

Career Development and Livelihood Planning: Resources for Professional Development

Module Name: The Manifestation of Career *Module Leader: Gideon Arulmani*

Module Overview

Module Name	Units
The Manifestation of Career	1. The Pre-Industrial Period
	2. The Industrial Period
	3. Evolution of Work in the non-Western (Indian) context
	4. The Post Industrial Period
	5. Post Industrial Society and the Emerging Work Ethic
	6. Career and Career Guidance: Definitions and frameworks

Work has been our constant companion ever since the hands of our ancient forefathers curled around a piece of stone and converted it into a tool – an instrument of production. The tendency to work is a natural and inherent human characteristic. Indeed it is the human being's highly developed ability to consciously and intelligently direct personal effort and energy toward a target that lies at the heart of not just our survival but of our progress and development as a species. The meaning and purpose of work has undergone significant changes over time. Moulded by ideologies, shaped by the tenets of a variety of philosophies and transformed by revolutions, work has finally grown to include the idea of "career". While work is as old as the history of human kind, the idea of a personal career appears to be a relatively modern one, yet its roots are intertwined with the history of work. A number of definitions of career exist and range from being broad and all-encompassing (perhaps too broad), covering "everything we do", to something specific (perhaps over specific) such as aptitude testing.

The Module presents the proposition that while all careers are forms of work, the reverse may not be always true. As an area of human activity, work is broader in what it encompasses. The Module will discuss the idea that **career is work with certain special characteristics**.

A further point to be kept in mind is that the notion of career emerged from within cultural and economic contexts that mainly characterise Western industrialised societies. The idea of career is culturally congruent, natural to such contexts and its manifestation is spontaneous. However, not all cultures and economies came directly under the same cultural and economic influences. In such societies, namely, non-industrialised non Western cultures human engagement with work progressed as it had for centuries. Even today, all one has to do is to step a few miles outside the cities of economically developing countries to enter a world of work that is characterized by preindustrial features, where work is linked to the marshalling of resources to secure basic necessities such as food, clothing, and shelter. **Career barely exists** in these cultures and economies and may even be perceived as culturally alien. Nonetheless, global forces have had and continue to have an impact on work behaviour in almost all contexts. In virtually all societies, work has changed from being simply linked to survival needs to something far more complex, requiring increasing amounts of specialization and training. Accordingly, the notion of a personal career has made its appearance in many more parts of the world. The fact remains that all cultures have time-tested traditions of engaging with the world of work, some of which are thousands of years old. Although historically the notion of career was born in a Western, individualistic, industrialized context and was nurtured by a work ethic that promoted freedom of choice, global forces over the years have transported it also to many other cultural and economic locations. It seems, therefore, that the manifestation of career can be seen in two broad contexts: contexts to which career is indigenous and contexts where it is, in many respects, culturally alien. This manifestation is strongly influenced by local, social, cultural, economic, and psychological factors. Hence, the meaning of

career for a middle-class, urban Indian might be very different from his/her middle-class German counterpart: the German, for example, may be relatively more accepting of a vocationally-oriented, blue collar career, while to the middle-class Indian, given prevailing culturally-mediated occupational prestige attributions, blue collar professions may not even be considered as a potential career path! The point to be noted is that the notion of career is becoming more and more **universal**. However, what it means, how it is manifested, and how the individual engages with career, can vary from one context to another.

Therefore, this Module aims at answering the question **What is career? What is career guidance?** Through this Module your aim is to develop a **clear, balanced and culturally grounded definition of career and career guidance** to guide your work as a career development professional.

We are going to do this by taking a historical perspective, tracing the history and evolution of work. As we begin this journey toward understanding work and career, the objective of this Module is not to merely to chronicle events that have shaped the development of work but to try and obtain a glimpse into the psychological, sociological and economic factors that underlie the evolution of this most essential of human preoccupations.

Our objective is to pick up the **“career” thread** that runs through the history of humankind’s engagement with work.

Refer to Recorded Lecture.

How you should prepare for the Module

- Ensure that you have oriented yourself to this Module by going over the **Module Overview** lecture notes and listening to the lecture.
- The key points of each **unit** in this Module will be covered through a PowerPoint based lecture. The lecture will refer to the unit’s lecture notes. So, keep the notes for each unit at hand.
- You will be given mini learning tasks as the lecture progresses that would require you to make notes and answer quizzes of different types. Therefore keep a **notebook and pencil** at hand.
- At the end of the lecture notes you will find a set of **assignments** you are required to complete.