



Editorial

Transitions in the World of Work

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An ongoing survey of languages called the People's Linguistic Survey of India has returned some startling facts. The survey has enumerated 780 living languages in India today and an expert estimate is that by the time the survey ends, the count will perhaps rise to about 900 languages. In the midst of this wonderful linguistic diversity is however hidden a story of loss. Several Indian languages have become extinct in the last 50 years. *Why should such statistics be of interest to readers of IJCLP?* The reason is that the fate of languages and livelihoods, at least in some parts of the world, are tightly intertwined. One of the key reasons for language loss and language change is thought to be linked to the rise and fall of certain livelihoods and occupations. For example, when livelihoods have been lost and communities have moved to find other means of living, their languages have also migrated. With time the communities have picked up other languages and proficiency in their earlier languages slipped: a fate closely mirrored by the growth and loss of their new and old proficiencies in a livelihood. While there is strong evidence that a language can be lost to a community within three generations of dwindling use, I am left wondering if the same is the case with traditional livelihoods in India. Taking inspiration from the People's Linguistic Survey, what is perhaps urgently needed is a People's Livelihoods Survey. Perhaps only then will the transitions in the world of traditional work become visible.

In this the third issue of IJCLP a special feature is an interview with Tony Watts, who recently stepped away from his multiple roles in the field of career guidance to pursue his passion for sports and music. The interview takes the reader through some watershed developments in the field of Western career guidance. In his simple, elegant and distinctly academic style, Tony Watts explains the forces that have shaped current day theorising and model building in the field. Common terms like counselling and guidance are explained in the context of recent cross-fertilisation across disciplines related to career guidance.

The four papers that follow each cover transitions in rural India, urban India, USA and Japan. The papers are either a review or a personal narration of the travails, triumphs and transitions experienced between young adulthood to late adulthood. The paper by Gideon Arulmani brings focus on to the livelihood planning approach to career guidance. It discusses the tensions between the term career and livelihood, and the key question of whether career counsellors are relevant in contexts where traditional occupations are practiced and work roles are automatically assigned. The focus of the approach is on local contexts that define the life and choices of those experiencing transitions in rural and pre-industrial economies in today's world. By contrast, the intensely personal narrative of a career journey by Siddharth Sthalekar reveals transitions of a very different nature. The introspection that prompts action, the experiences that stand out in the journey and the moving away and return to a career in finance occur against the backdrop of a booming Indian economy. Continuing the theme of transitions, but within the context of labour market frictions in twenty-first century USA, is the next paper by Jane Goodman. The paper is a succinct review of a selection of key career theorists who have influenced the author's work, as well as those who are considered as influential in the career guidance movement in the

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USA. This paper is written from the perspective of industrialised economies. The final paper in this section is an analysis by Kiyomi Banda of the school-to-work transitions in Japan. The paper gives a quick review of the recent history of the economic success story of Japan in the 1980s, the subsequent economic challenges, and what these economic waves have meant for young people at the threshold of taking on work roles. The dynamics of higher education provisions and graduate recruitment drives in Japan are well described and are yet another illustration of how local processes shape the transitions of individuals into the world of work. Seen along with the Sthalekar and Goodman papers, it becomes clear that even among industrialised settings the motivations and nature of career change and career development is varied and culture-bound. Taken together, the four papers illustrate the nature of career development in India and elsewhere, and the various influences on career progression.

A final paper in this issue of the *IJCLP* by Anuradha Bakshi questions the methodological stances taken within the career guidance literature. The paper lays out the philosophical and theoretical reason for nurturing a qualitative approach in the field of career guidance. The paper ends with a discussion about how such an approach would influence the practice of career guidance and what would it mean to have a mixed-methods approach that values both the quantitative and qualitative methods of research and practice.

This volume has many nuggets of information for practitioners, especially on how to situate one's practice within the matrix of quantitative-qualitative methodologies, the career-livelihood dimension, the school-to-work transitions and the later transitions from work through to other work roles. All authors in this issue touch upon the uncertainties of shifting opportunities and through their discussions offer insights for the practice of career guidance in the contemporary world of work.