for whom "matching" models of guidance may be particularly appropriate. At the other are services which take a more holistic, person centered, view of the client and her/his needs, embracing examination of long term aspirations, implications for family and community, lifestyle and finances. The latter sit more comfortably with post-modern theories of meaning-makingbut many migrants may feel more comfortable with the former, and it may well be what they are expecting (if indeed they expect anything)

These factors will be reflected in the role and expertise of career guidance and counseling practitioners. In publicly funded services, they can sometimes face challenges in managing their accountability to the client, to the State and to the public interest (which is not always the same). In some countries, the notion of the impartial professional is more developed, and more recognized by funding agencies, than in others. Some practitioners will be competent to address only the most direct labor market placement issues, while others set these in the broader context of related issues like finance, work-life balance issues and aspirations, while yet others have a wider focus on the holistic development of the individual commonly associated with professional counseling.

Resourcing

Resourcing careers guidance and counseling will always be a challenge, since the potential demand is unlimited: those most aware of services will continue to demand more (at least if they seem effective), while there will always be a public policy priority to reach out to those who are in most need, who are often least aware of services. It follows that there will always be issues of rationing in publicly funded services. Migrants who can afford to pay for careers support may be able to access the types of services that they feel address their needs (provided such services exist). In contrast, those who cannot afford to pay (even though they may have greater needs) are likely to have access only to publicly funded service support, or no services at all, while illegal economic immigrants may be actively barred from access. In those countries where services attract a level of public finance, the priorities of funding bodies will be critical, with these often being politically sensitive.

In some European countries, career support services limit themselves by function, adopting narrow definitions of the service, like providing access to job information for the unemployed, or supporting return to employment after a voluntary absence (for example, parents returning after an absence for childcare). A second approach limits by access, giving priority to specific socially or economically excluded groups, usually including the unemployed, amongst whom some kinds of migrant may well be included, while others (like "illegal" migrants, or asylum seekers) may be specifically excluded. A third approach is to ration the modes of access. The national adult careers service, launched in England in 2010 as "Next Step", seeks to address this by offering mixed mode delivery. All adults, regardless of employment or income status, are entitled to some face to face career support with a professional adviser, but the expectation is that most i-career support will be provided online, through a website[3] (which currently includes, among other things a national directory of training courses, as well as self assessment tools and client guides), and through an extensive telephone guidance service (with telephone guidance in nine languages). It may be the case that for some migrants (particularly those with uncertain legal status) the anonymity of online and telephone services can be an attraction. However, migrants are, in general, less likely than

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[3] http://nextstep.direct.gov.uk/

others to have access to online services, or to have the English language skills to make best use of them, or of the telephone options.

Each of these delivery models will have its own strengths and weaknesses in relation to migrants. Privately funded services are unlikely to reach any but the highly qualified globally mobile who can pay (many of whose careers guidance and counseling needs are likely to be met through their employer, or professional networks). Online models are likely to exclude significant proportions of migrants with limited or no IT skills. Services which focus on finding a job may well be more comfortable for migrant clients than those whose emphasis is on personal growth and meaning, which are likely to be more challenging of established cultural expectations in the migrant community.

Shaping services for migrants

Migrants also raise different issues at different life stages. The needs of a seventeen year old woman who does not speak the language of the host country, will be very different from those of her contemporary born and brought up there. Similarly, negotiating equivalence of qualifications or supplementing overseas qualifications is critical, but can be very difficult for qualified migrants, calling not only for time and effort on the part of the career practitioner, but often for significant technical knowledge of particular occupations. Here partnership with employing or employer based organizations may be important, sometimes to work through what is and is not equivalent, but also to offer work experience, to allow the migrant to identify training needs for the new context.

As already noted above, advocacy may be a critical function of career guidance and counseling services for migrant clients, who often face discrimination and hostility. One particularly vulnerable group is illegal migrants. Although they may have some of the greatest and most complex career guidance and counseling needs, many publicly funded services are prohibited from engaging with them, and the fear of being reported also makes it unlikely that such people will come forward. For such clients, voluntary or third sector agencies may be better able to respond, and carry out the advocacy roles which are often critical to meeting their needs.

Conclusions

A focus on migration re-surfaces some new, together with some familiar, debates around career counseling and guidance support. This article has acknowledged the profound differences in life chances that exist amongst various groups of migrants and has begun to examine their contrasting labor market experiences. It has explored the key purpose of career guidance and counseling, as promoted by different organizations and questioned the relevance of a narrow definition of practice for migrants. Equally, it has challenged the applicability of the matching approach to career practice that dominates the landscape of service delivery. The discussion of the particular needs of migrants and the inadequacy of current theory and practice is extended by an exploration of possible alternative, potentially more efficacious ways of working with migrants. A multicultural approach to practice is identified as one possible holistic, integrative framework, alongside strategies like increasing career adaptability and advocating for this client group. Finally, different models of service delivery are considered with their strengths and their weaknesses examined.

Irrespective of which theoretical perspective influences their practice, or framework model within which they work, the primary loyalty of career professionals is likely to be with their clients. A key purpose of their practice is to focus on helping individuals escape from artificial or unnecessary constraints on their aspirations or options, to challenge preconceptions and offer alternatives. This can be difficult to reconcile within current practice and delivery models and with the cultural expectations and assumptions of some migrant groups. With international population flows greater than ever before and the gap between the privileged and less privileged widening, cultural and ethnic diversity challenges views about social justice. Career guidance and counseling services have the potential to make a positive contribution to the social justice agenda, though their impact will depend largely on their ability to change practice in response to the particular challenges posed by migrants.

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