

RESPONDING TO CHANGES IN TODAY'S UNCERTAIN WORLD OF WORK

Call for Manuscripts: Special Issue

Responding to changes in today's uncertain world of work marked by a loss of work-life identity: advancing career counselling for life designing in institutions of higher learning

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Much has been written over the past number of years about fundamental changes in the occupational world and the effect of these changes on workers and prospective workers (including students). At a time when unemployment figures are reaching unprecedented high levels across the world, the sad reality is that many people are left with no choice but to accept any kind of work they are offered just to eke out a living (Maree, 2017). This has prompted some observers to state that career counselling in many countries (developing countries in particular) has been reduced to “employment counselling” (Maree, 2016). It is common knowledge that remaining in one organization for one's entire career-life is no longer an option (Doyle, 2017). The Bureau for Labor Statistics (BLS, 2016) (United States of America (USA)) reports that workers in the USA on average change work 12 times in their career-lives. While this figure cannot summarily be generalized to other countries, the phenomenon of people changing jobs ever more frequently has become a global phenomenon – and a significant contributing factor to increasing uncertainty in the workplace and loss of work-life identity. Bańka and Hauziń (2015, p. 34) stress the importance (and also the increased complexity) of making appropriate career decisions as these decisions have far-reaching implications not only for people's career-lives but also their personal lives: “Making life changing decisions in a chaotic reality is increasingly difficult and there is always a risk of failure, be it simply the assessment of pursued goals and sought-after values or in the goals themselves. Therefore, it is no surprise that nowadays people link the most important life issues with career decision.”

A short-, medium-, and long-term career counselling approach is needed that will help people deal with repeated work-related transitions and trauma (Hall, 1996). Anthony (in Wolfe, 2017, n. p.) advocates the term life planning rather than career planning in this regard. In other words, the aim of career counselling should be to help people look further than merely finding the next job or occupation as no one can say for sure whether any given job will still be in existence a few years' time. Helping people become employable, career resilient (helping them deal with “dreaded” future changes in the workplace), and career adaptable should therefore take precedence over, for instance, merely helping them find work and advising them on

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the “right” career choices. Wolfe (2017), too, argues that it is no longer an option for people to try to find work with one employer in one organization for the duration of their working lives. Today, people have to be helped to acquire and apply key career-related skills involving critical thinking, curiosity, creativity, collaboration, and communication (Wolfe, 2017). Acquiring these skills will enhance people’s sense of security in postmodern workplaces.

Accepting change as a given, preparing for change, and becoming adaptable are crucial in postmodern career counselling. Savickas (2011a, b) argues that career adaptability in particular is closely linked to key occupational outcomes. Hartung and Cadaret (2017) add that career adaptability is demonstrated by the thoughts, feelings, and actions that empower people to deal with career-life changes. Put simply: workers should be prepared to adapt and to demonstrate coping behaviours that display their willingness and readiness to adapt. They should a) show concern about their future by planning their future career-lives; b) provide evidence of control of their future career-lives by demonstrating a sense of agency and the ability to regulate their actions during the construction of their careers; c) display a sense of curiosity about their future career-lives by establishing (through job analysis) what certain careers entail and by gaining not only career-related knowledge but also self-knowledge; and d) acquire and exhibit certainty about what they want in their future career-lives by displaying the self-efficacy needed to manage any hurdles they may encounter in choosing and constructing their career-lives (Savickas, 2007; 2013).

Above all, there is a need to promote a sense of purpose and meaning in current and future employees and employers as well as in the unemployed. Blustein (2017) contends that critical consciousness (the ability to read the world accurately and critically) is crucial in enabling people to flourish, not merely “survive”, in an ever-changing world. He also stresses that workers should cultivate competencies that artificial intelligence and machines and computers cannot replicate.

Institutions of higher learning involved in the training of career counsellors need to respond appropriately and timeously to the changes discussed above and restructure and update their training programmes. Career counselling theory and practice need to be updated regularly to ensure that they remain aligned with “best practice” elsewhere in the world. Likewise, student counselling departments at tertiary training institutions should ensure that the services they offer fully meet the needs of 21st century students. This means that institutions of higher learning should discard a solely “positivist” (objective) approach and adopt a “postmodern” integrated, quantitative+qualitative approach to career counselling. This approach is based on Guichard’s self-construction theory (Guichard, 2009), Mark Savickas’ career construction theory, and the inclusive theory of life design paradigm (Savickas, 2013; Savickas et al., 2009). At the same time, what requires urgent attention is the current relevancy of the three generally accepted main components of career-related theory and intervention, namely a. career education, b. vocational guidance, and c. career

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counselling and life designing (Duarte, 2017; Savickas, 2015), and their value and role in promoting career adaptability, career resilience, employability, and access to sustainable, decent work. The urgency of the matter is brought home by Manfreda's (2016, p. 1) comment: "Widespread discontent over unemployment and low living standards has been the second biggest reason that triggered the Arab Spring."

What types of manuscripts are we looking for?

This Call for Manuscripts invites academics to submit manuscripts on theoretical issues, assessment and intervention outcomes, quantitative approaches, and narrative methods and strategies for career counselling and life designing today. Typical questions requiring answers are the following:

- How can career counsellors revamp their practices to help students deal with the rapid changes in today's occupational world?
- How can we ensure that career counselling in developing countries in particular is made available to all people and not only to a select few?
- How can career counselling departments be structured so that their services meet the needs of the students of today?
- How can the UNESCO vision of "facilitating decent work for all" be promoted in career counselling departments at institutions of higher learning?
- How can institutions of higher learning join hands with the newly-established South African Career Development Association to promote career development and counselling for all?
- How relevant are postmodern approaches to career counselling (including career construction counselling and life designing) in developing country contexts?
- How can present-day career counselling theories and practice promote outcomes such as career resilience, career adaptability, and employability?
- How can the outcomes of reflection, self-reflection, reflexivity, and self-reflexivity be promoted by career counselling and life designing?
- How can an integrated qualitative+quantitative approach to career counselling help counselees assume authorship of their career-life stories and promote the construction, deconstruction, reconstruction, and co-construction of these stories?
- How can career counselling best be taught at institutions of higher learning?

We welcome thought-provoking, creative, innovative, and incisive manuscripts covering the whole range of career counselling research methodologies. We hope to receive transinstitutional, transnational, national, international, transdisciplinary and interdisciplinary contributions that meet the high standard of previous

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issues of the *SAJHE*. We hope also that the contributions will invigorate debate on career counselling in institutions of higher learning in countries in southern Africa, in other developing regions, and in the rest of the world, and expand the network of people conducting research on and applying career counselling in these contexts.

- The pre process of article submission to the Guest Editor and the pre review process by the Guest Editor to confirm that the article is in line with the topic – will have to be finalised by - 1 January 2019
- All the articles will then be subjected to a peer review process according to the audit rules of SAJHE (by the .SAJHE reviewers) – 2 Jan – 31 Jan 2019
- SAJHE's Copy editor will do the layout, confirm the layout and corrections with the authors individually (either with each author or with the guest editor) – 1 Feb to 28 Feb 2019
- Online publication date set for 15 April 2019

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