**Chapter 15**

**Career adaptability, employability, and career resilience in managing transitions**

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**Abstract**

School-to-work transitions, in the sense of being processes that take place over a period of time and which involve both personal meaning and social issues (e.g. contextual factors), are what mark the starting point of this chapter. This chapter is essentially divided into three blocks, although the three follow the same structure. The first block is shaped around career adaptability, offering an overview of the concept and its historical perspective. The second block deals with employability. The most common definitions of this construct are first presented, along with a brief historical contextualisation of its role in career studies, followed by a selective review of existing research into employability. The third and final block looks at resilience. By looking at the notion of a career as an action, rather than a structure, we characterise the concept of career resilience as pertaining to the overarching framework designed to understand the process of self-directed career management, particularly when viewed as one of the components of the multidimensional concept of career motivation. Conclusions draw this chapter to a close, summarising the most useful and important suggestions which have been presented.

*Introduction*

In Western societies, it is often difficult to establish a line or a timeframe during which such transitions take place: school and training and a subsequent entry into the labour market is not a linear, or even a predictable, process. Work-based learning experiences in secondary education or in vocational education and training for young people, as well as adult education and validation of prior learning are examples of such phenomena. In such an unstable and changing context, concepts such as adaptability, employability and resilience take on significant importance in helping us deal with transitions, normative and non-normative, voluntary and, mainly, involuntary (Fouad & Bynner, 2008).

Focus on adaptability is given here to the definition tabled by Savickas (1997), however space is also given to career adaptability models/concepts. This block follows with a discussion on the utility of career adaptability in career guidance and career counseling, concluding with the proposal of the Career Adapt-Ability model for forging a link between the utilisation of instruments with guidance and counseling interventions.

After the presentation of employability definitions, a selection on measures applicable as part of this construct and their utility in career guidance and counseling is discussed.

The third part is about resilience. After the explanation of the concept, we will identify the concept’s situational and personality sub-groupings, thereby taking into account selected views on a) the career construction process as a result of continuous shifts in educational and working contexts and b) the personal variables needed to healthily deal with both voluntary and involuntary transitions.

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* 1. Adaptability

A.1. *The concept and its historical perspective*

The application of the vocational maturity construct in adults leads us to the concept of career adaptability, with this concept essentially being the definition of the attitude and information needed for us to quickly deal with changes in our working lives and working conditions. This idea of necessity is coined as part of the framework of “Career Pattern Study” (CPS, Jordaan & Heyde, 1979; Super & Bachrach, 1957; Super & Overstreet, 1960), which took the form of a longitudinal project looking to study processes of career development. The employment market is in a constant state of alteration, throwing down new and unpredictable hurdles for workers. However the majority of these hurdles are nothing to do with age, making it all the more important to build and develop another approach that takes into account the psychological factors involved in career development, without constantly resorting to the connotations of the term ‘maturity’. It is from this backdrop that the concept of career adaptability, “attitudes and information needed for readiness to cope with changing work and working conditions” (Super, Thompson & Lindeman, 1988, p.5), emerges. In brief, the concept of adaptability, or adaptation process, emphasises an individual’s competencies and attitudes, , and the origin of this emphasis is in the definition of the sub-stages of the growth phase (from approximately 4 to 13 years old), which includes four major developmentalist tasks: 1) worrying about the future 2) having control over one’s own life 3) having belief in a capacity to succeed and in the acquisition of work habits and 4) competent work attitudes (Super, Savickas & Super, 1996). The first four dimensions of career adaptability – concern, control, conviction and competence – were subsequently refined, with conviction being substituted for curiosity and competence for confidence (Savickas, 2005). From this concept we can trace the model of adaptability, encompassing five dimensions: two of which are attitudinal (planning and exploration), two cognitive (information and the taking of decisions) and finally one covering the conative dimension – reality orientation (Super, Thompson & Lindeman, 1988).

. Savickas suggests that adaptability can be conceptualised by building on the use of developmentalist dimensions such as planning, exploration and decision. For the author, “career adaptability, whether in adolescents or in adults, involves planful attitudes, self and environmental exploration, and informed decision-making” (Savickas, 1997, p. 254). According to Savickas (2012), career construction theory characterises adaptation outcomes as being the result of adaptivity, adaptability and adapting. These notions denote a sequence ranging across adaptive readiness, adaptability responses, adapting responses and adaptation results. Despite being distinct constructs, a similar guiding theme can be found running through this entire sequence (Hirchi, Herrmann & Keller, 2015). The most important refinement to have taken place is the replacing of readiness with resources, allowing for a distinguishing of the individual’s willingness to face change. Career construction theory presents the resources available to adaptability as a combined construct (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012), based on the assumption that the construct is formed through a combination of its indicators. This essentially means that attaining higher levels in the dimensions of planning, decision, exploration, cooperation and confidence permits a greater level of career adaptability, not the opposite. This then goes against the suggestion that the formula should be inverted, in which it would be greater career adaptability that allows for higher levels of planning... and so on. Adaptability, at least in the form of a combined construct, reflects an individual’s psychosocial resources for dealing with tasks, transitions and traumas related with occupational roles and this could alter social integration, in the sense that these resources reside at the intersection of the person and his/her surroundings/environment.(for more details see chapter 1, this book)

The concept of adaptability is also used as an explanatory instrument for the way in which the individual adjusts and goes about managing career transitions (Del Corso, Rehfuss, & Galvin, 2011). Other authors refer to adaptability as a form of performance construct (Pulakos, Arad, et al., 2000), or individual adaptability as being a composite of KSAOs – knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics (Ployhart & Bliese, 2006). In summary from the perspective of career construction theory, adaptability resources help to form the strategies that individuals use to direct their adaptive behaviours. Career adaptability resources are grouped into four dimensions, suggesting that someone *concerned* about the future of his/her work life, who sets out to take *control* of his/her own life, who is *curious* about him/herself and the surrounding environment and who has a *sense of faith* in the future is better prepared to handle transitions, to cope with current or imminent tasks or changes and to deal with personal traumas or vocational development tasks that may to some degree alter their social integration.

A.2 *The utility of career adaptability in career guidance and career counseling*

Adaptability plays a key role in the world of career guidance and career counseling. The articulation of adaptability dimensions with issues related to school-to-work transitions leads to the need to better understand the way in which these same dimensions interrelate and influence attitudes and behaviours for dealing with transitions. Hypothetically speaking, we could affirm that individuals who show greater concern/care for career planning and greater control over decision making make more use of strategies focused on transitions. For example, Koen, Klehe, Van Vianen et al. (2010) consider that behaviours indicative of curiosity and confidence are more associated with exploratory strategies, thereby facilitating transitions. Assisting the individual in situations of transition can represent a synonym not only for the usefulness of an understanding of which career adaptabilities constitute areas which should be/could be taken advantage of, but also for what the role of the mediator of attitudes, beliefs and competencies is. A study undertaken by Duffy (2010) with 1st year university students evidenced the strong relationship between a feeling of control and adaptability, meaning that the students who show a greater sense of personal control could be better prepared for easily adjusting to the world of work. However, we must highlight that adaptability has to be seen as a complex being, formed of many shapes and sizes, which must be contextualised.

The tendency to discuss adaptability as a category (or a discipline) is an obstacle of trying to understand what the *other* is saying, or what past experience leads him/her to say such a thing. This disrespects the goals of guidance and counseling itself, which is to support intervention and to promote change.

Adaptability dimensions must support and provide knowledge and can support decision-making processes and investment in learning. The benefit which can be taken not only for the individual, but also for society in general, is immense. When well documented and communicated, adaptability outcomes can be, on the whole, helpful for the future implementation of decision-making procedures. Additionally, adaptability can stimulate discussions about the implementation of new practices that go far beyond the current target problem. They can take the form of an evidence-based platform to launch new improvements for boosting learning, thereby broadens opportunities and enhancing equity.

Traditionally, the “core business” of career guidance and career counseling was in the matching of individuals and work. However, in what is a world full of uncertainties, theory and interventions are changing, transforming a relationship of help into a relationship of utility, which can ensure the study of understanding of the individual narrative and write this knowledge into the law of the universe in a way that gives consistency throughout the development of counseling. In this way, guidance and counseling are evermore geared for the future, placing the focus on the resources available to each individual, inclusive of the resources conceptualised in the adaptability approach.

The utility of this approach can be analysed through several different perspectives, one of which is adaptability as an assessment tool considering the operationalisation of the psychological construct for the study of individual differences. In general, the notion of assessment refers to the formal and systematic scrutiny of a planned intervention, meaning that testing and assessment are not actually synonyms. Assessment may of course involve testing, including interviews, projects, analysis associated with the implementation of new ways of working or studying and other observation techniques. From this perspective, we can affirm that assessment is focused on a careful and systematic examination of evoked mental processes and products resulting from a particular situation (this can include the administration of a single or a variety of assessment methods). Different practices can be used at the level of a single individual and the counselor can adopt a broader scope such as, for example, the addressing of questions found in cross-cultural studies (Duarte, 2005).

Another perspective considers adaptability as viewed from a cultural standpoint, integrating adaptability within the framework of a specific culture (or sub-culture). To frame this perspective, there is one main issue, which inevitably must be considered: the conceptual definition of what the counsellor intends to address and the context of its operationalization. The undertone of this issue is essentially ecological relatedness (Duarte, 2005) mixed with qualitative and oriented procedures, which could even come to enlighten specific contextual and acculturated career variables that affect experience, reveal the idiosyncratic nature of personal experiences and show the extent to which the individual performs an active life-long role in the life process.

The utility of career adaptability tools is not to designate a *quantitative* function (for example, to consider the number of existing dimensions), but rather an function of a *qualitative* nature, in the sense that the objective is to find the general set of relationships which define a form of individual singularity in which nothing can be forgotten or ignored. From a social and cultural point of view, the individual is the result of the interaction of multiple and diverse factors which he/she is surrounded by and which interact relative to the cultural and social production that must be taken into account (Duarte & Cardoso, 2015).

Today, social, economic and political changes are occurring across the globe and problems, which affect large swathes of the population – unemployment, the quality of living standards and the transition from school to work – have contributed to the consolidation of new perspectives in the field of guidance, as well as in the field of counseling (Savickas, Nota, Rossier, et al., 2009). Indeed, guidance in a broader sense, as well as counseling in particular, partners with life in that it can help individuals to become consciously aware of their own careers, lifestyle and options and can help to attribute a greater sense of importance to a person’s life (Duarte, 2009, 2015) (For more information on the difference of the nature of guidance and counseling, see Savickas & Lent, 1994; Savickas & Walsh, 1996).

*A.3. The Career Adapt-Abilities Scale and its utilization in guidance and counseling interventions.*

“Take a test, and they tell you what you should do” is a well-known colloquial expression. For many people, career assessment and testing are closely associated. This link, although controversial, comes from the classic approach of using tests to collect information suitable for matching individuals and jobs.

Nowadays, the concept of assessment is more comprehensive, but is viewed as just one of a variety of sources of information. Prediger and Swaney (1995) suggest that practitioners should use test scores as one of these sources of information to enhance self-awareness of an individual’s array of options, while allowing him/her to use these scores as a stimulus for further exploration.

The purpose of a comprehensive approach to assessment in terms of the strengths and weakness of the individual or populations has methodological implications on various levels, namely: studies design, research settings, features / traits sampling and data collection (Duarte & Rossier, 2008).

These concepts carry with them practical implications for researchers who are developing psychological instruments. A good example is the development and construction of the *Career Adapt-Abilities Scale Inventory* (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). At its earlier stages, the *Inventory* consisted of a research project set up through the collaboration of an international team and brought together researchers from 18 different countries spread across several continents (for more details, see Leong & Ott-Holland, 2014; Leong & Walsh, 2012). The team “produced the framework… as readiness, resources, responses and results. They settled on the career construction model of adaptability resources to identify and linguistically define what would be called “adapt-abilities”. Moreover, they decided, “to jointly construct a measure of career-adaptabilities in the English language and then translate it as needed for use in their home countries” (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012, p.664). This project led to an internationally implemented instrument and a special issue of The Journal of Vocational Behaviour (2012), publishing data from 13 different countries.

The promotion of adaptability in contexts of transitions can benefit intervention strategies sustained on the support of the building up of personal resources and attitudes for dealing with these transitions. These resources and attitudes are extremely important for learning how to deal with transitions. Adaptability provides for the utilisation of mixed strategies, while considering the qualitative and quantitative angles of the analysis of the results obtained from the application of CAAS and facilitating the individual’s search for meaning in his/her life and stories (Maree, 2010) which have been developed in the social, economic and political contexts in which he/she exists. The use of adaptability in guidance and counselling interventions could contribute to a better understanding of the most difficult, yet most banal, aspect of science: the decisively human meaning of the importance of individual difference, so often striped out by a framework of uniformity and the correlation that we call conformity.

* 1. Employability

B.1. The concept and historical perspective

Noticeable changes to the trajectory followed by individual careers have taken place since the 1990’s. During that period, it became clear that traditional paths (i.e. bureaucratic, linear and predictable careers) were in many cases being quickly substituted by more uncertain and flexible professional paths (Wijers & Meijers, 1996). Two new types of careers are emerging from this shift: “protean” careers and “boundaryless” careers. These new types of careers are mainly driven by people, rather than organizations offering employment. People who chose these kinds of careers tend to be guided by fundamental values such as freedom and personal development and, according to Hall (2004, see also, Hall & Mirvis, 1996), demonstrate a high level of mobility (intra and inter-organisational). For these individuals, the measurement of career success (e.g., Hall & Chandler, 2005) is built subjectively (psychological success), with the benchmark attitudes for career success being satisfaction in work and professional commitment (reputation).

For Forrier and Sels (2003), the idea of “employability for life” rather than a “job for life” is often viewed as an antidote for growing insecurity in the employment market. In the context of this new perspective of the world of work, employment, careers and the notion of employability have inevitability take on an inescapable notoriety in the political, organisational and scientific discourse of the last few decades (e.g., Arnold & Jackson, 1997; Collins & Watts, 1996). In today’s world, staying ‘re-employable’ is a highly prized asset for any worker, particularly for the large group of individuals who make do with temporary or part-time work. The existence of a workforce with a high level of employability (highly flexible labour) is also just as important for 21st century organisations and companies and is a strategy frequently applied in the struggle for survival and prosperity in the uncertain and shifting world in which we currently find ourselves. As Brown, Hesketh and Williams (2003) so appropriately affirm: “Employability is a notion that captures the economic and political times in which we live.” (p. 107)

While this concept has only really been thrust into the spotlight over the last thirty years, authors have already extensively written on the topic (e.g., Forrier & Sels, 2003; Fugate, 2006; Harvey, 2001; McQuaid & Lindsay, 2005; Thijssen, Van der Heidjen & Rocco, 2008; Van der Heidje & Van der Heijden, 2006). Indeed, the first publications looking at the concept of employability date to the 1950’ and 1960’s and were heavily influenced by economic policy, most notably in relation to the push towards the objective of 100% employment rates.

Employability’s modern-day definition is highly linked with the type of psychological contract (e.g., De Cuyper, Van der Heijden & De Witte, 2011; Rousseau, 1995) in play between employers and employees and is characteristic of the new economy. This new form of contract places the emphasis of taking responsibility for the construction of careers squarely with the individual (Forrier & Sels, 2003), meaning that a career belongs more to the individual than to the organisation (Duarte, 2009). In this sense, keeping up a high level of employability throughout our working lives, namely by showing wisdom and common sense in managing our career, is in our economic interest. Likewise, it is also in the competitive interests of nations and, *pour cause*, of each nation’s business and industrial players, to ensure that a competent and flexible workforce is available (i.e., with a high level of employability).

It has been said before that there are as just as many theories of constructs as authors who write on the issue and the same can be applied to the concept of employability. As Forrier and Sels (2003) affirm: “Employability has become a broad term given a very wide interpretation” (p. 105). After undertaking an in-depth historic analysis and critical revision of the state of the art, Forrier and Sels (2003) define employability as “an individual’s chance of a job in the internal and/or external labour market” (p. 106). Through this definition, the authors on the one hand look to highlight the idea that the chance of getting a good job depends as much on an individual’s capacity (ability) as his/her drive (willingness), while on the other noting that the possibilities of such a job can only be effectively gauged when contextual factors are appropriately taken into consideration. In this sense, employability is not an exclusively individual characteristic, which can be based solely on the capacity and motivation of each individual. On the same topic, Thjissen et al. (2008) propose the following formula for a general definition of employability: “The possibility to survive in the internal or external labour market” (p. 167). In their view, this is a sort of catch-all definition (through its notably generic character) which allows for the incorporation of the majority of the current concepts of employability. Another definition frequently cited in the area of vocational behaviour is that of Fugate, Kinicki and Ashford (2004), who approach employability as being a psychosocial construct, focused around the person (person-centred) and being independent relative to the job itself. More specifically, Fugate et al. (2004) comment that employability “represents a form of work specific (pro)active adaptability that consists of three dimensions – career identity, personal adaptability, and social and human capital” (p. 15). Considering then that employability is dislocated from the status of the individual relative to his/her job, we can affirm that a person can be employable, even when not he/she is not actually in employment.

This brief analysis of the concept of employability allows us to draw several conclusions. Firstly, it is evident that the concept has been in the limelight since the 1990’s, thereby being examined from various different perspectives. For example, Thijssen et al. (2008) discuss three perspectives (societal, business and individual) which, in being centred on the concept of employment, have clear implications for the way in which the concept of employability is constructed. These perspectives were shown to be related with developments which took place during three recent periods (e.g., 1970’s, 80’s and 90’s), moving the focus onto different issues (e.g., employability seen as the flexibility of society, business and/or workers) and championing different objectives (e.g., 100% employment, the efficient management of human resources and the individual opportunity of employment in the internal or external market). Secondly, it has been made clear that employability is a complex abstract and multidimensional entity, which integrates different facets (e.g., Fugate et al., 2004; Fornier & Sels, 2003; McQuaid & Lindsay, 2005; Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2008). This variability in terms of reference frameworks does of course have direct implications on the investigation of employability and its practical applications.

B.2. The utility of the employability concept in career studies and interventions

Employability, as we have seen, is a concept, which is frequently cited in the literature of a variety of different disciplines (the Science of Organizations, Economics and Management, Education, Psychology). Yet for many, employability is little more than a buzzword, often nominated but poorly explained and understood. Increased interest in the concept of employability by both political decision-makers and scientists stems directly from the transformations fed by globalization, most notably a shift in the idea of “lifetime employment” in the same organization or institution towards a paradigm of “lifetime employability”. The focus of employability (the capability of being employed in a job) can also trace its roots to the tangible consequences for the adaptive capabilities of individuals, organizations and nations.

We must of course not overlook the fact that a significant volume of works identifiable in recently published literature continue, as was the case in the past, to investigate the antecedents and main consequences of employability across different levels of analysis. These studies, undertaken across different continents and with different groups, incorporating distinct theory-based variables, are a testament to the vitality, reach and interest in the construct for a multitude of audiences. In the following paragraphs, we present some examples of studies carried out in the last five years on this topic.

The association of PE with the wellbeing of employees and of both factors with the success of organizations, controlling the effect felt by the respective type of psychological contract, was examined in a study by De Cuyper, Van der Heijden, & De Witte (2011), in a sample of 463 Belgian workers. In agreement with their hypothesis, the authors discovered associations in PE with satisfaction in life, self-evaluation of performance and turnover intention (negative). Contrary to what had been anticipated, PE was not related to job satisfaction.

Van Emmerik, Schreurs, de Cuyper, Jawahar, & Peeters (2011) examined the associations between job resources (i.e., feedback, autonomy and variety) with the type of motivation (intrinsic or extrinsic) and PE, in a study of 611 workers in a Dutch municipality. The authors discovered that only performance outcome goals set by employees proved to be important for the association between job resources and PE.

De Vos, Hauw, and Heijden (2011) undertook a survey study involving more than 550 workers in the Belgian financial sector, thereby looking to uncover the relationship between competency development, employability and career success. They found a positive association between the level of participation of workers in activities for the improvement of competencies, level of support received for participating in these activities and the level of PE.

Kang, Gold, & Kim (2012) examined the role of PE in moderating the relationship between experiences of job insecurity on the part of employees and behaviors related to work (discretionary extra-role and impression management behaviors, in a group of 207 supervisors from banking and financial institutions in the Republic of Korea. The results showed that the perception of job insecurity had an effect on behaviors related with work (negative in extra-role and positive in impression management behaviors) and that this effect is intensified in correlation with PE.

Lin (2015), using a sample of more than 500 banking sector workers in Taiwan, analyzed the potential mediating effect of learning-goal orientation in the relationship between protean career attitude and PE as both an internal and external component. Lin verified a favorable attitude with regards to protean careers and a statistically significant correlation with both aspects of employability. Protean talent individuals, proved to have a high level of external employability. Lin also noted that learning-goal orientation fully mediated the relationship between protean attitudes and internal employability. However, only a partial mediation was evident in the case of external employability.

Onyishi, Enwereuzor, Ituma, & Omena (2015) undertook a cross-sectional study of 254 Nigerian university students, both employed and unemployed, highlighting the mediating role of EP between core self-evaluations (CSEs) and job-search behavior (preparatory and active job-search). The authors discovered a positive association between CSEs and preparatory job-search behaviors. However, the same could not be said of active job-search. The authors also proved that PE fully mediates the relationship of CSEs with preparatory job-search behaviors, but does not mediate the relationship with active job-search behavior.

Forrier, Verbruggen, & De Cuyper (2015) developed a non-recursive model in which they look to integrate three popular notions of employability (job transitions, movement capital, PE), linking them in a dynamic flux and defining employability as “an individual’s chance of a job in the internal and/or external labor market”. Through a two-wave study with a sample of more than 600 Belgian workers, Forrier et al. were able to prove that the three notions of employability form a kind of dynamic chain: job transitions influence movement capital and this in turn impacts on PE levels. Finally, PE triggers a new possibility of job transitions.

The above revision of employability studies focus on a new program that seeks to explain the mediator and/or moderator role that employability plays in the dynamic flux of processes which exist between relevant input and output variables. Future research should keep up with this level of sophistication in order to better capture its unique and complex role.

B.3. Measuring employability in guidance and counseling interventions

Considering the enormous difficulties in defining what employability is (e.g. Harvey, 2001; Hillage & Pollard, 1998) and in accepting that we are dealing with a multidimensional complex (Forrier & Sels, 2003; Fugate et al., 2004; Heijde & Heijden, 2005; Rothwell & Arnold, 2007) which is expressed across distinct perspectives, (Thijssen et al., 2008), it comes as little surprise that the respective literature is also packed with different proposals for measuring the construct. Many of these different operationalizations are essentially homemade, however we can also reflect on some measurements which are psychometrically solid and which are increasingly cited in literature. Bearing in mind the focus on the individual, which the authors have adopted in this chapter, we have chosen to use the self-perceived employability scale (Rothwell & Arnold, 2007) as an illustrative example from the various possibilities available. The scale was initially developed and validated in a sample of workers employed in human resources roles, however a version has also been adapted for university students (Rothwell, Herbert, & Rothwell, 2008). Sixteen items were initially constructed, in a reflection of the crossing of the two main dimensions of employability (internal vs. external labour market and personal vs. occupational attributes). Responses are given in a five-point Likert-type scale with anchors from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). In attempting to determine the discriminative validity of these employability items in relation to two independent constructs, namely subjective career success and professional commitment, Rothwell and Arnold (2007) found out that only 11 of the items were of sufficient discriminative value. To study the internal structure of self-employability scale, the 11 items were examined based on the idea that employability presents two components: internal employability (relating to the internal labour market) and external employability (Rothwell & Arnold, 2007). This analysis demonstrated that employability items are indeed distributed over two components. The first of these reflects external employability and is composed of seven items (e.g., “I could easily retrain to make myself more employable elsewhere”), with loadings between .36-.70 and explaining 27.4% of the total common variance. The second component, reflecting internal employability, integrates four items (e.g., “Even if there was downsizing in the organization I am confident that I would be retained”), with loadings of .53-.81 and explaining the 22.8% total variance. The Cronbach alpha values stood at .79 and .72, for external and internal employability respectively. For the overall set of 11 items, internal consistency reliability was .83. Other analyses undertaken by the authors revealed that the scores presented good validity. In summary, the scale of 11 items showed a high internal consistency and there is additional evidence, which suggests that self-perceived overall employability is distinct, although related to the level of subjective career success and professional commitment of individuals. Moreover, the analyses demonstrated that we should show caution in considering self-perceived employability as a unitary construct. In addition and according to Rothwell & Arnold (2007), a two-factor solution “produced a fairly clear split between items reflecting internal (i.e. within-organization) and external employability” (p. 36). We can conclude then that the self-perceived employability scale could be legitimately used as a single scale or as two independent scales, depending on the goal of the particular investigation/application. Indeed and as stated by the authors, a contrasting of internal employability and external employability could be deemed appropriate in situations such as downsizing or in specialist organisations which are relatively isolated from wider labour markets. The scale could prove useful for such an undertaking in career interventions (as diagnostic tool), where it could be applied to clients who are looking for support in tackling career transitions. It does of course go without saying that the validity generalisation of the scale scores will have to be tested in different groups of individuals and in different cultural contexts before we can recommend a wider use of the self-perceived employability scale.

C. Resilience

C.1. The concept and its historical perspective

"Ordinary magic" is the designation that Masten uses to express the development of the resilience process, defined as the extraordinary (although quite common) fact that many children, adolescents and adults (and not only the "invulnerable" or "invincible" ones) seem to develop well, despite the fact that they are consistently exposed to contexts of risk and adversity (Masten, 2001). Research on resilience groups an ever-growing set of studies which have been uncovering the internal (assets) or external (resources) factors that explain and promote adaptive and healthy development, in several age groups, in individuals exposed to risk contexts(Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005; Masten, 2001) . According to Masten (2001) these studies can be grouped in two major approaches: variable-focused approaches (which analyse the associations between risk variables, promotive and protective factors, and developmental outcomes in rather complex quantitative studies) and person-focused approaches, which compare, in relation to substantive developmental criteria, individuals with different profiles, via the use of both qualitative and quantitative studies. Both approaches have given rise to a comprehensive body of research pointing out to a short list of fundamental protective systems for human development (Masten, Herbers, Cutuli, & Lafavor, 2008), covering individual, family, relationships and larger environmental factors, as well as their respective links and connections to basic human adaptive systems (e.g. intelligence and problem-solving skills with learning and thinking systems, perceived efficacy and control with mastery motivation). All the evidence collected has contributed significantly to provide a resilience framework for intervention in educational contexts, including a mission statement, models, measures, and methods (Galassi & Akos, 2007).

C.2. The utility of the career resilience concept in understanding the career construction process in contemporary societies

In contemporary societies, risk factors for unhealthy behavioural patterns or developmental trajectories might come up as overwhelming, if we do not take into account both promotional and protective factors that can help build career resilience within non-linear career construction processes in educational and work contexts (Hirschi, 2012). Thus, contemporary career literature has come up with a series of concepts focusing on self-directed career (promotive) processes which underline a proactive set of career strategic attitudes that might help the individuals, namely adolescents and adults, making important career decisions, survive, and even flourish, in an era defined by flexible work and mobile and, often, insecure life journeys. Constructs like career competencies and career capital (Kuijpers & Scheerens, 2006), or protean (Briscoe & Hall, 2006) and boundaryless career orientations (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006), all depict the notion of career as an action that is self-directed, self-managed and meaningful in a complex context that requires career resilience. Taken together, these concepts express the idea that career construction is driven and directed by personal competence factors, that promote positive developmental outcomes in unpredictable contexts. Cordeiro, Paixão, Lens, Lacante, and Luyckx (2015) found out, in a longitudinal study carried out with a sample of 12th graders, facing the transition to enter higher education or join the world-of-work, that the “bright” pathways of career decision-making (in opposition to the “darker” ones), depend upon a set of cognitive-motivational factors (e.g. basic needs satisfaction, autonomous career commitment-making, self-efficacy, a-schematic thinking, positive emotional adjustment) that seem to foster psychological resilience.

Nevertheless, it was London (1983) that explicitly addressed the concept of career resilience, conceiving it as a core component of the broad construct of career motivation (in the sense of mastery motivation, identified by Masten as a human basic adaptive system), and defining it as the ability to adapt to changing and, quite often, very adverse circumstances, that might be discouraging, or put the individuals at risk of being entrapped in courses marked by vulnerability. Scientific evidence has been underscoring the role of career resilience as mainly a promotional factor, and some examples can be pointed out. Alniacik, Alniacik, Akçin and Erat (2012) observed, in a sample of 250 employees working in various industries, in Turkey, that career resilience has a positive correlation with organisational commitment and job satisfaction. Liu (2003) explored the relations between career resilience and career beliefs in a sample of 178 employees, in Taiwan, and found out that the participants who had higher scores on career resilience displayed fewer irrational career beliefs. Coetzee, Mogale and Potgieter (2015), in a sample of predominantly black African staff people, demonstrated that career resilience was significantly correlated with the participants' career anchors.

However, the protective and buffering role of career resilience in the face of severe adversities has been understudied. London and Noe (1997), when reflecting upon the directions for future research in the domain of career resilience, stress, precisely, the urgent need to study either populations and groups facing persistent societal and cultural constraints, or risk features of contemporary work environments, like job demands related to voluntary and involuntary transitions, changes in the psychological contract, and organisational restructuring and downsizing. Extensive work has still to be done in order to comply with these authors' suggestions and with resilience research requirements.

C.3. The utility of measuring career resilience in guidance and counselling interventions

Career resilience has mainly been measured via the use of self-report instruments assessing rather stable individual characteristics, and this represents a weakness in the research that has been developed in this important career domain. In fact, following Fergus and Zimmerman (2005) reasoning, resilience should not be measured as a static trait, nor as the quality of an individual that is always present in every situation, once should be mainly conceived as process which is defined by the context, the population, the risks, the promotive/protective factors and the outcomes. However, the focus on individual-level assets has been favoured within the career motivation model proposed by London (1983), as well as in similar approaches in the career construction domain. Even in the very few longitudinal studies that took place in the last few years (e.g. Cordeiro, Paixão, Lens, Lacante, and Luyckx, 2015), self-reports instruments have been the measures more frequently (and sometimes, exclusively) used.

Thus, concerning these measures, we are going to briefly refer the ones that are more frequently reported. London (1993b), introduced a 17-item instrument (Career Motivation Inventory) measuring the three dimensions of the career motivation construct (identity, insight and resilience) focusing on feelings and attitudes. Items intended to measure career resilience (5) include the ability to adapt to changing circumstances, willingness to take risks, welcoming job and organisational changes, ability to handle work problems, and the desire to work with new and different people. Items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale, from 1=low to 5=high. In a similar vein, Noe, Noe and Bachhuber (1990) proposed a 26-item measure assessing the dimensions proposed in the London's model (1983) and using a similar response scale, where the items measuring career resilience (13) include the notions of making uncalled suggestions to others, maintenance of friendships with people working in different departments of the same organisation, the design of better work procedures, the proactive outlining of ways of accomplishing jobs, and the dedication to do the best job on a task. Grzeda and Prince (1997) elaborated a 14-item scale to measure career resilience, which results from a combination of the resilience items of the two inventories previously mentioned, resulting from a study in which these authors investigated the convergent and discriminant validity for these items in a sample of 94 Canadian managers. Fourie and Van Vuuren (1998) constructed the Career Resilience Questionnaire, a 45-item measure of the cognitive, affective, and behavioural components of career resilience comprising four dimensions,: a) belief in oneself; b) own success ethic, disregarding traditional sources of career success; c) self-reliance, and; d) receptivity to change.

However, London himself suggested that there are more dynamic strategies and procedures to study career motivation and resilience, although they may be time and resources consuming. Along with Bray (1984) he developed a 2-day assessment center that encompassed the use of several and complementary techniques. All the test results and written responses to the exercises were rated by several specialists in the three dimensions of career motivation.

Nevertheless, the most interesting proposal regarding both the assessment and development of career resilience during critical transitions (and which is clearly aligned with the study of resilience as a developmental process) was presented by Hirschi (2012), when he devised a career resources model, aiming at the facilitation of career self-management, encompassing four types of critical resources: a) human capital resources (factors such as formal, non-formal and informal education, experience and training, and cognitive ability, all of which equip the individuals to fit the expectations to perform different occupations); b) social resources or social capital (the structure and content of the individuals' social relations networks and that provide them with the material, instrumental and emotional supports needed to adequately face both their normative and unanticipated transitions); c) psychological resources (positive motivational, cognitive and emotional traits and states, which are not only expressed in work roles, but generalized to the overall psychological functioning, fostering the persistence in the overcoming of obstacles and promoting a flourishing motivational orientation and optimal development), and; d) career identity resources (the assessment of the assets that are closely related to their career construction process, such as interests, aptitudes, abilities, values, goals, structure of meaning, and so on).

Following the ideas expressed by London and Noe (1997), taken together, these resources might help the individuals overcome frame-breaking changes (either internally caused or externally caused, such as unsuccessful job-seeking or the need to adapt to working contexts that do not fit their formal education and training path), and set them to perceive these changes as being positive opportunities to attain increasing outcomes or as positive transitions that bring about transformational changes (e.g. fostering strategic reasoning or planning) and unforeseen, albeit highly desired, career changes.

**Conclusion**

In the future, theory and research should look to make proposals and investigations, which take into account a wider scope of variables which affect the vocational behaviour of human diversity, idiosyncrasy, ethnics and culture. After all, “career paths and behaviours are a function of many individual and contextual factors that are not under the control of the individual or cannot be rapidly modified” (Rossier, 2015, p.161). In the new millennium, research must encompass and account for diversity and paradigms, methodologies and population studies are the tools, which we readily have at our disposal.

There is space for further exploration down the path of some of the ideas, which are inherent to this conceptualisation of career adaptability, employability and career resilience in managing school-to-work transitions. These three concepts are not only useful in predicting career success, but also in identifying and helping individuals to develop competencies required for success – adaptability in the life long process of personal development.

Employability, as previously mentioned, is still a broad term, which is given a very wide interpretation. This does not facilitate the comparability of the results coming from diverse disciplinary views on the construct, although the recent trend focusing on the operationalization of its psychological dimensions (e.g., internal resources such as openness to changes, proactivity) and contextual factors (e.g., labour market conditions) is a good promise for the future.

Considering the study of career resilience in the transition process, adversities can range from long-term chronic stressors (e.g. mental health problems), to short-term acute stressors (e.g. not being successful in the implementation of their current choice) and traumatic stressful events (e.g. being the victim of harassment in educational or work settings). The exposure to some of these risks might bear immediate strong effects that dissipate over time, while the exposure to other risk conditions might only be revealed in the vulnerabilities that the individuals display in the long run. The negative outcomes might, thus, vary according to these exposures, and the assets and resources required to overcome them are, eventually, also different. Only longitudinal study designs will properly address these complex interactions between risks, assets and resources, and outcomes, and longitudinal studies are scarce in the study of career resilience. Considerable developmental research on career resilience is still needed if we want to fully understand its correlates, antecedents and consequences and, thereof, outline substantive implications for healthier life designs.

Our review has disclosed a still substantial overlap among the three constructs covered in this chapter. More conceptual and further empirical work should help disentangle this unclear matter. Moreover, the analyses of data must be based on an idiographic (as opposed to nomothetic) definition of success. Guidance and counselling are contextual in nature, therefore implying an awareness of personal ´style` (values and goals) and of the historical environment in which the individual has to intervene and make changes. To put it another way, we much forge a close relationship between guidance and counseling within socio-cultural contexts.

Adaptability, employability and resilience must not only serve the purpose of predicting success (a question of ranking), but these concepts must help us to capitalise on our strengths and/or counterbalance our weaknesses (a sense of equilibrium).

The progressively increasing importance of constructivist approaches to career counseling also determines a developing emphasis on dimensions and variables, which are subjective in nature, such as satisfaction or idiographic definitions of success, rather than objectively evaluated achievements and outcomes. Guidance and counselling do not simply aim to describe and explain behaviour, but rather look address major issues of adaptation in the sense of wellbeing and the making of an adjustment.

We cannot forget or ignore the fact that the ever-evolving reality of the 21st century makes no exceptions in pushing us towards an integrative and comprehensive perspective across all fields of knowledge and intervention.

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