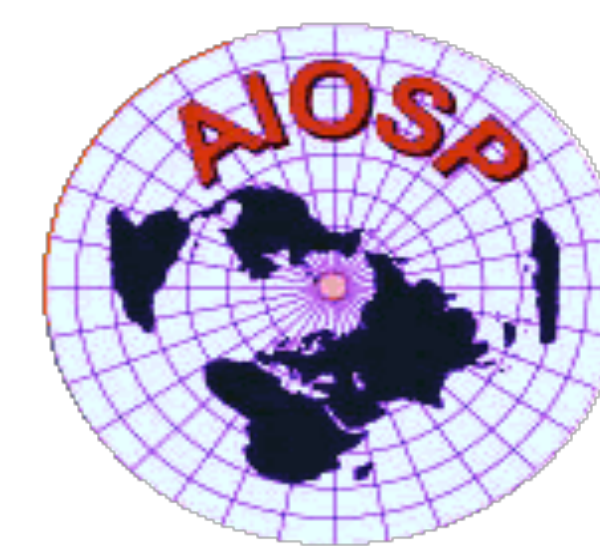




# History and Evolution of Vocational Psychology in Portugal: Contributions and Implications

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## Abstract

This work presents a brief history of Vocational Psychology in Portugal. We begin by highlighting the pioneering work of António Aurélio da Costa Ferreira (1916, 1917), Augusto Alves dos Santos (1916) and Faria de Vasconcelos (1925), in the domains of the educational and occupational guidance during the first decades of century 20. We continue with the reference to the landmark that strongly announces the career guidance and occupational selection services in Portugal, the creation of the Institute of Occupational Guidance. In relation to the educational guidance movement at that time, the initiatives with more relevance were related to research focused on teacher training and in gaining a better understanding of the psychological processes with direct influence in the education of the children and the young. We then review the evolution of the career and school psychology services in the school context, and the course of Vocational Psychology outside the schools. In this sense, a historical analysis of the legal framing and of the type of interventions developed in the domain of Vocational Psychology, in Portugal, is made, with a particular emphasis on the articulation between politics, education, research and practice. Finally, the reality and evolution of Vocational Psychology in Portugal are analysed in the international context, offering implications for the future of Vocational Psychology in the Portuguese context and beyond.

**Keywords:** Vocational Psychology, Career Guidance, School Psychology Services, Historical Review.

In 1933 the course of advisory experts was allowed to operate.

Creation of the Portuguese Journal of Pedagogy (1961), creation of the Portuguese Society of Psychology (1960).

It is stipulated the creation of the Psychology and School Orientation Services (1991).

Decade of 20	Decade of 30	Decade of 40	Decade of 50	Decade of 60	Decade of 70	Decade of 80	Decade of 90	XXI Century
Creation of the Institute of Professional Guidance.			The Psychology disciplines are taught in the faculties of Humanities			In 1977, the first Psychology courses were created in public higher education institutions. In 1979 the Institute of Employment and Professional Training was created.		

## Beginning of the 20th century

In 1912, Augusto Alves do Santos founded the first laboratory of Experimental Psychology in the faculty of Humanities at the University of Coimbra. The main objective of this laboratory was to contribute for the research focused on the teacher training. However, many works were focused on psychological processes with direct incidence on child and youth education, with implications for educational guidance. Many of the works of Alves do Santos were approached to the studies of António Aurélio da Costa Ferreira, who contributed to the resolution of several problems in education, specifically, the detection of sensory-motor anomalies, and somatic and psychological difficulties. In Europe, school guidance emerges through Binet (1903) with the construction of a measuring instrument through its experimental study of intelligence. From these results it was suggested the formation of special classes and the confirmation of the usefulness of psychology in solving school problems. Thus, the variety of instruments for the analysis of sensory-motor skills with relevance in learning and school performance is widened (Abreu, 2003). Meanwhile, in the United States, several research studies led to the construction of new intelligence measuring instruments, included in the career assessment practices of that time. In this context, career guidance emerge as a social practice, aimed at choose people to work, in response to the demands of industrial society. The main concern was to choose people who would guarantee effectiveness and efficiency at work. The trait-and-factor model proposed by Frank Parsons (1909) is another important milestone of career guidance in the early 20th century. This intervention model promoted the establishment of correspondences between the individual's personality and occupations' requirements, with the skills, interests and personality characteristics being the traits, and the performance, the factor (Herr, 2008). This model greatly influenced the development of career guidance in Portugal and it is still considered a dominant model in Vocational Psychology (Savickas, 1997).

## Decade of 20

In Portugal, in 1925, the Institute of Professional Guidance (IPG) was created in Lisbon, at the initiative of António Faria de Vasconcelos. It was the first Portuguese institution of career guidance and placement. The activities of the institute focused in the analysis of individual characteristics through psychological instruments; the IPG produced also detailed descriptions of occupations and analyses of its characteristics in order to identify the correspondent psychological requirements; IPG also developed career guidance services and job placement activities for school students, especially those who were under state protection (Alves, 1969).

## Decade of 30

In 1931, the IPG was integrated into the General Direction of Higher Education, through decree law nº 20236. In 1933, under the decree law nº 22753, the course of advisory experts is allowed to function (Vasconcelos, 1931). Career guidance was conceived as a professional approach designed to help individuals to choose a career through scientific methods, exposing the individual to clinical, physiological and mental exams in order to determine their aptitude or disability for the intended career option (Santos, 1969). Faria de Vasconcelos considered important the statements of students, parents, and other elements provided by the school, in order to get a broader view of the process of decision-making. After the death of Faria Vasconcelos in 1939, Joaquim de Oliveira Guimarães assumed the position of director of the IPG. In this period, in image what happened in Europe, career guidance was practiced considering the individual's personality as the main determinant of career choice. During and after second world war, the institute's activities have stagnated due to the country's economic and political conditions, unlike in other European countries and the United States (Abreu, 2003). With the establishment of the dictatorial political regime of Salazar (1932-1968-1974) in Portugal, the IPG experienced several difficulties, in the pursuit of its goals, having reduced its broader scientific and technical activities.

## Decade of 40 and 50

In the late 40's and beginning 50's, through the Langevin-Wallon project, it is advocated the integration of guidance in schools conducted by school psychologists (Andrey & Le Men, 1968). From the 50's, educational and occupational guidance is considered as a continuous and integrated process. A process to support the personal development and career maturity throughout life and a process of personal decision-making and of construction of career-life projects (Abreu, 2003). In this regard, it is worth mentioning the work of Ginzberg, Ginzburg, Axelrad and Herma (1951) on the developmental character of choices, interests and occupational preferences. Another important perspective is the career development theory of Super (1953), where he characterizes and explains the development of a career throughout life, from childhood to old age. The study of interests was also extensively conducted by Anne Roe (1956) and Holland (1959). The theoretical and scientific contributions of various other authors such as Erickson (1968) and Gottfredson (1981) - who studied identity formation and career aspirations, respectively - also influenced the evolution of career development and guidance domain. These authors considered the individual's active role in the construction of his/her life project. In Portugal, the 50's did not bring many accomplishments in this field. However, it is worth to mention the fact that the subjects of General Psychology, Experimental Psychology, School Psychology and Mental Measurement, continued to be taught in the faculties of Humanities.

## Decade of 60

In Portugal, at the late 50's and beginning of 60's, occurs the creation of the Portuguese Journal of Pedagogy (1961), the creation of the Portuguese Society of Psychology (1960), and at 1963 the constitution of the Higher Institute of Applied Psychology. In 1965, the National Employment Service was created, which, in addition to promoting employment and vocational training, also implemented career guidance activities. In 1967, the creation of the second cycle of studies with duration of 2 years was made official by decree law nº 47/480.

## Decades of 70 and 80

At the 70's and 80's, the most significant events in the history of Psychology in Portugal were observed. Portuguese scientific studies increased in the field of Vocational Psychology, revealing a significant evolution in research and intervention (Pinho, 1986). One of the most important events was the creation of the Psychology higher education program (Decree-law nº 12 of January 20) in public Universities in Porto, Coimbra and Lisbon. At 1980 the faculties of Psychology and Educational Sciences were created, with the purpose of teaching and produce scientific research in the fields of Psychology and Educational Sciences (Decree-law nº 529 of November 5). In the vocational field, in these faculties, was constituted centres of educational and occupational guidance, with functions in the formation of Psychologists. In the last two years of this degree, students could choose the specialization in School and Occupational Guidance (Abreu, 2003). At 1979, the Employment and Vocational Training Institute was created with more comprehensive clauses in the field of occupational information and guidance (Decree-law nº444/80 of 4 October). The reorganization of technical and professional education (1982-1983), also promoted the development of educational and occupational guidance activities (Abreu, 2003).

## Decade of 90

As a result of the reorganization of technical and professional education, other measures were implemented, namely the integration of Psychologists into the Portuguese Educational System. The Psychology and School Guidance Services(Decree-law nº 190/91 of 17 May) were created, as well, the career of a Psychologist in schools (Decree-law nº 300/97 of 31 October). These career development services help students with career problems and promote career development trough career education activities (Taveira, 2004). In 1996, at the European level, the Ministers of Education established a compromise extended to the OCDE countries; OCDE countries searched to implement lifelong learning strategies and the development of policies that promote employability through educational and occupational guidance services (OCDE, 2004).

## XXI Century

In this century, considering the several changes in employment and education occurring around the world, Vocational Psychology assumes a new paradigm to respond to the intervention needs of different groups of population (Cardoso, 2011). Vocational interventions assume more frequently the promotion of narrative and adaptability competences. The professionals intend to help people to realize the meanings of work in their life, giving continuity to individuals' action and identity in view of the need to perform different roles and occupations (Savickas et al., 2009).

## Conclusions

In this chronological analysis of the history of career guidance in Portugal, we emphasized the work of Faria Vasconcelos with the implementation of personal, educational and occupational guidance services, and also the work of Alves dos Santos and Aurélio da Costa Ferreira, who contributed to the implementation and evolution of current educational practices. Career guidance services have been recognized by the implementation of lifelong learning strategies. In promoting efficacy and efficiency in education, and in vocational training through the management of the school-work transition, achievement of economic and social objectives, and promotion of adjustment to work (ELGPN, 2009). In this sense, it is important to promote the continuity of research with implications for lifelong guidance practices, demonstrating their effectiveness. The evolution of the vocational paradigm during the last century came from the need to respond to economic, educational and social challenges (Cardoso, 2011). It was observed an openness to updated practices, and the adoption of a constructivist model where it is assumed that the individual constructs himself/herself and well as the subjectivity of the perceived reality (Savickas et al., 2009).

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