THE RELEVANCE OF VOCATIONAL THEORIES TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM

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ABSTRACT

In normal life situation, one has to learn what one is to do for a living. The learning could be formal or informal and has to be done according to rules after considering some factors. The factors considered before applying a sequence of learning is referred to as curriculum. Attesting to this viewpoint, Nicholls et al. (1978) defined curriculum as "a plan for providing series of learning opportunities for persons to be educated". The factors to be considered in curriculum development are numerous. They could be psychological, physiological, emotional, economic, social, cultural etc. Vocational theorists are experts in these aspects and are depended upon as resource reservoir in curriculum development and design.

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, our country is placing a lot of emphasis on vocational training which is understood to be a kind of development for utilitarianism. Utilitarianism is a concept of recognizing the importance of dignity of labour and it is this concept that is lacking in our educational and economic systems. The effect of this type of development has almost reached the climax hence the incessant shouts for a new system of education in our country. To train someone in his appropriate field for him to substantially contribute his quota to the overall good of the nation is a task that is so onerous to imagine. It is a fact that needs no further investigation to say that when and if it is good with any nation, it is also good with its inhabitants. Of course, it cannot be good with a country that gives proper training in one area of importance to her citizenry nor can it be good with a country that gives improper training to people in all areas of importance. People are differently gifted and should therefore be differently trained for the different opportunities or openings that abound in the country. In compliance with the tedious task of giving suitable and proper training to the individuals for optimum productivity, theorists of different kinds emerge to provide a guide in the form of Learning Theories, Vocational Theories, Vocational Decision and Developments which inherently possess some reliable, accurate, explanatory, predictive and control powers in vocational preferences, choice and adjustments as the major preoccupations of any curriculum designed or developer.

Vocational theories and developments are unavoidable aids in vocational education curriculum. Some people may know what to do but when to do it may be elusive. On the other hand, someone may not even know what to do or to choose in the midst of various alternatives which might at times be very competitive and handsomely rewarding. Finding one's self in these types of situation is so frustrating, impairing or injurious to say the least and one of the simplest ways to disentangle one's self from the above mentioned distressful situations is the proper and objective use of the experts' propositions in vocational theories, vocational developments and vocational decisions. This is why it is absolutely necessary to look at the contributions of some of the renowned theorists in vocational decisions choice and developments since their propositions have a lot of influence on the development of a 901 and pragmatic curriculum in a school system.

The theorists under consideration are:
(a) Ann Roe (b) John L. Holland (c) Donald E. Super (d) Ginsberg (e) UdppockaMl (f) Staats and Staats

Some of the above theorists propounded their theories from more than one perspective aim of this is that an effort is made to present their theories in the following schematic approach:

i. Psychoanalytic Constructs and Assumptions,
   a. Ann Roe

ii. Personality Construct
   a. Ann Roe
   b. John L. Holland

iii. Theories of Developmental Process
   a. Donald E. Super
   b. Ginsberg
iv. Motivational Concept
   a. Hoppock

v. Traits Theories
   a. Ann Roe 
   b. Donald E. Super

vi. Learning Theory
   a. Staats and Staats

PSYCHOANALYTIC CONSTRUCTS AND ASSUMPTIONS:
   Ann Roe was a prominent theorist in vocational choice and decision making. She theorized in this area in different perspectives one of which was the psychoanalytic constructs and assumptions. She made an analysis of developmental pattern of special abilities and viewed it as being determined by the direction of psychic energy involuntarily expended. Emphasizing the importance of attention in occupational choice, she opined that attention directedness is the major denominator of the field to or fields which a person will apply himself. Although she was not the only person who thought of how psyche-analytic constructs and assumptions have a lot of influence on vocational choice, she created a lot of impact by focussing her attention on the early experiences and need satisfaction of the individuals. Roe's (1986) theory states that early experience with parents is related to need satisfactions which in turn influence interests and a little that affect vocational choice and behaviour. It is therefore, not too great a surprise when a child from high-handed parents chooses jobs that relate to or directly needs high-handedness. A typical example of such jobs is choosing a military career. Also, most of the children from religious families tend to be anti-socials because of the beliefs and doctrines received! from the parents at youth. Such children normally incline to choosing jobs from areas that look at most of the social activities of the individuals as taboos and purely sinful. Some people do not work in breweries that produce any alcoholic drinks because to them, drinking of alcohol is a big sin before God and must not be encouraged. It is in these contexts, that the predictive power of Roe's theory is held at the highest esteem.

However, Roe's contribution in vocational choice did not stop at early experiences and needs satisfactions. She also looked at personality and traits as they affected vocational choice and development. In connection with traits, Roe (1906) placed a strong emphasis on interests as a determinant factor in vocational choice. Under personality, the concept of similarity of personalities in a vocation group, and the interaction of the individual's personality with his environment completely occupied her mind. The explanatory power of Roe's theory features here so prominently when one considers why a person not really gifted in or good at a particular occupation places himself in a "do or die" situation because of his interest for the line. No one is again in doubt about why some people find a particular environment their "grazing" ground while others look at the same environment as a "deed end" because of this congruence or non-congruence of their personalities and the environment.

PERSONALITY CONSTRUCT
   Although Ann Roe has made positive contributions to Personality Theories in the area of non-specificity of personality variables, the most outstanding theory in this regard is that of John L. Holland. His theory was based on major assumptions regarding personality types, their determination and relation to various outcomes and vocational choice. Holland (1959) in his personality theories viewed vocational preferences as expressions of personality under which people's resemblances to a particular personality type could be characterized. Thus, each personality type is associated with personal traits and behaviours and the closer a person's resemblance to a particular type, the more likely the exhibition of the personal traits to match the personality type. Holland (opp. cit.) identified six personality types which have influence on occupational choice. They are:
   1. Realistic 
   2. Intellectual 
   3. Social 
   4. Conventional 
   5. Enterprising 
   6. Artistic

1. Realistic Personality Type
   Those in this personality type have the following characteristics:
   have good co-ordination and skill; lacks verbal and interpersonal skills;
   prefer concrete to abstract problems;
   conceive of themselves as being aggressive and masculine and as having conventional political and economic values.
   Airplane mechanics, electricians, wild-life specialists, tool designers, locomotive engineers are typical examples of those with realistic personality type.
2. **Intellectual Personality Type**
   Those in this group have the following characteristics:
   - are task-oriented, intraceptive
   - have needs to understand, have unconventional values and attitudes;
   - enjoy ambiguous work tasks. Those in this category of personality type are the aeronautical design engineers, astronomers, geologists, physicists, chemists, zoologists, meteorologists and scientific research workers.

3. **Social Personality Type**
   Those in this group are the marriage counselors, vocational counselors, psychiatric case workers, juvenile delinquency experts, clinical psychologists, social science teachers, physical education teachers and directors of welfare agencies. They:
   - have verbal interpersonal skills;
   - avoid intellectual problem solving, physical and highly ordered activities;
   - prefer to solve problems through feelings and interpersonal manipulations of others; and are orally dependent.

4. **Conventional Personality Type**
   People in this class of personality type exhibit the following behavioural features;
   - are extraceptive (conforming easily); effective at well-structured tasks;
   - value material possessions and status and identify with power;
   - avoid ambiguous situations and problems involving interpersonal relationships and physical skills; and
   - prefer structured verbal and numerical activities and subordinate roles.
   Typical examples of those in the above personality type are: book-keepers, financial analyst, quality control experts, inventory controllers, statisticians, budget reviewing and traffic managers.

5. **Enterprising Personality Type**
   Those that conveniently fall in this category are: business executives, hotel managers, industrial relations consultants, manufacturers' representatives, masters of ceremony, political campaign managers, sports promoters, television producers, real-estate salesman, travelling salesmen and stock and bond salesmen.
   These personnel:
   - have verbal skills for selling; have dominating and leading traits;
   - conceive of themselves as strong and masculine leaders; are extraceptive and orally aggressive
   - avoid well-defined language or work situation requiring long period of intellectual effort have greater concern with power, status and leadership; and prefer ambiguous social tasks.

6. **Artistic Personality Type**
   These identified with this group:
   - are social, intraceptive and more feminine, have need for
   - individualistic expression, have less ego strength suffer more
   - frequently from emotion disturbances
   - avoid problem that is highly structured or require gross physical skill; and prefer dealing with environmental problems through self-expression in artistic manner. Those that can be identified with the above characteristics are: authors, cartoonists, poets, stage directors, composers, musicians, musical arrangers, free-lace writers, concert singer, commercial artists, art dealers, dramatic coach and symphony conductor.
   - A good curriculum developer or designer cannot afford to do without the highlighted occupational and vocational characteristics since they are all embracing for effective teaching and learning as well as occupational choice and decisions.

**THEORIES OF DEVELOPMENTAL PROCESS**
Developmental theories describe both typical kinds of vocational decision behaviours for different age levels and factors related to their decisions, Super (166). Also, developmental theories relevant to career
guidance view vocational development as one aspect of the individuals total development. While Ginsberg considered this theory under maturational level, sex, socio-economic status, emotions, education, and personality type, Super contributed immensely to this theory under a series of life stages characterized as those of Growth, Exploration, Establishment, Maintenance and Decline.

People differ in their abilities, interests and personalities and are qualified for a number of occupations by virtue of these divergent characteristics. Due to the fact that each of the occupations that people find themselves requires a pattern of various characteristics ranging from abilities, interests to personality traits, it is incumbent on such occupations to diversify their employment base to allow for these characteristics while at the same time allow for a variety of individuals in each occupation. The effect of passage of time and experience on vocational preferences and competencies, the situation in which people live and work and their self-concepts are also critically looked at as a continuous process in terms of occupational choice and adjustment.

The continuous process. Super observes manifests itself in a series of life stage with due consideration to age ranges. The Growth stage which covers a period of 14 years is sub-divided into Fantasy period, 4 - 10 years, Interest, 11 - 12 years, and Capacity, 13 - 14 years. Exploration stage covers a period of 15 - 24 years in range, with its sub-divisions of Tentative period, 15 - 17 years; Transition, 18 - 21 years and Trial, 22 - 24 years. Establishment period or stage is observed to range from 25 - 44 years which is further sub-divided into Trial period, 25 - 30 years and stabilization period, 31 - 44 years. Maintenance period ranges from 45 - 64 years with its sub-divisions into Deceleration and Retirement periods of 65 - 70 years and 71 years respectively.

Sight is not at all lost of the nature of career pattern which is observed to be affected by the individuals parental and socio-economic levels, mental ability and personality characteristics as well as the opportunities to which he is exposed. The process of compromise between self-concept and reality etc. is seen as one of role-playing, place notwithstanding.

In addition, work and life satisfactions are emphasised upon and are possible for achievement through the possession of adequate outlets for one's abilities, interests, personality traits and values as well as establishment in a type of work, a work situation, and a way of life in which he can play the kind of role which his growth and exploratory experiences have led him to consider congenial and appropriate.

In addition to the above continuum. Super (1953) made some propositions which emphasized abilities, interests, personality traits and values, vocational preferences and competencies, work and life satisfaction as well as the effect of time and experience on the individual. From Super's theory it could be accepted that one man's meat is another's poison particularly in relation to vocation. Choice People differ in their abilities, interests and personalities and in like manner, one can perform more in an the other due to some competing personal traits.

MOTIVATIONAL CONCEPT

A concept of motivation as a factor of occupational choice was propounded by Hoppock. His motivational concept focussed attention on needs as they affected occupational decision or choice. He explained that occupations any person chooses should be based on meeting the needs of the individual now or in future. In this respect, the individual has to do everything possible to have the correct information about the needs he wants the chosen occupation to meet and whether he will have job and life satisfaction if the needs are met.

A careful thought to Hoppock's theory confirms its importance. People keep on leaving on job to the other or refusing to take up a particular job. The main reason is that their needs are not or will not be met by the job. (Hoppock, 1957). Depending on the type of job and needs one expects to satisfy, one can predict, explain or control the outcome of one's entering a particular occupation with a greater degree of accuracy. This is possible because he has already known the magnitude of his needs which will determine where and how he will be able to have the means to meet them.

TRAITS THEORY

Traits theories assume that abilities, interests and other personality factors are important determinants of behaviour which in turn affect one's occupational choice. Ann Roe and Donald E. Super are the two theorists directly connected with traits and their effects or influence on the individual. Roe (1966) discussed interests as the major trait while Super (1952) stressed the importance of individual differences for predicting any explaining vocational decisions and satisfactions. He stressed that the individual differences were in the areas of personality traits such as intelligence, special abilities, interests, values attitudes, needs and self-concept. He, in conclusion, viewed critically the relationships among decision behaviours, vocational participation and traits. The predictive and explanatory powers of Super's and Roe's theories are highly held particularly when considering molar activities such as academic achievement, selecting appropriate curricula for schools and colleges, or occupational success and satisfactions. On control function, emphasis was placed by Roe on non-trait aspects while Super (1952) uphold the control function 'of his theory in his discussion of identification process.
**LEARNING THEORY**

Learning or training that some one gets has a lot of influence on his behaviour and vocational participation. Learning theory takes the position that predictions of responses can be made from knowledge of the individual's past history, current stimulus situation, and present motivational states. Thus, learning theory would first of all identify the behaviours that constitute the decision, (Staats and Staats 1963, and Bijou and Baer 1961). With adequate information or a record of an adequate sample of events, the learning theory can have a very high predictive power. The control function of this theory is also very sound but it need adequate information concerning the individual and his knowledge of the learning process. Therefore, a theory of vocational decision behaviour is needed to provide sound principles in the learning process and to lead to manipulations of those aspects of the environment that may register their effect on occupational choice and vocational participation.

**LINK BETWEEN VOCATIONAL THEORIES AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT**

The link between vocational theories and curriculum development could clearly be identified through a critical look at the process and general objectives of curriculum development. According to Osuala (1981), curriculum is "the series of courses designed to cover the instruction in designated field". This simply means that the planning of learning opportunities intended to bring about certain changes in the learners, and the assessment of the extent to which these changes have taken place is what is meant by curriculum development. In giving support to these views, Nicholls et. at. (op. cit.) defined curriculum as "a plan for providing sets of learning opportunities for persons to be educated".

**THE PROCESS OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT**

Most writers in the area of curriculum development including Saylor et al (1981) maintained that there are four major stages in the process. These are (1) selection of objectives; (2) selection of learning experiences; (3) organization of learning experiences; and (4) evaluation. All the vocational theories explained above are embedded in these four stages of curriculum development process for thorough analysis and application at any point in time.

**GENERAL OBJECTIVES OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT**

This paper identifies four general objectives of curriculum development viz:

(a) to prepare learners for education that is relevant to everyday life;
(b) to equip the schools with the knowledge of factors that make learning easy and interesting to the learners;
(c) to prepare and encourage students to participate fully in the learning process; and
(d) to prepare and encourage teachers to know the level of students' expectations and contributions in the learning process.

**SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

Curriculum development has never been carried out in isolation. Some factors affecting all the beneficiaries of a well-structure curriculum have to be considered. The factors are usually classified according to the view of the various vocational theorists since the learner must be groomed for challenges outside the learning environment - the labour market. These challenges form the basis of the vocational theories which in turn have direct bearing with the entire personality of the individual learners in their respective work environment.

**REFERENCES**


