How first and second generation students learn and make decisions about careers.

Rachael Collins
Why?  
Who?  
How?  
What?  

How first and second generation students learn and make decisions about careers.
Why?

‘Learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience’ Kolb 1984:38
One problem was that most of them focussed on the individual decision maker, seeing the person as the only agent involved in making a career decision, and seeing that individual as separate from the context within which it was made. (Hodkinson, 2008:3)
Who?

Krumboltz & Mitchell

The Social Learning Career Decision-Making

They acquire beliefs about themselves and the nature of their world through direct and indirect educational experiences (Krumboltz, 1990:39)

• Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT; Lent, Brown & Hacket, 1994)
• Social Learning theory (Bandura)
• Systems Theory Framework (Patton & McMahon, 1997)
One reason why some young people vehemently reject careers advice is that what is being said to them lies outside their horizons. It does not fit with their existing schematic view of themselves or their perceptions of appropriate careers opportunities. Furthermore the opportunities are not just ‘out there’ to be chosen (Hodkinson and Sparkes 1997:33)
Careership Theory (Hodkinson & Sparkes, 1997)

His concept encapsulates the ways in which a person's beliefs, ideas and preferences are individually subjective but also influenced by the objective social networks and cultural traditions in which that person lives. (Hodkinson & Sparkes, 1997:33)
Who?

Pierre Bourdieu

Pierre Bourdieu

The sons and daughters of the elite apply themselves in the right time and in the right place, drawing on all their social, cultural and economic capital. The disadvantaged are left to their own devices. Without advice, they act inappropriately or out of turn, missing opportunities. (Grenfell, 2004:61)
Findings and Analysis

**RQ1** How have personal experiences and influences shaped the career learning of first and second generation student groups?

**RQ2** To what extent are these students aware of contextual factors influencing their career decision making?
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How?

45 questionnaires conducted at the 2010 Graduate fair

6 in-depth interviews
Findings and Analysis

**RQ1** How have personal experiences and influences shaped the career learning of first and second generation student groups?

**RQ2** To what extent are these students aware of contextual factors influencing their career decision making?
“My mum hasn’t got much confidence with me being an academic...I love my mum to bits, but I don’t pay much attention when she tries to give me advice because it’s not her world” (Gen1C)
“They were like, think of the debt, think of the debt and they always say everyone has got a degree, it’s not going to help you get a job” (Gen1B)
“I got advice from my mum in terms of selecting final year modules. She actually went through details of the modules and actually figured out ok, I think this module is going to be interesting to you and when you enter the workplace this module is going to help you a lot” (Gen2E)
“I guess with my dad doing accountancy it has made me more aware of what I want to do”

“My dad would support me whatever”

“My dad went to university and I think it was just expected...I would never have thought I am not going to university....my dad would have hit the ceiling.” (Gen2d)
“My parents at the end of the day want me to do well and want me to be happy and definitely they will be happy if I follow their suggestions.”

( Gen2E )
“They were like so unsupportive because they didn’t want me to go to university, and they were like you’re not very good at maths...It was why I wanted to get a first just to say actually I can cope with maths” (Gen1B)
“It was my brother who actually told me about the course I am applying for” (Gen1C)
“My business lecturer was really supportive, so I had the two different points, there was my mum and dad who were like ‘you will be ladened with debt’...but my lecturer was like ‘there are lots of benefits, it will open doors for you’ (Gen1b)
“These kinds of opportunities I wouldn’t have been able to do if my background was not of this kind and obviously at the end of the day the whole funding and all that my family has given is a big support.” (Gen2F)
“Thinking about it my mum actually wanted to do the course herself; they were very supportive.”

“It would never be an option to do anything else, oh my god, not at all. There are certain family traditions; everybody had gone to university so I had to follow.”

“I suppose my dads influenced me one hell of a lot, but now I’d say it’s what I want to do.”
“I had been accepted at Warwick and didn’t think anything of it, no one told me, I didn’t grasp the importance of it and how well it would look if I went there” (Gen1b)
“I know that if you’re at Oxbridge or Durham, employers will look and put them on a higher level, so the next best thing is a red brick university in order to give myself the best possible chance. My parents told me, I mean my dad’s a teacher so he knows, he knows the system.” (Gen2f)
“My dad said you can't just choose any university...he knew about the differences and he says he used to be in a job where he employed people and when he recruited them if they were from a random university he would throw it away.” (Gen2d)
“I do realise that if you walk into a job in London and you have a certain accent you have to tone it down to fit in with the culture down there.” (Gen 1a)
Conclusion/ Critical Reflection/ Recommendations

**RQ1** How have personal experiences and influences shaped the career learning of first and second generation student groups?

**RQ2** To what extent are these students aware of contextual factors influencing their career decision making
If clients learn to appreciate how contextual factors in their lives have an influence on their career thinking, they are more likely to be able to act in order to capitalise on or counter such influences to make better career decisions. (Bright et al 2004: 33).
References


FutureTrack (2006) Survey Results- tracking the career choices. HECSU.


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