Career Development Framework

Issue 15 | July – September 2022

# TRUE NORTH

*In today's workplace climate, career advisory has gone beyond the simple act of placing clients into job roles. It has become an intricate art of helping clients navigate workplace complexities and interweaving that closely with an individual's beliefs, values and principles. As a career practitioner, you are tasked with the all-important role of helping one find meaning and fulfilment in their career. You are instrumental in their search for a purpose-driven life; for their* **TRUE NORTH**.

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Module 1: 4 Nov - 6 Dec 2022

**Creative Solution Findings**
Module 2: 6 Jan - 24 Feb 2023

ORGANIZED BY: Abundanz Consulting

CONDUCTED BY: Erickson Coaching International

SUPPORTED BY: WSG Workforce Singapore

Enhance your career coaching practice with globally recognised and ICF-accredited coaching school. Erickson's Solution-Focused coaching methodology enables career practitioners to create transformational change in others. Participants in both modules will gain:

- **A Solution-Focused** coaching approach that moves your clients towards their desired future career outcomes, instead of concentrating on past experiences or reasons for present dissatisfaction
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- **A Client-Centred** approach allows you to trust your client's inner resources and skills, respecting their career goals and future outcomes.
- **An Action-Oriented** approach pursues transformational change in specific, inspired steps that lead to fundamental shifts in attitude, behaviour and habit formation.

The two modules are independent training and are sponsored by WSG. When completed both modules, participants would fulfill part of their coach-specific training requirements for ICF guidelines for credentialing. Register for additional Mentor Bundle session to be awarded Erickson Accredited Coach certificate.

**Deadline for registration: 21 Oct 2022**

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## IN THE PIPELINE

**Career Advisory Programme (CAP)**

**Dec Intake:** 13 Dec 2022
*(Application closes: 1 Nov 2022)*

**Jan Intake:** 12 Jan 2023
*(Application closes: 2 Dec 2022)*

**Feb Intake:** 27 Feb 2023
*(Application closes: 17 Jan 2023)*

**Feb Intake:** 13 Mar 2023
*(Application closes: 31 Jan 2023)*

**Career Facilitation Programme (CFP)**

**Dec Intake:** 29 Dec 2022 – 7 Mar 2023
*(Application closes: 14 Nov 2022)*

**Career Supervision Programme (CSP)**

**Jan Intake:** 16 Jan – 18 Jan 2023
*(Application closes: 30 Nov 2022)*

**Career Facilitation Programme Assessment Pathway (CFP AOP)**

**Mar Intake:** 6 Mar 2023
*(Application closes: 2 Jan 2023)*

FROM THE CASE CHEST

# HOPE THROUGH STRENGTHS

*Gaining hope and clarity through one's circle of strengths*

## Background

Zoe, a Year 2 student in a Junior College, is taking her GCE A-Level examination in a few months' time. She was concerned that she has nothing in mind for her future education choices, as compared to some of her friends who had clear education and career plans. She decided to meet the ECG Counsellor (ECGC), Vina to discuss her education and career options.

## Issues

At the start of the ECG counselling session, Zoe seemed lost and unsure about herself. When asked about her interests and strengths during her intake interview, Zoe replied, "Nothing seems to be of interest to me now. I do not have any worthy goals to pursue."

Zoe also shared that she is not strong academically and is not confident in her own abilities. This resulted in some difficulties in terms of her decision-making, regarding her further education choices.

## Implementation

Vina used Hope-Action Theory to develop Zoe's hope-action competencies of self-reflection and self-clarity. She helped Zoe to better understand her interests and strengths through the ***Favourite Things and Circle of Strengths*** activities. She also asked open-ended and clarifying questions to get Zoe to describe the things she liked to do in her free time and things that she did well in. Zoe was able to express her thoughts and feelings, as she reflected deeper and made meaning of her past and present experiences.

From Zoe's sharing, Vina highlighted Zoe's qualities and affirmed that these were her strengths and abilities. She also helped Zoe to draw connections between her interests and strengths. This helped to improve Zoe's self-clarity and self-confidence, and she was keen to consider courses or careers that could tap on her interests and strengths. Vina guided Zoe through websites of the local autonomous universities and MySkillsFuture Student Portal, to show her the education and career options available, and encouraged her to do further research on her choices.

At the end of the ECG counselling session, Zoe felt more hopeful as she could see a clearer direction ahead for her. With greater insights about her strengths and interests, Zoe is now more confident and empowered to navigate and plan for her future. A follow-up session was arranged for Vina to work with Zoe on the other hope-action competencies of visioning, goal setting and action-planning.

*Contributed by*
***Vina Sim***
*Senior ECG Counsellor*
*Ministry of Education*
*WSG CDF Certified*
*Career Practitioner*

**FURTHER READINGS:**

>> *Hope-Action Theory*

>> *Career Decision Wheel*

>> *Singapore Industry Landscape*

MAIN ARTICLE

# DREAM JOBS AND EMPLOYMENT REALITIES: HOW ADOLESCENTS' CAREER ASPIRATIONS COMPARE TO LABOUR DEMANDS AND AUTOMATION RISKS

*This article was extracted from the Journal of Career Assessment, Volume 30. It is accessible to all WSG CDF credential holders. Read more about the credentialing benefits here: https://go.gov.dg/cdf-credential*

Changes in the labour market present both challenges and opportunities for career development. Technological innovations have created new sectors that require diverse skill sets and training. Yet automation replaces many jobs and threatens the availability of stable work. Despite this uncertainty, application of career development theories and workforce development initiatives can make a positive impact in helping individuals and societies prepare for the future of work. Adolescent career aspirations set the stage for future educational and work trajectories.

Career development programs can help prepare youth for future jobs by motivating them to aspire toward bright-outlook careers that help strengthen the national economy (e.g., healthcare workers, web developers, or sustainability specialists). In line with these objectives, the current study progresses understanding about adolescent (age 13 – 18 years) career development within the context of automation and the future of work.

## PRESENT STUDY

The present study examined how adolescents' dream jobs relate to employment realities from multiple, interrelated perspectives.

1. **Variability of Career Aspirations Across Adolescence**

This examined how variability of career aspiration differs across age. The study used Gottfredson's Theory of Circumscription and Compromise and Super's Life-Span Model of Career Development framework, which suggests career aspirations become increasingly realistic throughout adolescence as youth learn about different careers within their developing interest areas. It further suggested that there should be more variability (i.e. less concentration) among older adolescents' career aspiration.

**2. Comparing Career Aspirations to Labour Demands Across Interests and Education**

This compared the distribution of career aspirations to national job openings to identify specific career areas that are over- and under-represented in young people across vocational interest and education level.

**3. Potential Differences in Aspirations Across Gender and Race/Ethnicity**

This investigated potential differences in career aspirations across gender and race/ethnicity to help inform workforce initiatives aimed at achieving more balanced occupational representation.

**4. Automation's Potential Impact on Career Aspirations**

This examined the potential of career aspirations to be replaced by automation and test whether risk levels differ across distinct subgroups of students.

Altogether, the study helped advance theoretical and practical understanding about how young people's career aspirations connect to the continually changing world of work.

## METHODS

The study adopted the following methodology:

A. **Participants** – It used data from 4-H Study of Positive Youth Development, sampled US adolescents aged 13 to 18 years from across 42 US States. Majority was female and white. It also used a cross-sectional data analytics approach to treat each collection wave cross-sectionally to improve validity and generalisability of the results and all collection waves were separated by about 1 year, allows study to compare age differences at 1 -year interval.

**B. Procedure and Measures** – Participants were recruited either through schools or outside-of-school programs with parental's consent. Participants then completed the questionnaires either online or in-person with identical format:

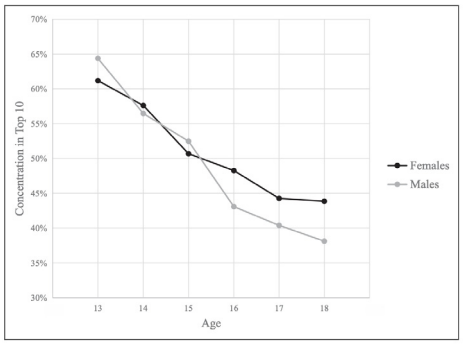
i. Career aspiration. Participants responded to an open-ended question to assess their career aspiration at each wave and analysis done on first response.

ii. Vocational interests and educational requirements of career aspirations. It used high-point codes to capture and measure interest fit.

iii. Automation probabilities of career aspirations. Linked O*NET-coded career aspirations to automation probabilities. Using supervised machine learning, it found three bottlenecks to computerization, namely perception and manipulation, creativity and social intelligence.

**C. Data Analysis** – Four sets of analyses were conducted to examine the research questions and hypotheses.

## RESULTS




### Do Career Aspirations Become Less Concentrated Across Adolescence?

The concentration of career aspirations at different ages, which refers to the percent of all aspirations that fell within the top 10 male and female occupations, were first examined. A clear trend of decreasing concentration was observed for both males and females, supporting the hypothesis predicting a pattern of decreasing concentration with age for both males and females (indicating more variability in aspirations). Refer to Figure 1.

***Figure 1.*** Concentration of career aspirations by age and gender.

### How Did the Sample's Career Aspirations Correspond to U.S. Labour Demands?

Next, the correspondence between aspirations and national employment numbers across interests and education were examined. The hypothesis which predicted an overabundance of aspirations for enterprising and investigative occupations, especially at higher job zones, was partially supported. Career aspirations were generally underrepresented in realistic, social, and conventional interests compared to job openings. Notably, conventional career aspirations were almost completely absent. Overall, these results reveal that aspirations requiring advanced education were typically overrepresented, especially in investigative and artistic interests.

### How do Aspirations Differ Across Gender and Race/Ethnicity in Interests and Education?

Third was the examination of potential gender and race/ethnicity differences in the vocational interests and educational requirements of career aspirations. Generally, career aspirations did not differ substantially among racial/ethnicity groups in terms of their interests and educational requirements.

For gender and interests, in general, males were more likely to aspire to realistic careers, whereas females were more likely to aspire to investigative, artistic, and social careers. The proportion of males reporting realistic aspirations decreased sharply with age, and there was a slight increase in social. These results suggest that males' aspirations were less consistent with gender norms in late adolescence. Interestingly, gender differences in investigative aspirations (favouring females) were in the opposite direction of those found in a past meta-analytic investigation.

For gender and education, the hypothesis that females' career aspirations would have higher average degree requirements than males' aspiration was supported. In sum, females typically aspired to careers requiring more education than males, and there were also large gender differences in the vocational interests associated with aspirations.

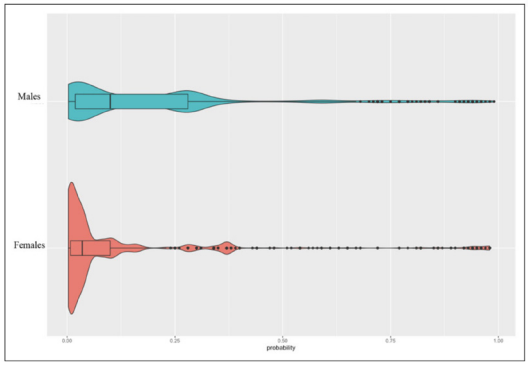
### What Were the Automation Risks of Career Aspirations?

The final set of analyses examined the automation potential of career aspirations. The hypothesis that fewer aspirations would be at risk of automation was supported. Overall, only 4% of females and 7% of males had high-risk aspirations. In fact, 87% of the sample's aspirations were at low risk.

On whether automation risks differed across age, gender, and race/ethnicity, it was found that:

i. For gender, females' aspirations had a lower probability of being computerized than males. Follow-up independent samples t-tests revealed that these differences were significant at each age with age 15 having the biggest gender differences and age 18 having the smallest gender differences. Overall, the gender differences were small-to-moderate in size.

ii. For race/ethnicity, there were no statistically significant differences for automation probabilities.




Finally, Figure 2 displays the distribution of automation probabilities for males and females using violin plots. The violin plots display the relative frequencies of aspirations at varying probabilities of being replaced by automation. As shown in Figure 3, the distributions were right-skewed for both males and females, as most aspirations were at low risk. However, males' aspirations had more variability in risk levels compared to females, which helps explain why males' aspirations were generally at greater risk (due to more high-risk outliers).

***Figure 2.*** Violin plot displaying distribution of automation probabilities by gender for overall sample.

## DISCUSSION

**Balancing Ambitious Career Aspirations With Employment Realities**

Overall, the findings were optimistic in that the sample generally aspired to careers with high educational requirements and low automation risks. However, the mismatch between aspirations and available jobs, even in late adolescence, highlights the reality that not everyone can have their ideal career. This raises an important question: to what extent are lofty, ambitious career aspirations advantageous for individuals and society?

There are several potential benefits of having difficult-to-attain career aspirations. First, children who aspire to more prestigious careers often attain more prestigious jobs (Ashby & Schoon, 2010). Instilling youth with ambitious career goals can therefore promote positive future outcomes. Second, even if adolescents do not end up attaining their ideal job, they may compromise in a better job than they would have otherwise.

However, unrealistic aspirations can be problematic in other cases. Youth who aspire to careers that fit poorly in terms of interests or ability may pursue extensive education or training directed towards a misfitting or unattainable job. Similarly, people who hold an overly fixed view of their career calling can experience negative consequences, such as assuming that they must achieve their dream job to be happy and overlooking other careers that may be more fulfilling. Popular media and peers can be highly influential in shaping students' career aspirations, but these sources of information can lead youth to only focus on well-known, stereotypical jobs (e.g. athletes, actors, doctors and lawyers). Moreover, a mismatch between aspirations and job openings can lead to skills gaps in the labour market.

To promote career aspirations that are both ambitious and pragmatic, it is critical to consider how youth think about careers at different age periods. Both Gottfredson's (1981, 2005) and Super's (1980) career theories emphasise the importance of delivering career information to youth in ways that connect to their developing social concerns, interests, and competencies. The findings revealed important age differences across adolescence, such that gender gaps in interests were much larger during early adolescence. Teachers and counsellors who give interest assessments to early adolescents should keep these trends in mind. Another potential strategy to reduce the impact of gender norms on career aspirations is to teach youth about careers that are rarely portrayed in the media, particularly those that are less associated with a sex-type. For example, career talks, videos, or worksite visits can be used to introduce students to lesser-known occupations and describe the rewards and social benefits of these careers (Kashefpakdel & Percy, 2017).

## CONCLUSION

Results revealed that most adolescents aspired to careers existed at low risk of being replaced by automation, likely because of their high education and training requirements. However, notable discrepancies exited between the sample's aspirations and the types of jobs available when the sample entered the workforce. These findings inform career theory and can guide workforce development programs aimed at helping young people prepare for and achieve success in their future careers.

*Source: Hoff, K., Van Egdom, D., Napolitano, C., Hanna, A., & Rounds, J. (2021, June 23). Dream Jobs and Employment Realities: How Adolescents' Career Aspirations Compare to Labor Demands and Automation Risks. Journal of Career Assessment, 30(1), 134–156. https://doi.org/10.1177/10690727211026183*

## Food for Thought

In your opinion, do youths in Singapore have lofty and ambitious career aspiration? And, why so? To align adolescents' career aspiration to the labour demand, who should be involved, what and how should it be done?

## Further Readings

**Super's Life-Span Model of Career Development**

**Theory of Self-creation - Gottfredson's Theory**

**Singapore's Top Talent Trends in 2022**

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**We look forward to your valued contributions!**

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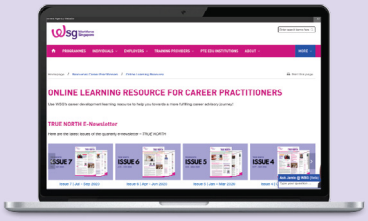


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