

Call for Papers: Special Issue



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Using career counselling to inform educational psychology by addressing work-related challenges in an emerging economy and a postcolonial context: Generating evidence-based knowledge to promote career resilience, career adaptability, and employability

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Today, it is generally recognised that:

- a. the world is changing faster than ever before,
- b. work-related structures are disappearing,
- c. the work environment no longer provides the 'safety' blanket it used to provide for workers,
- d. fewer people are able to negotiate and secure life-time, work-related agreements with employers,
- e. short-term work assignments are becoming the new standard for employer-employee contracts, and
- f. employability is the new watchword rather than someone merely finding employment.

Changes in the world of work are prompted largely by far-reaching technological advances, and many of these advances arise from the increasing need to disseminate information across the globe faster and more efficiently.

Workers today are accordingly facing numerous work-related transitions in their career-lives, and career counsellors are obliged to find new ways to help their clients deal with these transitions. In an attempt to obtain some 'control' of a situation that often seems to be spiralling out of control, terms and expressions such as the following have been created to describe changes in the workplace: 'customised careers', where many employees today customise their career portfolios in line with their own needs rather than those of their employers (Benko & Weisberg, 2007); 'kaleidoscopic careers', where careers that are created on one's own terms and defined by one's own values, choices, and preferences (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005); 'postindustrial careers', where the idea of 'stable' work identities is disappearing; people have to redefine themselves repeatedly in contemporary work contexts (Gershuny, 1993); 'boundaryless careers', where there is a move towards employee independence, away from traditional agreements with organisations (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996); 'portfolio careers', where employees contract their skills out to various contexts and negotiate self-employment agreements (Handy, 1995); 'protean careers', where employees remain resilient so that they can deal with the effect of new technologies and new developments in the world of work on their lives (Hall, 1996); 'hourglass economies', where it is predicted that the labour force of the future will be increasingly segmented; economies will increasingly display an hourglass shape (Moynagh & Worsley, 2005); and the elimination of standard jobs (Savickas, 2007).

In addition to finding new terminology to describe what is happening in the world of work, career counsellors are required to respond to what is happening in global economies and, consequently, the workplace; ultimately, they must be responsive to the career-lives of people. A response is needed that will be practically useful as well as theoretically sound. Put differently: It is incumbent on us as career counsellors to advance career counselling (which, for the purposes of this call for papers, is defined as "a general rubric that covers a myriad of interventions and services" (Savickas, 2015:129) in such a way that clients can be helped to devise work-life identities that will enable them to see the many opportunities contained in major challenges and not just 'give up'. Ultimately, this should enable our clients to thrive – instead of merely surviving – in career-life contexts in challenging and turbulent times. We should always remember that "[t]he 21st-century perspective on career counselling moves from the empiricism of objective vocational guiding and the humanism of subjective career developing to the social constructionism of projective life designing" (Savickas, 2015:136).

This call for papers is therefore an invitation to career-counselling theorists and practitioners to share their views on how we should respond, individually and collectively, to the work-related challenges elaborated on above. We would like contributors to report on how we can help clients become more employable (rather than merely trying to help them find a job and remain in one organisation throughout their working lives). Ultimately, our aim is to improve their career adaptability and resilience as they can no longer expect to be provided with holding environments in the job market for the duration of their career-lives.

We hope that this call for papers will elicit manuscripts that draw on sound, updated theory that demonstrates how work-related threats in the 21st century can be turned into career-related opportunities. This is, of course, quite possible, as whenever major technological change has occurred in the past, and widespread job losses have ensued, people have

succeeded in using the new technology to create new work opportunities. Likewise, today, advances in information communication technology have led to many thousands of new jobs and, more importantly, to new ways of prospering, achieving self- and career construction, designing successful lives, and making social contributions.

What Types of Manuscripts are We Looking for?

This call for papers invites academics to propose innovative assessment and intervention measures, strategies, and techniques for career counselling to expedite the transformation of our fledgling democracy. Typical questions requiring answers are the following:

- How can career counselling help learners in our developing country context (characterised by inequality, high risk, need and a serious dearth of vital resources) deal with repeated transitions in a changed and changing world of work, which increasingly requires workers to use “prospective reflexivity” (Savickas, 2015:136)?
- How can contemporary theory and praxis in career counselling inform outcomes such as success in the workplace, employability, and career resilience?
- How can the notion of life design be exploited to advance career counselling in South African schools positively?
- How can career counselling be used to promote learners’ later career adaptability, career resilience, self-reflection, and reflexivity?
- What is the link between employability and life design?
- How can an integrated qualitative + quantitative approach to career counselling bolster career-life identity?
- Can an integrated qualitative + quantitative approach to career counselling be implemented to assess happenstance?
- How can career counselling be provided to promote group-based counselling?
- What evidence do we have that career counselling models developed in North American and European contexts can (be adapted to) facilitate post-modern career counselling in developing countries in particular?
- What evidence do we have (if any) that career counselling is dependent on happenstance?
- How can life design be applied in schools in South Africa (and, indeed, other developing countries)?
- How can career counselling best be facilitated in our schools?
- Which career counselling interventions work ‘best’ with learners in disadvantaged contexts (individually and in groups)?
- How can departments of education, schools, and other training institutions join hands to narrow the gap between training and the requirements of the job market?

We look forward to receiving thought-provoking contributions that extend across the spectrum of research methodologies, that is, manuscripts dealing with theoretical issues, as well as manuscripts reporting on research from a quantitative, qualitative, or an integrated qualitative + quantitative perspective. Above all, we are looking for ‘positive’ contributions that – while taking cognisance of major challenges in the world of work – are solution-based, opportunity-oriented, inspiring, and encouraging.

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Completed manuscripts should be e-mailed for review to: estelle.botha@up.ac.za.

Closing date for submissions: 15 April 2017