In Search of Addressing People's Career Adaptability and Career Identity Needs: Constructing the *Shaping Career Voices* Intervention

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Abstract The inclusion of educational, cultural, economic, social and historical contexts in the development of career interventions can enhance adaptation to career-life transitions. In a South African context, interventions that promote career adaptability skills could enhance career adaptability competencies and bolster employability. This chapter reports on the designing and adapting a contextually grounded life-designing career intervention titled the *Shaping Career Voices* Intervention in the Kayamandi Township. A collaborative engagement process was undergone using focus group interviews and Delphi panel focus groups with community role players, including fieldworkers, teachers, principals, and Non-governmental Organisation members. A thematic analysis was conducted on the interview data using Career Construction Theory as a theoretical framework. Themes that emerged were used to create the content for the *Shaping Career Voices* Intervention Workbook. The development process contributed to career counselling practice and theory by demonstrating the incorporation of collaborative mechanisms in the practice of multicultural counselling with South African disadvantaged population groups to design contextually relevant career interventions in a non-western developing world context.

Keywords Multicultural career counselling · Career adaptability · Career-life transitions · Career identity · Life-designing career intervention · Contextually grounded interventions · South African disadvantaged youth · Sustainable employability

Introduction

South Africa, like many other nations, faces multiple challenges in creating work opportunities and reducing unemployment (Statistics South Africa, 2016). Contextual factors, such as unemployment, a weak national economy, and shifting entry requirements into occupations, constantly impact South African individuals and

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make career development processes inherently complex (Stead & Watson, 2017). Career psychologists can assist with the alleviation of pressing social problems by creating interventions that facilitate career decision-making processes among vulnerable and marginalised population groups. Career interventions can serve as vehicles to enable youth to transcend poverty as a long-term objective and can yield positive short-term effects on matters such as grades attained, school attendance, tertiary education enrolment, and employment outcomes (Perry & Smith, 2017).

This chapter contributes to research on career intervention development in a marginalised adolescent population group to improve career competencies that may need further development to facilitate employability. The present research was located in a peri-urban township called Kayamandi on the outskirts of Stellenbosch, South Africa. Previously this was a Black residential area during Apartheid, where migrant farm workers from the Eastern Cape were housed. A pejorative rural image of Kayamandi is projected, because it is surrounded by farmlands. The community is characterised by informal housing structures, limited municipality services, and high levels of crime, unemployment and poverty. Dominant occupations for residents in Kayamandi remain low-paying and have high turn-over rates, such as unskilled manual labour jobs or entrepreneurial jobs in the informal sector (Albien, 2013).

Chapter Structure

The first part of the chapter briefly discusses some of the challenges in creating work opportunities and reducing unemployment globally and in South Africa especially. In Part 2, the goals of the study are described. Part 3 speaks to the theoretical underpinnings of the *Shaping Career Voices* Intervention. Part 4 elaborates on the qualitative process that was undertaken in the creation, structure and adaptation of the career intervention. The design of the workbook is presented in Part 5 before the chapter is concluded.

Goals of the Chapter

The purpose of this research was to design and adapt the *Shaping Career Voices Intervention* as a qualitative, contextually relevant intervention. The intervention was partially guided by components of prior interventions developed for population groups without much access to volitional jobs (Blustein, Kozan, Connors-Kellgren, & Rand, 2015). Beneficial components included provided the following: occupational information in-session, individual attention within a group setting, opportunities to engage with occupational information in-session, examples of role modelling, written reflective exercises, and identification of existing support structures (Brown & McPartland, 2005). Outcomes that are more positive have been associated with the inclusion of these components in career interventions (Stead & Subich, 2017).

These components were collaboratively discussed with Kayamandi community role players to create a contextually relevant intervention and adaptations were based on their feedback in the design process.

Life Design Paradigm: Brief Theoretical Overview

The career intervention was theoretically grounded in a postmodern career counselling approach located within the life-designing paradigm to advocate subjective and contextually situated understandings of career behaviours (Maree, 2010a, 2010b). The importance of this approach in a South African context is because of the emphasis on the value of oral traditions and the contextual development of new meanings in career development to address complex issues in diverse cultural environments (Maree, Ebersöhn, & Molepo, 2006; Mkhize, 2015). The Life-design counselling model (Savickas et al., 2009) is informed by, and at the same time actualises, the career construction theory (CCT) (Savickas, 2011b) and self-construction theory (SCT) (Guichard, Pouyaud, De Calan, & Dumora, 2012). According to Savickas (2013), the key construct "adapt-abilities" is closely associated with Life design and comprises four dimensions. *Concern* involves a future orientation, *control* refers to self-regulation and responsibility for career decisions, *curiosity* describes career exploration activities, and *confidence* refers to self-efficacy and an individual's ability beliefs.

Questions have been raised by Watson (2013) if the basic tenets of the CCT are versatile enough to meet the needs of diverse cultural groups in developing world contexts, with particular reference to "non-career groups" (p. 6). This term specifically refers to underprivileged, underclass, disadvantaged, and non-normative population groups, whose career development has been undocumented. The CCT and by extension the Life-designing model have been found to be useful in unpacking and reformulating the subjective career meanings, contextual barriers, social and community expectations and career identity processes in Township youth to facilitate employability (Albien, 2018). In addition, McMahon, Watson, and Bimrose (2012) assessed the usefulness of career construction theory and uncovered a number of qualitative and quantitative indicators that supported the usefulness of this theoretical approach.

Furthermore, Life-design counselling models, such as the one described in this chapter, have been shown to enhance people's adaptability, narratability, intentionality, and activity (Savickas, 2011a). Three broad phases of the life-design counselling model informed the design of the present career intervention (Savickas, 2015): (1) encouraging people to tell small stories (constructions); (2) reconstruction of small stories into larger stories; and (3) co-construction of future stories. The intervention was built on the process of critical self-reflection of an individual's desired identity (Guichard et al., 2012), and included six stages based on the life-design intervention model of Savickas et al. (2009). The versatility and applicability of the life-design model has been documented across diverse settings, which includes developed and developing country contexts using both individual and group formats (Maree, 2017).

The facilitation and promotion of career life-design in group contexts is important, specifically in developing country contexts where one-on-one counselling is not accessible or affordable to the majority of the population. In disadvantaged contexts, group interventions have been shown to be an efficient format to enhance clients' career adaptability competencies (Di Fabio & Maree, 2012). Furthermore, various studies have indicated that life-design counselling helped clients to use their lived experiences and stories to develop the inner stability needed in a rapidly changing world-of-work (Maree, 2015a, 2015b). According to Maree (2017), career construction counselling, embedded in the Life-designing framework, offers "hope, especially to people in the poorest regions in South Africa, of escaping the cycle and trap of poverty and overcoming the barriers of poor education and the inability to find work" (p. 115).

Reflective Theoretical Underpinnings

Reflection is an important process in the Life-designing approach, however, often reflection is not deeply engaged with in career counselling. As a result, the reflective underpinnings of the career intervention presented here was created by using Schön's (2017) three reflection types. The first type is *reflection-on-action*, in which retrospective reflection is elicited after an event has passed, and was used in exercises that asked participants to think back to past events or experiences. Second, *reflection-in-action* is simultaneous, and can be compared to a running commentary in which an individual narrates thought processes during actions. The booklet used *reflection-in-action* by asking participants, in reflection text boxes, if they noticed/thought/learnt anything during the exercise. Third, *reflection-through-action* is the process of becoming aware of internalized or habituated sets of actions and thoughts. Additionally, reflection was also theorized according to Kolb's theoretical model (1984). *Reflection-in-action* is the first stage, which includes *concrete experience (CE)*, during which tacit knowledge is used to carry an experience forward. However, the reflection process is only initiated in the *reflection-on-action* type, which is mapped onto the *reflective observation (RO)* stage, and includes identifying the significance of an experience and/or questions triggered by the experience. In the *abstract conceptualization (AC)* stage, usable concepts or hypotheses are generated which can be compared to the *reflection-on-action* type. The next stage is the *active experimentation (AE)* stage of Kolb's (1984) cycle, where the implications of the generated concepts are tested. This stage links to *reflection-for-action*, when someone revisits earlier reflections in order to create a new plan or to confirm an understanding (Cowan, 1998; Moon 1999a, 1999b). These reflective theories informed the use of reflection exercises throughout the intervention, which extended the depth and range of reflective processes stipulated in the Life-designing approach.

Creation of the Shaping Career Voices Intervention

Each of the original career adaptability dimensions (i.e., concern, control, curiosity, confidence, and co-operation) are included in the intervention under discussion and were operationalized in terms of a number of specific exercises to facilitate reflection, self-awareness, and meaning-making (Savickas, 2005). These exercises were adapted from narrative therapy practices (Combs & Freedman, 2012; White & Epston, 1990), qualitative career counselling interviews (Bimrose & Hearne, 2012; McMahon, Watson, Chetty, & Hoelson, 2012), the career construction interview (Savickas, 2011b, 2012), case study approaches (Maree & Molepo, 2007; Maree et al., 2006) and established career interventions such as the *Career Interest Profile* (Maree, 2013). The end product was a mosaic of previous qualitative career counselling practices woven together by the perspectives of academics, field workers, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) members, teachers, and principals. The inclusion of contextual role players allowed adaptations to be made to the career intervention that allowed the intervention to be culturally relevant and to address the contextually-bound challenges that existed and were specific to a South Africa Township context.

These contextual nuances were incorporated from a multitude of sources and perspectives. Information sources included: informal conversations with community members; individual and group interviews with Kayamandi role players; and Delphi panel focus group interviews with fieldworkers. Focus groups meetings were held with seven Kayamandi residents employed as fieldworkers, using the Delphi method to gain insight into prior career counselling experiences and needs in Kayamandi (Fletcher & Marchildon, 2014) to expedite the career intervention material development. The Delphi technique is a widely used and accepted method for gathering data from respondents within their domain of expertise to achieve a convergence of opinion. In this case, the opinions of individuals who were considered experts on the career difficulties that high school learners faced in the Kayamandi context were obtained (Hsu & Sandford, 2007). The fieldworkers (five females and two males) were at the time enrolled at higher education institutions or at further education and training colleges. Their ages ranged from 21 to 25 years old, which reflects an older normative age range (and provides an indication of the challenges faced in completing educational qualifications) in comparison to the typical middle-class undergraduate cohort, whose ages would range between 18 and 22 years old.

These experts were asked to voice adjustments they believed would be beneficial, such as the inclusion of examples, explanations, or instructions to aid understanding of the career assessments or career booklet exercises. The fieldworkers' recommendations allowed the contextual factors associated with being part of a marginalised population group to be incorporated, such as peer pressure and social comparison mechanisms. Furthermore, they became visible examples of success stories and became mentors (Matshabane, 2016) that provided access to available channels of information after the research process had ended. This was done in an attempt to pre-empt the pervading stereotype of 'parachute' research, where researchers leave no visible imprint on the community (London & MacDonald, 2014).

Additional community members and role player groups were consulted, including the principals of the two high schools, eight teachers from both high schools, and four management members of a Kayamandi-based NGO Vision Afrika, colloquially called Vision K, which undertook community development programmes, such as a variety of career-life skills afterschool workshops. The teachers' and principals' age range was between 33 and 54 years of age. They all had a higher education teaching qualification and had been teaching for a minimum of five and a maximum of 25 years. Both principals were male, and three of the teachers were male and five were female. Vision K staff members consisted of four Kayamandi youth, two males and two females (age range between 22 and 28), who had finished high school and were enrolled in part-time education courses. Below, we present a brief overview of the meetings held with Kayamandi role player groups and a summary of the suggestions that resulted from these meetings (see Table 1).

Engagement of Role Player Groups in the Development of the Career Intervention

Five meetings were held with the principals of the high schools in Kayamandi. Further meetings were conducted with eight teachers at the schools to create the intervention materials. Another four individuals, who belonged to the Vision K management team, were interviewed on four occasions during 2015 to garner insights for intervention materials (all participants signed informed consent forms). All information was documented in the form of written or voice notes. Many of the career intervention suggestions came from the team of fieldworkers, who were alumni of the two Kayamandi high schools. Discussions were held to determine what career development difficulties were experienced by adolescents, with the intention of developing useful exercises and activities that could instil a sense of agency in the participants. Once the career booklet had been created, another 12 meetings took place to assess the career booklet in terms of cultural relevance and practicality. There were four meetings held with fieldworkers and four meetings with teachers at each school. The principals and Vision K staff were not included due to time constraints. In total, 28 intervention content meetings were held in 2015 and 2016 before the final implementation of the career intervention. Specifically, 16 meetings were held before the creation of the career booklet. An overview of role player groups, their suggestions and the adapted exercises that were created is presented below in Table 1.

Many daunting obstacles were mentioned that township residents faced daily and these scenarios were discussed for use as case-study material for in-session examples. The fieldworkers were also critically involved in addressing linguistic concerns in the consent forms and assent forms. Decisions were made through a collaborative leadership approach, which acknowledged fieldworkers as experts in the Kayamandi context with access to localised knowledge (Matebeni, 2014).

Table 1 Process of intervention content construction

Groups	Suggestions	Exercise created
Teachers (T)	T.1. "You *need to find something that they can relate to, let them see I am not alone in being confused and scared*"	Nikiwe's case study was included. It was hoped that fieldworkers could also be role models/mentors
	T.2. "*They need to explore, often they have never even seen a pamphlet. They need to sit, absorb and get questions*"	The last session included pamphlets and answering of questions
	T.3. "*A positive voice must be encouraged, that one stands up for him/her. Saying no man, I can do this!*"	Mapping externalising conversations and the counter-story
	T.4. "*We need to talk about barriers, that are other voices, these kids face so many challenges*"	Putting the Voices of others into my story
	T.5. "*Role models. To pick the good role models and to know why you look up to that person. And it should not only be about money, clothes or we will lose them all to the tsotsis*"	Identifying the people who have shaped you
	T.6. "*They need to learn to plan step by step and know what they need to know*"	Actualising a career identity
	T.7. "They *need to learn to reflect where they came from, the decisions they made put them on a path and they can change that path at any time*"	Reflection exercises
Fieldworkers (F)	F.1. "*I like the idea of being the author of a story and the depending how you link events together you can either be a victim or a hero*"	Curiosity: Creating the plot of my career story
	F.2. "*We need to find a way to create a complex picture of all the small puzzle pieces that inform career choices, make them see all these small things link*"	Curiosity: Plotting my career story
	F.3. "*These kids they need perspective, they need to think about how others see them and how that compares to what they see. They really don't have much self-awareness*"	Co-operation: Johari's window
	F.4 "*And they have no clue what they like doing. It's always the same I like socialising and chatting on Facebook or WhatsApp. They need to think about what they like doing and how that links to skills that can be used in a job*"	Curiosity: Choosing my skills

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

Groups	Suggestions	Exercise created
Principals (P)	P.1. "*Include exercises where they need to reflect on what others are telling them. They must be able to be critical and think this person is jealous and not being supportive*"	Control: Identifying positive and negative voices in my career story
	P.2. "*The one thing that worries me the most is that these kids have weak minds. They give up when it is too difficult to become that career. They listen to that voice inside that tells them they will fail no matter what they do*"	Confidence: Externalising conversations
Vision K (VK) management members	V.K.1. "*These kids they don't spend any time in the future, they are like grabbing anything that comes their way one moment to the next*"	Concern: The Future You
	V.K.2. "*Time is something that no one really thinks about. We need them to think this is what I did in the past, I learnt this lesson, now I do this thing differently, but in the future I must still learn to other things differently. That time connection is missing*"	Concern: My Career Voice: Past, present, and future career stories

Delphi panel meetings were all recorded, transcribed, and thematically analysed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) approach. In this approach the analytic process involved a progression from a description of the data based on patterns that indicated semantic content, to interpretation where the significance of these patterns was theoretically explored according to the CCT five career adaptability dimensions. The career intervention was structured for four sessions of two hours each, resulting in a total 20 h, which included eight hours' face-to-face time with 12 h of homework. The career intervention was broken up as follows: *Session 1* included the career concern dimension; *Session 2* included the career control and curiosity dimensions; *Session 3* included the career confidence and co-operation dimensions; and *Session 4* included pamphlets, consolidating a career identity and reflection questions.

Role Player Groups' Recommendations for the Career Intervention

In order to incorporate Kayamandi voices and reality-near experiences, the career workbook was critically discussed with the team of fieldworkers after feedback had been received from the teachers and principals. Three main categories of adaptations

were discussed, namely the inclusion of the concept of co-operation, the use of Afrocentric imagery in the career booklet, and the narrative structure of the career intervention. In Table 2, the changes are listed that were suggested to improve the career booklet, as well as the ensuing adjustments that were made to the intervention.

The concept of co-operation was added to the intervention after many Delphi panel meetings with fieldworkers and school staff as an adaptation of the intervention to the Kayamandi context. These parties emphasized a huge community or social relational component that needed to be considered in developing career adaptability, which was supported by previous research conducted using the *CAAS-Iceland* (Einarsdóttir, Vilhjálmsdóttir, Smáradóttir, & Kjartansdóttir, 2015). The co-operation construct was included as an adaptation of the CCT to be contextually-relevant to the collectivistic amaXhosa sample (Stead & Watson, 2017). Thereby, the interconnectedness of social, contextual and cultural aspects was included, which resonates with non-western collectivistic worldviews (Holdstock, 2000), where co-operation with others to fulfil social obligations was paramount in the expression of a self-concept (Mkhize, 2015). Therefore, an examination of voices that influenced career decision-making was presented, to allow a reconciliation between individual ambition and Afrocentric duties in the creation of a coherent self-concept (Albien, 2013).

The use of African images in the workbook was considered but the main theme that emerged during discussions was that images of success were tied to Western notions of success and traditional African images often were not seen as desirable or prestigious enough. As a result, images were used that related to the content of the workbook and depicted people of diverse heritages. In addition, fieldworkers were apprehensive about the narrative structure of the career intervention because they were concerned that learners would not complete the intervention if the content seemed too unfamiliar as this would be associated with less value. Fieldworkers explained that a "testing and telling approach was expected" (Fieldworker 1: F.1). Learners had expectations of career counselling entailing a process in which they were told what they were good at and then matched with a corresponding career skill or trait. This misconception of the career counselling process was supported by previous research in the Kayamandi context (Albien & Naidoo, 2017).

Final Content of the Shaping Career Voices Intervention Workbook

The final version of the *Shaping Career Voices Intervention Booklet* (Albien, 2018) consisted of 19 pages with lined spaces to write down reflections. The final career booklet structure can be seen in Table 3, in which an overview is presented of the career dimension addressed, the associated workbook exercises, and the corresponding page numbers. Pamphlets of higher education institutions and colleges were provided in-session to facilitate career exploration. The intervention was facilitated by the fieldworkers and researcher as a team, thus creating a bilingual English and isiX-

Table 2 Process of career intervention redrafting

Groups	Suggested changes	Changes made
Teachers	T.1. "*You need lines for these kids to write on*"	Lined spaces were included
	T.2. "*You need to include fun things, like games or jokes*"	Fieldworkers included jokes and role playing
	T.3. "*They will get bored, make the instructions short*"	All text was reworked and shortened
	T.4. "*You should print this in an A5 booklet format so that they think it is not so much work, if they see it in an A4 format they will complain that it's too much writing*"	The booklet was printed in an A5 format
	T.5. "*You will have to check that they answer all the sections, they try to cheat and only fill out a few pages because they think you won't check*"	Each booklet was checked for completion
	T.6. "*You need to include pictures, they don't like pages of writing*"	Images were included on every page
	T.7. "*You need to give them career pamphlets to look at with you so you can help them fight that fear of not understanding*"	Career pamphlets were collected and included
	T.8. "*You need to make them choose three careers at the end. You know like plan a, plan b and plan c*"	This idea was included the whole way through
Fieldworkers	F.1. "*You will need to make these kids work to finish in time, we will have to explain the sections first and then give them time to work afterwards*"	This approach was followed and worked very well; however, there were also quiet times
	F.2. "*We will have to help them understand the externalising conversation using a role playing example*"	This was included and fieldworkers took turns using personal examples
	F.3. "*We will have to explain entry requirements and bursaries*"	This was included
	F.4. "*These reflection questions will need explaining because they are not used to reflecting*"	An explanation was given verbally about the value of thinking back to what was learned
	F.5. "*This plotting of events will confuse them, but they need to learn how a story is made, we need to give them examples*"	We used two examples of plotted stories in-session

hosa environment. Each team member was responsible for explaining demarcated sections of the booklet. Role playing scenarios were included and contextually-relevant examples were used to bring creativity and cultural-sensitivity into the relational space created. An introduction to narrative career counselling was provided in the beginning of the career booklet to explain how career adaptability could be facilitated. Thereafter, career adaptability was explained using a simple five Cs analogy, which included *concern*, *control*, *curiosity*, *confidence*, and co-*operation*.

The actual processes of reflexive construction, deconstruction, co-construction, and reconstruction were included and elucidated in the booklet. These constructive processes are theorised to form the cornerstone of the Life-designing approach and result in individuals' developing career adaptability competencies and designing subjectively successful lives (Savickas, 2011b). Meanings assigned to career-related experiences can result in a distinguishable plot as an implementation of the client's career identity into a work role (Savickas, 2013). CCT highlights the importance of the process of eliciting career-life stories to discover, examine and adapt central career-life themes to which individuals assign importance during their life-spans (Hartung, 2011). This was emphasised at the start of the intervention, where a narrative career counselling case study entitled Nikiwe's story was presented (Maree, 2010b).

The case study provided an example of how stories could stimulate reflection and help the participant re-author a new career-life narrative (Maree, 2017). In the case study, Nikiwe is described as a high school learner who turned to her teacher for help in facing career indecision and uncertainty. Life themes were described as "clues" to what career Nikiwe should choose. The narrative structure of the intervention was emphasized and compared to Nikiwe's dialogue with her teacher, with the aim of stimulating awareness of the presence and influence of common themes in an individual's career-life story. The participants were encouraged, throughout the career booklet, to reflect on how personal qualities, influential people and experiences could ultimately be interwoven to form their own unique career voice.

Career Adapt-Ability Section: Concern

The first section in the career booklet was *concern* and dealt with having a future orientation. The main exercise in this section was to write a newspaper story in third person about an ideal future self and reflect what choices would lead to this future self. The participants were requested to outline their achievements, describe the type of person they would like to be and the qualities they would like to be remembered for. A reflection box was added at the end of the section, in which participants were asked to reflect on what they learned in describing their future selves. The intention was to provide a space to include process-related reflections (Kolb, 1984; Moon, 1999b; Schön, 2017), which would help participants to identify life themes, goals, or values that were pertinent in shaping their career stories. The second exercise of the *concern* section was a table called *My Career Voice: Shaping my Career*

Table 3 Life-designing intervention structure

Adapt-ability dimension	Career question	Attitudes and beliefs	Competence	Career problem	Coping behaviours	Relationship perspective	Career intervention	Types of intervention
1. Concern	Do I have a future?	Planful	Planning	Indifference	Aware Involved Preparatory	Dependent	Orientation exercises	1. The Future You (p. 4) 2. My Career Voice: Past, present, and future career stories (p. 6)
2. Control	Who owns my future?	Decisive	Decision-making	Indecision	Assertive Disciplined Wilful	Independent	Decisional training	1. Identifying positive and negative voices in my career story (p. 7) 2. Putting the Voices of others into my story (p. 8)
3. Curiosity	What do I want to do with my future?	Inquisitive	Exploring	Unrealism	Experimenting Risk-taking Inquiring	Interdependent	Information-seeking activities	1. Identifying the people who have shaped you (p. 10) 2. Creating the plot of my career story (p. 11) 3. Choosing my skills (p. 12) 4. Plotting my career story (p. 13) 5. Career Pamphlets and fieldworker facilitated discussions in session (pp. 17–19)
4. Confidence	Can I do it?	Efficacious	Problem-solving	Inhibition	Persistent Striving Industrious	Equal	Self-esteem building	1. Externalising conversations (p. 14) 2. Mapping externalising conversations and the counter-story (p. 15)
5. Co-operation	Who is involved?	Collaborative Compromising	Negotiation	Indecision Foreclosure	Accommodating Interpersonally skilled Agreeable	Interdependent	Inter-relational and interpersonal skills training	1. Johari's window (p. 16) 2. Identifying positive and negative voices in my career story (p. 7) 3. Putting the Voices of others into my story (p. 8)

Adapted from Hartung (2007) (Reprinted with permission)

Story. This contained three columns, titled *past* (i.e., career decisions taken), *present* (i.e., current career actions), and *future* (i.e., career actions to be taken). Thereby participants could develop a time perspective by tying future career ideas identified to current decisions that they needed to make.

Career Adapt-Ability Section: Control

The next section, *control*, dealt with the responsibility that individuals needed to assume for constructing their own careers. This section was conceptually adapted for the township context from the *My Systems of Career Influences instrument* (*MSCI*: McMahon, Patton, & Watson, 2017) by examining participants' career voices at different levels. This included social (family, friends, teachers and culture) and societal-environmental (community and media) levels of influence. The *control section* was designed to develop critical thinking skills to help participants navigate various positive and negative influences in the township context. This exercise aimed to critically analyze the mixed-messages that were transferred between social groups in township contexts, which could lead to the perpetuation of career myths and dysfunctional and/or irrational career beliefs (Albien & Naidoo, 2017). Thereby, a subjective examination could occur of how career voices could affect the individual's behavior if control was not exerted in implementing his/her own career voice. The underlying belief was that individuals could adjust to different contexts, using self-regulatory strategies and that they could exert an influence on their context. This served to acknowledge contextual challenges but did not victimize or pathologize township youth in any way (Kapp et al., 2014). As a follow-up exercise, the second *Control* exercise was called *Putting the voices of others into my story.* Here the most meaningful career voices were transferred into the participant's current career journey using the same divisions again (family, friends, teachers, culture, community, and media) to discern which voices needed to be actively ignored. This left the career voices behind that were supportive and/or were able to provide information or mentorship. The section ended with a *reflection-in-action* exercise (Kolb, 1984; Moon, 1999a; Schön, 2017) in which participants were asked what they would do in the future when negative voices were encountered.

Career Adapt-Ability Section: Curiosity

The third section, *curiosity*, included exploration activities to engage with the world-of-work. Participants were encouraged to explore possible selves in order to create a realistic career identity. The introduction, called *Voices of self: My story*, explained that narratives were created by linking specific events together over time, in a way that was uniquely meaningful to the individual. As a result, the individual became the author who choose the events to weave together that created a career-life story and

that this story could be re-authored if steps were retraced or a different direction was taken. The *curiosity* section consisted of four parts. The first part was *Who has helped shape who you are*? (i.e., choosing three people whom the participants admired, but it was important that this choice was not based solely on materialistic indicators of success). Each fieldworker provided examples of their personal role models, with qualities listed that they valued as an example of the subjective integration of career and personal values (Savickas et al., 2009). The second part was *Creating the plot of my career story* where participants were encouraged to think about all the events, chance encounters, obstacles and people that had shaped their career story up until that point. A diagram was provided, in which participants had to fill in the boxes and then join the events by drawing a line to plot the order or sequence of events. Participants also had to write down a belief or meaning that connected these events. If participants wanted to, they could go back to their diagram to add skills and other relevant pieces of information or join the events differently as a way of re-authoring their experiences.

The third part was *Choosing my skills*. This section was based on the participants gaining self-awareness of their skills by looking at twelve categories of skills, namely mechanical, physical, manual finesse, analytical, creative, artistic, musical, social, persuasive, organizing, leadership, and academic skills (Bolles, 2009). Discussions were facilitated by fieldworkers about diverse skill sets that were visible in the informal and formal work sectors. Overlaps in skills for specific careers, the influence of self-identified skill sets on their current career ideas, and peer feedback that reflected additional skills not considered by the individual were discussed, using *reflection-in-action* (Schön, 2017). Lastly, the fourth part, *Plotting my career story*, required participants to integrate the identified skills, role models, and previous career events. This exercise allowed a re-authoring to occur, in which the individual questioned previous interpretations that linked events together to create a career-life story. The intervention highlighted that individuals needed to gain insight into the events, messages, reflections and meanings they were assigning importance to and as a result informed their self-concept and career identity (Morgan, 2000; Van der Merwe & Gobodo-Madikizela, 2009).

Career Adapt-Ability Section: Confidence

Confidence was the fourth dimension and is defined as the belief held by an individual about his/her capabilities, which has also been called self-efficacy (Bandura, 2006). Proactive career behavior has previously been linked to self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-efficacy in completing career-related career activities (Betz & Hackett, 1981; Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 2000). Most importantly, confidence also includes the ability to persist in pursuing aspirations and objectives in the face of obstacles and barriers. This career competency becomes essential when the township context is taken into consideration. The participants had faced extreme hardships compared to middle-class cohorts. Previous career interventions had not taken personal losses or

traumas into consideration, when these often require a complete identify reformulation and extensive meaning-making processes that spill over into career development processes (Brown, 2015; Hartung & Taber, 2008). Therefore, an externalizing conversation approach was used (Morgan, 2000) in an overview called *Mapping externalizing conversations* (White, 1997, 1998), which allowed the participants to identify the greatest challenge (i.e., 'problem') currently faced in their career journey. The section ended with a summary that engaged the participants in the different types of reflection (*reflection-in-action*, *reflection-on-action*, *reflection-through-a*ction and *reflection-for-action*). Participants filled out a table that placed the 'problem' voice directly against a positive counter-story. In contrasting these two narratives, an understanding was generated about how meaning-making processes and subjective value was attached to both voices (Madigan, 2011; White & Epston, 1990).

Career Adapt-Ability Section: Co-operation

The last dimension was *co-operation*, which is described as beliefs held about working with others and collaboration. Johari's window (Luft, 1969) was used to indicate the hidden areas (skills or traits) that were unknown to the participants but were perceived by others. A four-quadrant window was filled out and called *My personalized Johari's window of my career story.* Johari's window has four equal cells, where *Cell 1* is known by the person and is known by others (i.e. an open area). *Cell 2* is a blind area, unknown by the person but known by others. *Cell 3* is a hidden area which includes what the person knows about him/herself that others do not know (i.e., the façade) (O'Toole, 2015). *Cell 4* is an unknown area that includes repressed feelings, fears, latent abilities, behaviours, experiences, etc. at both surface and deeper levels, which are unknown to the person and also unknown to others (Luft & Ingham, 1961a). Large unknown areas can be expected in individuals who lack experience, who are young or who lack self-belief. As a result, abilities that are under-estimated or untried through a lack of opportunity, encouragement, confidence or training can emerge through self-discovery, observation by others, collective or mutual discovery. However, the movement of unknown discovered knowledge into the hidden, blind or open area depends on the individual who discovered the information and what he/she does with it. A useful way to discover unknown abilities and reduce unknown areas is by providing opportunities to try new things with no great pressure to succeed. Information, which an individual is prepared to learn from others or experience, is incorporated in *Cell 2* (Luft & Ingham, 1961b). Participants' active engagement with and reflection on self-disclosure in the presence of others is incorporated in *Cell 3*. The model presumes that accurate self-awareness is a function of how much is known about the self and requires shifting information from *Cells 2*, *3*, and *4* into *Cell 1* (O'Toole, 2015). Therefore, the more an individual knows about him/herself, the more self-determination he/she will have in pursuing subjectively valued career actions.

Termination Section: Action Plan and Reflection

The section *Actualizing a career identity* was focused on helping participants to integrate snippets of information gained during the career intervention. The aim was to have three career choices at the end of the intervention. Pamphlets handed to participants included a range of training options such as Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges, universities, private further education and training institutions, learnerships, and internships. Questions and a checklist were incorporated in the career booklet to facilitate participants' career exploration activities. As a result, a safe space was created for engaging with difficult concepts (i.e. entry requirements). This session also created a holding space for disappointment if the minimum entry-level requirements were not met and a reformulation of career goals was needed. The last two pages of the career booklet included 12 reflection questions based on the reflective stages assigned to Kolb's Learning Cycle (Kolb, 1984; Moon, 1999a, 1999b; Schön, 2017). Evaluation questions assessed participants' reflections about what had meaningfully stood out during the intervention and if they had suggestions for improvements.

Conclusion

The present research confirms the usefulness of the life-design counselling approach in the (South) African (developing country) context through the creation of a career intervention that was specifically adapted to the Kayamandi context by including role player groups who were considered experts in the township context. Adaptations were included based on the suggestions that these role players made. Adaptations included: various reflection exercises based on different reflection process types; constructs based on collectivistic underpinnings that integrated the management of social mechanisms such as social comparison, and community and cultural expectations. These adaptations allowed the career construction theory, and by extension the life-designing approach, to be successfully used in a non-western, low-resource context. The most significant aspect of this career intervention was the positioning of the self and career identity of township learners within social webs and networks. Thereby, learners gained unique insights into their own personal process needed in making career decisions which was based on the integration of individual capabilities and values with social expectations and norms. This career identity reformulation was emphasized in narrative exercises that dealt with deconstructing critical social messages received from community members, in order to prevent individuals from internalising these negative voices, which were inherently associated with competition and jealousy in low-resource contexts. Therefore, self-and career construction counselling, as explained in this chapter, embedded in life-design counselling can be regarded as an effective means to promote people's career adaptability. We hope that even though South Africa faces challenges that are unique

and extraordinary, the knowledge and practice that are constructed in South African contexts can and will be applied successfully in other contexts and cultures as well. More particularly, we hope that the career-intervention design process presented in this chapter will lead to the successful utilisation of these intervention materials with similar disenfranchised youth in other contexts and stimulate future research in this regard. The process that informed the design of the present intervention content and structure provides an innovative example of creating culturally sensitive career interventions that could contribute to promoting dialogues about social justice and decolonization of people in Global South (developing country contexts) especially (Sultana, 2014; Watson, 2010).

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