Integrating Theory, Research, and Career Counseling:
Lessons from the Society for Vocational Psychology Conference

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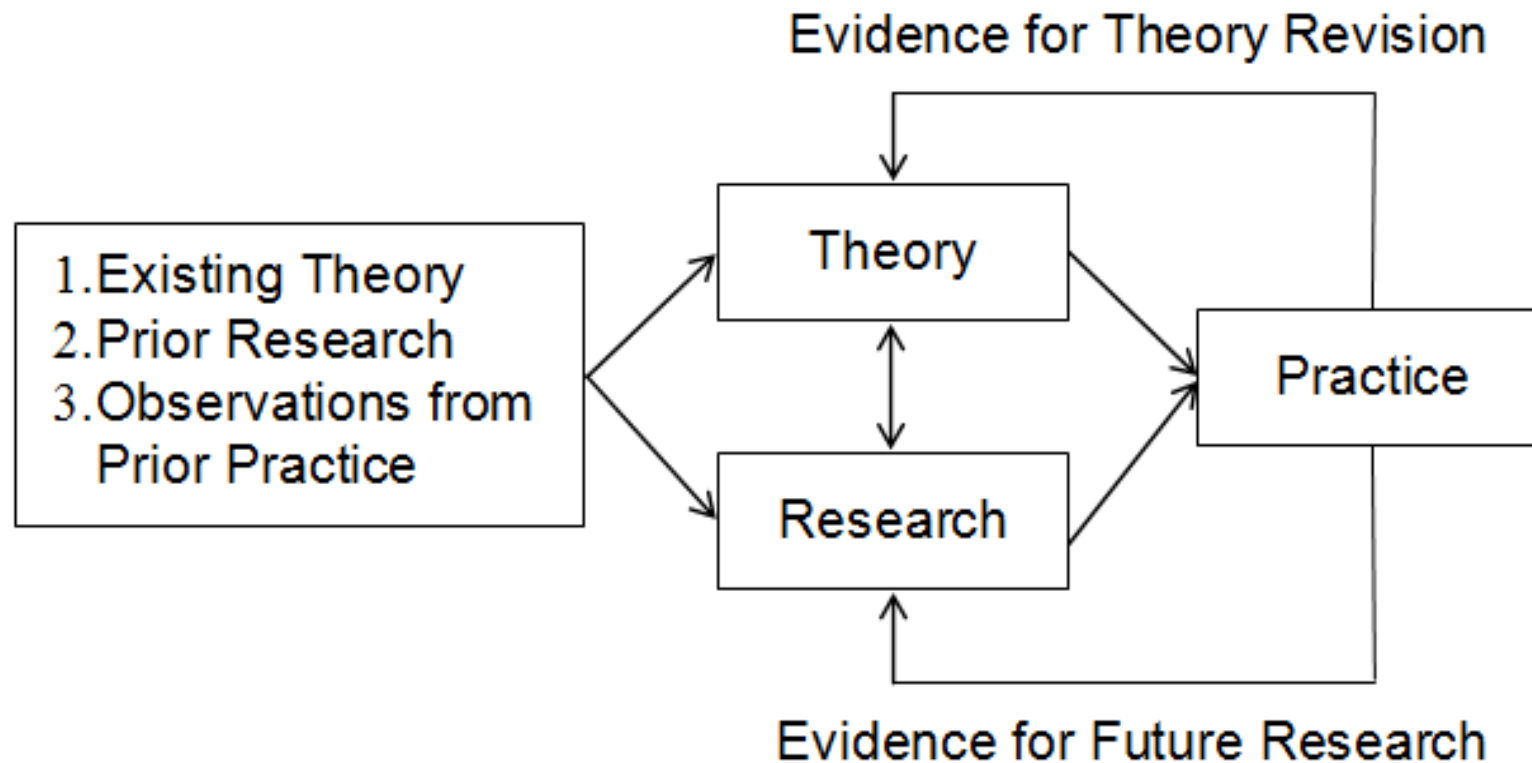INTEGRATING THEORY RESEARCH PRACTICE IN VOCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

Overview

- Introduction of Presenters
- Introduction to the Theory, Research, and Career Counseling Concept
- Findings from the Society of Vocational Psychology Conference
- Dynamic Strategies for Enhancing Evidence-Based Practice
- Example of Theory, Research, Career Counseling Integration
- Audience Ideas for Enhanced Integration
- Question & Answer
- Closing

Introduction to the Theory, Research, and Career Counseling Concept

Sampson, J. P., et al. (2014). Annual review: A content analysis of career development theory, research, and practice - 2013. *The Career Development Quarterly*, *62*, 290-326. doi:10.1002/j.2161-0045.2014.00085.x

Introduction to the Theory, Research, and Career Counseling Concept

- What prompted 2016 SVP conference theme?
  - 2013 CDQ annual literature review provided a content analysis of career development theory, research, and practice
  - Results showed limited integration of theory, research, and practice (44%)
  - Integration that did occur was greater in theory and research (55%) than theory and practice and research and practice (39%)
- 2016 SVP Conference Theme
  - Examined challenges and opportunities for integrating theory, research, and practice from the perspectives of:
    - career theorists
    - researchers examining theory and practice
    - journal editors and editorial board members who shape knowledge
  - Conference videos: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLCsXiACK-LKrVRKb1z_Nw3METZg-SoRFA

Introduction to the Theory, Research, and Career Counseling Concept

- The Book Resulting from the Conference

  - Integrating theory, research, and practice in vocational psychology: Current status and future directions (Conference book: http://journals.fcla.edu/svp2016/index)

  - Section 1 identifies specific challenges and opportunities for integrating theory, research, and practice for contemporary career theories

  - Section 2 examines how theory and research contribute to evidence-based practice

  - Section 3 examines how journal editorial policies shape the integration of theory, research, and practice

  - Section 4 examines how theory, research, and practice can be better integrated by considering the past, present, and future of career development
    - Includes findings from a content analysis of challenges and recommendations from the preceding chapters

Findings from the SVP Conference

Challenges for Theory, Research, and Career Counseling Integration

1. The difficulties in communication among theorists, researchers, and practitioners (n = 21)

2. The difficulties inherent in the methodology and statistical procedures used to study the field of vocational psychology (n = 12)

3. The existence of potential editorial bias in journals, hurdles to publishing, and difficulty incorporating theory and practice into a research-focused process (n = 7)

4. The complexity of integrating theory into practice in light of 21st century changes for the economy and workers (n = 2)

*8 other challenges were identified 1 time by authors and can be reviewed
 at http://journals.fcla.edu/svp2016/index

Findings from the SVP Conference

Recommendations for Theory, Research, and Career Counseling Integration

1. Improvements in communication among theorists, researchers, and practitioners (n = 32)

2. Improvements in journals and publishing (n = 23)

3. Improvements in methodological and statistical approaches in research (n = 18)

4. Improvements in the integration of diverse perspectives into the way we practice, conduct research, and develop theory (n = 14)

5. Improvements in training for practitioners (n = 7)

6. Improvements in the integration of technology across research and practice (n = 7)

7. Improvements in public engagement in our research as well as advocating for changes in policy (n = 5)

8. Improvements in diagnostic systems for career concerns in the form of a common language or searchable best practices system (n = 2)

*10 other recommendations were identified 1 time by authors and can be reviewed at http://journals.fcla.edu/svp2016/index
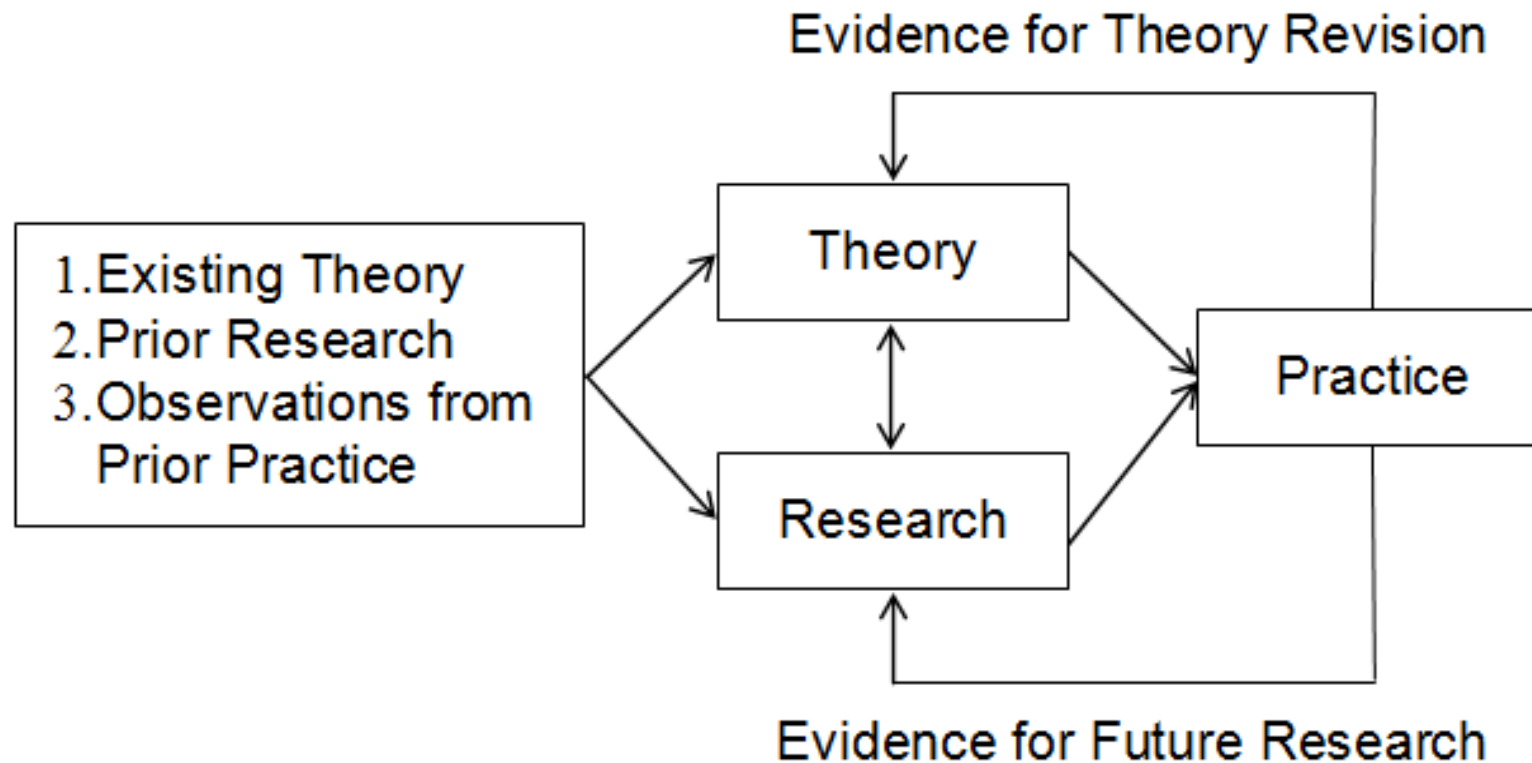
Mission of Vocational Psychology

(a) foster scientific understanding of career choice and development, including issues of occupational preparation, transition, entry, adjustment, satisfaction, health, and change or stability;

(b) translate career theory and research into practice in the form of developmental, preventive, and remedial services;

(c) train new professionals (and provide continuing education to more senior professionals) to serve an increasingly diverse clientele consisting of students (of all ages), workers, the unemployed, those undergoing work transition, retirees, and systems (e.g., schools, work organizations, dual-career couples, and families). (Lent, 2001, p. 220)

Lent, R. W. (2001). Vocational psychology and career counseling: Inventing the future. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 59*(2), 213-225. doi:10.1006/jvbe.2001.1827

Connecting Theory, Research, and Practice

Evidence for Theory Revision

1. Existing Theory
2. Prior Research
3. Observations from Prior Practice

Theory

Practice

Research

Evidence for Future Research

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Using Theory and Research to Improve Evidence-Based Practice

- Foundation of key earlier studies (e.g., Brown & Ryan Krane, 2000; Oliver & Spokane, 1988; Spokane & Oliver, 1983; Whiston et al., 1998)

- Featured 5 critical ingredients of career intervention (Brown & Ryan Krane, 1999): Written exercises, Information, Modeling, Support building, and Individualized attention to goals and assessment

- Effectiveness of job search interventions (Liu, Huang, & Wang, 2014): Teaching job search skills, improving self-presentation, increasing self-efficacy, encouraging proactivity, promoting goal setting, and enlisting social support

- Brown (2017) emphasized need to identify core outcome constructs, attend to clinical significance, and study more diverse samples

Using Theory and Research
to Improve Evidence-Based Practice (cont.)

- Whiston (2017) examined relative merits of conducting general or narrowly focused studies on populations or settings

- Need more studies examining gender, SES, and specific presenting concerns (e.g., CDM, WFC)

- Identify interventions with the largest effect sizes

- Becker (2017) emphasized conducting meta-analyses guided by theory

- Explore strategies for developing large-scale programs that address needs of organizations, communities, and policy initiatives (Solberg, 2017)

Dynamic Strategies for Enhancing Evidence-Based Practice

1. Nurture creative interdisciplinary collaborations

2. Conduct <u>intentional</u> studies examining interventions for diverse groups

3. Develop a database of core constructs, measures, and results

4. Attend to critical outcomes, including clinical significance and subjective well-being

5. Consider innovative strategies for advancing education and training

Theory, Research,
Career Counseling Integration

FSU Model

- built over a long period of time

- Importance of collaborative relationships between counseling faculty and career services practitioners/ administrators

- Faculty with long standing commitment to theory, research, and practice—all prior practitioners!

- Administrative support for Career Center to serve as a "training facility & lab"

- Website that gives away content for practitioner use

Examples of Theory, Research, Career Counseling Integration

FSU Model

- Faculty space provided by Career Center

- Creation of theory-based materials that are practitioner and client friendly

- Career Center facility serves a diverse clientele—opportunity to see what works with a wide variety of individuals

- Opportunities for staff and graduate student training

- Support for research in the Career Center via career class, career advising & counseling services

- Importance of "giving back" to the Career Center

Examples of Theory, Research, Career Counseling Integration

Tasmania—Catherine Hughes

- Works in the largest secondary school in home state

- "Marries research on effective career treatment modalities and differentiated service delivery model" (p. 1)

- Combines two theories—CIP & narrative approach

- CIP constructs, pyramid, CASVE Cycle, readiness, ILP

- Use of narrative measure (Career Adapt-Abilities Scale) and constructs—concern, control, curiosity, confidence

- Creation of client, parent, practitioner, and teacher materials

Hughes, C. (in press). *Careers work in schools: Cost-effective career interventions*.

Generating Ideas for Enhanced integration

Audience, break into groups to discuss any of the applicable topics below:

1. An example of how you might integrate theory and research into your work

2. Consider one small change you could reasonably make in your work that would allow you to communicate with those outside of your typical work zone.
   (e.g., If you are a researcher, what could you do to access knowledge from practitioners more regularly?)

3. Issues you commonly address in your work that you do not see as addressed by theory
   (e.g., If you are practitioner, are there needs your clients regularly have that you do not see represented in a theory with which you are familiar or know how to implement in your practice? If you are a researcher, are there research ideas you have do not seem to have a connection to a theory?)

4. Practitioners, consider an intervention you use (or would like to) but wonder if there is research evidence to support it with your clients.

Choose a leader from each group to report findings back 1-2 main findings to the whole group

Integrating Theory, Research, and Career Counseling:
Lessons from the Society for Vocational Psychology Conference

- Questions?

- Summary

- Presentations slides available at,
  http://emilybullockyowellphd.weebly.com/recent-conference-information.html or
  http://career.fsu.edu/tech-center/resources/presentations

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