

Developing career trajectories: Researching effective careers guidance

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Project aim:

To use a longitudinal (5 year), qualitative case study approach to investigate the nature of effective guidance by tracking the career trajectories of 50 research participants.

Methodology:

A detailed investigation of 50 in-depth case studies across varied guidance contexts was undertaken (2003-2004).

Each case study included a detailed examination of a career guidance interview from the perspectives of the client receiving guidance, the practitioner giving the guidance and an independent third party.

The 50 clients (female, n=33) were then followed up by telephone each year for four years (over the period 2004-2008) to track their career progression exploring influences, barriers and decisions.

Barriers to progression:

- ▶ Health barriers
- ▶ Local labour markets
- ▶ Caring responsibilities
- ▶ Financial constraints

Key findings:

- ▶ Low attrition rate (50 to 28)
- ▶ Clients value guidance and find it useful
- ▶ 4 career decision-making styles
- ▶ Model of 'guidance-in-action'
- ▶ Matching approaches dominate in practice
- ▶ Need to develop measures of 'distance travelled'

Women's participation in the labour market represents a complex interaction of:

- ▶ Context
- ▶ Culture
- ▶ Life-stage
- ▶ Perceived support
- ▶ Personality

Useful guidance:

- ▶ Promotes positive outcomes
- ▶ Provides access to networks, knowledge & information
- ▶ Encourages constructive change
- ▶ Provides a positive experience

Career decision making styles:

- ▶ Evaluative
- ▶ Strategic
- ▶ Aspirational
- ▶ Opportunistic

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Full reports and related publications from this study can be downloaded from www.warwick.ac.uk/go/glacier/cg
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