

Career Guidance Research Symposium 2015:

Doctoral Research in CEIAG

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Overview

This workshop will introduce key areas in which doctoral research in Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) has been undertaken in recent years.

We will discuss issues around developing and accessing academic knowledge in CEIAG and the relevance of academic research to practitioners.

I will introduce the SDS / Scottish Graduate School of Social Sciences (SGSSS) PhD programme and present an overview of my own PhD.

Becoming a CEIAG Researcher

My route, via a varied career:

- Writing
- Careers
- Teaching

- Completed the QCGD at UWS in 2011-12

- Maternity leave followed by PhD

- Networking:
 - Website and blog at www.emmabolger.co.uk
 - LinkedIn: uk.linkedin.com/in/bolgeremma
 - Twitter: [@bolger_emma](https://twitter.com/bolger_emma)
 - Academia.edu, ResearchGate, professional networks, Amazon author

Why Research?

What is the relevance of academically valid research for and by CEIAG practitioners?

- Exploring and verifying approaches
- Tried and tested methods
- Best practice
- Building up the reputation of the sector and contribute to a growing knowledge base
- Research to influence and back-up policy, the production of policy-relevant research
- Creating links between the profession and prominent academics
- Transparency between policy influences and practice guidelines
- Creating a research agenda for CEIAG practitioners
- Complementing existing doctoral and post-doctoral research, which is used in practice by regional, national and international organisations such as SDS, The National Careers Service in England, AGCAS, NICEC, the CDI, Cegnet
- Relevant to the NOS criteria for career guidance work

Why Research? (1)

It can be enjoyable!



Why Research? (2)

Involvement with engaged scholars and practitioners.



Challenges of PhD Level Research

- Compared to other long-established academic fields, relatively new area, therefore limited literature with a specific CEIAG focus
- How is research disseminated amongst the practitioner community?
 - Transferring research into practice
 - Rewriting for the practitioner audience
- Few 'new' theoretical approaches, therefore dealing with the challenges of Career Development Theory (CDT) that is rooted in the outdated past experiences of men of specific social classes.
- Could be argued that 'career' has been an essential component in academic research, simply not phrased primarily as CDT
- No 'standard' pathway (not necessarily a bad thing!). Routes into PhD research might be at an early or later stage in the researcher's own career, perhaps following:
 - time spent working in the field
 - a career change
 - an academic career established in another sector
 - direct from undergraduate ➔ postgraduate study

Examples of PhDs

Doctoral theses can be downloaded from the British Library:
http://ethos.bl.uk/
(nb. Doctoral to include DEd and PhD)

Recent Trends: practitioner experience, equality and diversity, professionalism in practice.

Sample titles:

Constructing professional identity : the role of postgraduate professional development in asserting the identity of the career practitioner (2014)

Talking about careers : personal and professional constructions of career by careers advisers (2013)

Taken-for-granted assumptions and professionalism in IAG practice (2013)

The impact of career guidance on well-being outcomes (2103)*
*Peter Robertson, Napier University

An exploratory study of student awareness and understanding of structural and agentic influences on career choice (2012)

Young people's and employers' perceptions of equal opportunities in the world of work (2008)

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[Taking care of careers: The working-lives of professional women in the careers guidance sector](#)
Author: Smith, Janice Louisa
Awarding Body: The University of Warwick
Awarded: 2007

[Professionals under pressure : a consideration of the experience of careers guidance professionals post-privatisation](#)
Author: Mulvey, M. Rachel
Awarding Body: University of Warwick
Awarded: 2001

[Client and careers officer perceptions of careers guidance and their relationships to models and outcomes.](#)
Author: Millar, Robert.

The SGSSS-SDS Collaborative PhD Programme

- Partnership initiative with the Scottish Graduate School of Social Science (SGSSS)
- Co-funding 4 new PhDs per annum with the ESRC (currently in the third year of partnerships, meaning 12 PhDs underway at any one time)
- Working closely with Scottish Universities to deliver the PhDs
- Focussed on skills-related issues, with topics identified by SDS

SGSSS-SDS PhD Programme: Justification and Benefits

Why?

- Access to high-quality academic research on skills related issues
- Develop the research talent pool—expertise on the Scottish labour market and skills system
- Promote SDS' relationship with the academic research community
- Enhance SDS' reputation as an expert skills body in Scotland

What are the expected benefits?

- High-quality, policy-relevant research on the Scottish Labour Market and Skills System
- New research talent with an expertise on the Scottish Labour Market and Skills System
- New networks and new opportunities for collaboration between academics, policy-makers and practitioners
- Help to answer some of the big questions in skills policy and CIAG work

Current SGSSS-SDS PhD Topics and Titles

Research topics:

The Transition from Education to Work

Job Quality

Employer Voice in the Skills System

Gender and Apprenticeships

Career Pathways and their Outcomes

Models of Collaboration Working in
Employability

Social Networking and Career
Management Skills x2

Workplace Learning and Innovation x2

Advanced Apprenticeships

Impact of 'Big Data' on Skills

The PhD Titles:

'The Role of Wellbeing and Decision-making in the Transition from Education to Work',

'The Full Costs and Benefits of Job Quality in International Context'

'Employer Voice in Engaging with the Education and Training System for High Performance
Workplaces,

'Gender and Occupational Segregation in Modern Apprenticeships'

'Understanding Career Pathways and their Outcomes'

'The Evolution of Social Networking and its Impact on Career Management Skills'

'Social Networking and Career Management Skills: A Sociological Perspective'

'Models of Collaborative Working in Employability'

'Innovative Workplace Practice and Potential in Scotland: Identifying Supporting and
Evaluating 'what works best' in a key sector'

'Enhancing the Capacity for Workplace Learning and Innovation in Scotland'

'Advanced Apprenticeships in Scotland, the UK and Comparator Countries'

'Impact of New Information Technologies and 'Big Data' on Skills Requirements'

My PhD

- One of the SGSSS-PhD Doctoral Candidates
- Started September 2014, due to submit September 2017
- PhD Title: Gender and Occupational Segregation in Modern Apprenticeships

A study into how labour market gender and occupational segregation presents within Modern Apprenticeships in Scotland, incorporating research into supply and demand, the career decision making processes of individuals and CEIAG provision, leading to suggestions for practice that may be used by employers, career educators and policy makers to reduce gender and occupational segregation in apprenticeships

Research Themes

For decades, careers guidance practice has been influenced by theories which assume that the career behaviour and development of women is the same as men's...to be effective across the full range of clients, career theory must take account of diversity in all its forms – including class, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation and gender.

Bimrose, J. *Girls and women: challenges for careers guidance practice* in *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling* Vol. 29, No 1, 2001 (p91)

My PhD: CDT as Theory

The study of the career development of women in literature: discussion of failure, negative experiences and inequality is given priority over success, positive experiences and markers of the rebalancing of gender.

A primary objective for the thesis and supporting documentation for stakeholders is to draw on positive action, experiences and best practice.

Using CDT as the dominant theoretical approach (matching, developmental, structural, social learning and constructivist).

These theories consider:

- psychological and sociological influencing factors
- the decision maker
- how to help those making career decisions

Where Will My PhD Lead To?

- A career within academia?
 - Research
 - Teaching
- A career within policy-making?
- A return to career guidance practice?

Discussion

What do you think are the big issues in career education, information, advice and guidance research?

Where do you feel there are research gaps?

Do you have any reflections on how CDT is used in practice?

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For more information on the SGSSS-SDS Collaborative PhD Programme:

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