Longitudinal Studies of Interests, Personality and Life Goals in Iceland: An Integrated Approach to Studying Individuality

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A research project on the longitudinal development of vocational interests began in Iceland in 2006 with the construction of a culturally appropriate interest inventory for adolescence. Dr. Einarsdóttir’s talk discusses the longitudinal development of interests, their interplay with other life forming individual differences, and their influence on career related outcomes. The longitudinal study examined the interests, personality, and life goal changes of two representative samples. The ongoing data collection effort takes place every two to four years, starting from 2006. Information about education and income of all the participants are also made available by national agencies. The purpose of the project is to test the stability and change of interests and person-environment fit through the formative years of adolescence to early adulthood, and the interplay of interests, personality and life goals over time. In this talk, the rationale, context and main results of the project are introduced along with future studies and challenges.

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Dr. Sif Einarsdóttir is a Professor in Career Counseling and Guidance in the School of Social Sciences at the University of Iceland. She is well known for her work on vocational interests, the longitudinal development of individual differences and cross-cultural assessment. She is highly published in top tier refereed journals as well as numerous book chapters, including Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, Journal of Vocational Behavior, and European Journal of Psychological Assessment, among others. Dr. Einarsdóttir has presented at numerous conferences and has played key roles in Nordic and European networks in career counseling. She has served as visiting faculty and the Head of Career Guidance and Counseling program at the University of Faroe Islands. She is currently the principal investigator of an ongoing nationwide longitudinal study funded by The Icelandic Research Council with the aim to study the development of interests, personality and life goals among Icelanders through the formative years of adolescence to early adulthood.