

Editorial

Jérôme Rossier

Published online: 3 November 2010
© Springer Science+Business Media B.V. 2010

Our *Journal's* third issue of volume ten again contains a diversity of contributions. This issue contains three empirical contributions, one using an unusual research method for our field that might contribute to generating new findings in the future, and one literature review. Two of these contributions address the question of supervision and how supervision may promote a reflexive attitude toward our own practice and in the end increase the quality of our interventions. The two other contributions assess the impact of some individual characteristics on the tendency to seek career counselling and on final year medical students' career plans.

In “My Career Chapter as a tool for reflective practice,” Peter McIlveen and Wendy Patton presented the results of a study using an innovative and uncommon research method called autoethnography, which consists of studying oneself in a specific situation. Of course, the difficulty of this method may consist in producing scientifically interesting and unbiased results, as stated by the authors themselves. However, this method might be especially well suited for studying self-reflection. This study has shown that an instrument such as My Career Chapter based on the theory of dialogical self may contribute increasing reflexive self-awareness. Moreover, this study might also be considered as an illustration of the pertinence of this autoethnographic method in our field. Being innovative in terms of method might indeed allow researchers to more accurately describe all of the complex processes underlying educational and vocational guidance.

In “Who seeks career counselling? A prospective study of personality and career variables among Swiss adolescents,” Elif Balin and Andreas Hirschi presented an empirical study aiming at identifying individual factors that might explain the inclination of seeking career counselling at a very specific developmental moment when adolescents have to make their first professional choice. Results indicated that gender and some career related variables, such as career undecidedness, predict

J. Rossier (✉)
University of Lausanne, Institute of Psychology, Anthropole-3127, 1015 Lausanne, Switzerland
e-mail: Jerome.Rossier@unil.ch

help-seeking behaviours. However, as suggested by the authors, gender differences simply could be due to some social inequalities. Indeed, in Switzerland transition from school to the world of work are known for being more difficult for girls with low school achievement. Finally, it would be important to further study the relationship between career related variables and seeking career counselling in order to assess if people who face the most important social barriers or at-risk populations seek career counselling more frequently or if they may be considered as underserved.

In “A multivariate analysis of personality, values and expectations as correlates of career aspirations of final year medical students,” Mary E. Rogers, Judy Searle, Peter A. Creed, and Shu-Kay Ng studied the impact of several individual characteristics, and more precisely personality, values, work and lifestyle expectations, well-being, and several background variables, on the career aspirations of future doctors. Career aspirations implying high levels of interpersonal contact seemed to be associated with the agreeableness personality dimension as expected. The other four personality dimensions and values seemed only to have a marginal effect on career aspirations whereas well-being issues, quality of lifestyle and prestige were of importance. This study again raised a question of social justice and, more specifically, of how some specific barriers have an impact on some discrepancies in terms of gender distributions across medical specialities. However, the question of how career counsellors may have an active and direct impact on this mal-distribution induced to some extent by social factors is a very difficult one.

Finally, in “Supervision to enhance educational and vocational guidance practice: A review,” Hazel L. Reid presented how supervision emerged in some specific Western countries and may serve formative, normative, and restorative purposes. Supervision has to consider and to take into account the needs of both the client and the counsellor, as suggested by McIlveen and Patton in the first article of this issue. This review emphasizes the importance of supervision for the training and the professional development of counsellors and for insuring and improving the quality of our services. Unfortunately, the scientific literature about supervision is very scarce. More research on supervision in our field is needed, studying for example, its impact on counsellors’ well-being or their professional stress levels or on the quality of our interventions as perceived by our clients. Finally, research on supervision should also be conducted in a diversity of cultural settings.

We hope you will find that issue 10(3) provides you with a number of new and interesting insights and that it contributes to your own professional development. We wish you pleasant reading in the hopes that this issue will stimulate your own thoughts and lead to the other contributions to our *Journal*.