If Ego Identity is the Envelope then Adaptive Change Is the Note to Self:

Scaffolding the Career Choices of Adolescents.

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Abstract

The first aim of the current paper is to primarily propose a model to assist career counsellors to understand and guide adolescents towards career commitment. The second aim of the paper is to focus on the relationship between career identity and career certainty and how these positively influence the achievement of ego identity and maturity. Finally, it is proposed that systematically applying a model of adaptive change will prompt adolescents to explore and understand their career options with greater certainty. Applying such a model provides career counsellors with a practical framework to guide adolescents with their career choices.

Keywords: Adaptive Change; Career Decidedness; Career identity; Adolescent transition;
Adolescent Identity; Identity Formation

Résumé. Si l'ego identitaire est l'enveloppe, l'adaptation au changement est la note personnelle: Concevoir les choix de carrière des adolescents

Premièrement, cette étude propose un modèle permettant d'aider les conseillers en orientation à comprendre et guider les adolescents vers un engagement professionnel. Le second objectif de cet article est de se focaliser sur la relation entre l'identité et la stabilité professionnelle, ainsi que sur la manière dont elles influencent positivement l'atteinte du moi identitaire et de la maturité. Pour conclure, il est proposé que l'application systématique d'un modèle de changement adaptatif encouragera les adolescents à explorer et comprendre leurs options de carrières avec une plus grande certitude. L'application d'un tel modèle offre un cadre pratique aux conseillers en orientation pour guider les adolescents dans leurs choix de carrière.

Zusammenfassung. Wenn die Ego-Identität der Umschlag ist, dann ist die adaptive Anpassung die Notiz an das Selbst: Ein Gerüst für Karriereentscheidungen junger Erwachsener

Das erste Ziel der vorliegenden Studie ist primär ein Modell vorzustellen, das Karriereberatern hilft junge Erwachsene zu verstehen und deren berufliches Engagement zu fördern. Das zweite Ziel der Studie ist es,

auf die Beziehung zwischen Karriere-Identität und Karrieresicherheit zu fokussieren und darauf, wie diese das Erreichen von Ego-Identität und Reife positiv beeinflussen. Schliesslich wird vorgeschlagen, dass die systematische Anwendung des Modells für adaptive Anpassung junge Erwachsene veranlasst, ihre Karriereoptionen zu erforschen und mit grösserer Sicherheit zu verstehen. Ein solches Model anzuwenden gibt Karriereberatern den praktischen Rahmen um junge Erwachsene und ihre Karriereentscheidungen zu begleiten.

Resumen. Si el Ego de identidad es el sobre, entonces el cambio adaptativo es la Nota Personal: El andamio de las opciones de carrera de los adolescentes

El primer objetivo del presente trabajo es proponer un modelo para ayudar a los orientadores laborales a entender y guiar a los adolescentes hacia el compromiso de una carrera profesional. El segundo objetivo de este trabajo es centrarse en la relación entre la identidad y la certeza de la carrera y cómo éstas influyen positivamente en el logro de la identidad del yo y la madurez. Por último, se propone que la aplicación sistemática de un modelo de cambio adaptativo llevará a los adolescentes a explorar y entender sus opciones de carrera profesional con mayor certeza. La aplicación de un modelo de este tipo proporciona a los orientadores laborales un marco práctico para guiar a los adolescentes en sus opciones de carrera profesional.

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The period of adolescence is a transitional developmental period in which young individuals are able to explore and confirm their career trajectories (McWhirter, Rasheed, & Crothers, 2000; Negru-Subtirica, Pop, & Crocetti, 2015; Novakovic & Fouad, 2013). The exploration of career opportunities typically occurs during adolescence when adolescents are learning about their individual identity (Cheung, Wan, Fan, Leong, & Mok, 2013; Heckhausen, Chang, Greenberger, & Chen, 2013; Porfeli & Lee, 2012). Through exploration, selection, and experimentation, adolescents gain the confidence to engage and commit to activities which inform their career trajectory (Cheung et al., 2013; Ladany, Melincoff, Constantine, & Love, 1997). The problem being addressed here is sufficiency of processes used to make life-impacting decisions such as career choice during adolescence. The impact of career certainty, the decision-making hurdles encountered, the importance of developing adaptive future career pathways, and the impact of developing an adult and career identity at adolescence will be discussed. This review will then discuss the development of career pathways through the lens of the Adaptive Change Model (ACM; Bowles, 2006). It will be argued that the ACM is an eight-factor model that includes five processes or stages that people go through to make changes, such as career choice in adolescence. Using a systematic and ordered approach builds a foundation for career choice and career certainty. The ACM also has three factors that can be used to assist in thoroughly applying the process factors, which will also be discussed.

One of the most important developmental milestones made during the transition from adolescents to adulthood is achieving career decidedness (the point of deciding and level of determination on a career), and a level of career commitment (becoming committed to a career or pathway) to a career identity (Fernandes & Bance, 2015; Porfeli & Lee, 2012). Low levels of an adolescent's career certainty which is usually accompanied by confusion and possibly resistance often cause adolescents, parents, and school administrators considerable anxiety. These concerns are valid as there are adolescents who fail to utilise good decision-making practices during this period and may experience episodes of profound indecision having consequences which last into early adulthood or longer (Fernandes & Bance, 2015; Porfeli & Lee, 2012). Even students who have made apparently certain choices may not be making such decisions soundly. For example, some individuals have been found to prematurely commit to a career pathway without appropriate career exploration which can have negative outcomes for the individual (Ladany et al., 1997). The development of a career choice is further complicated with the development of both a career identity and a future adult identity. A career or vocational identity "is one's self-definition in the career context, describing "who I am" or "who I want to be." Career identity acts as a cognitive compass that motivates an adolescent to actively adapt in order to realize (or create) opportunities that match one's aspirations (Ashforth & Fugate, 2001). Previous research supports the notion that career identity development and ego identity development enhance and are enhanced by each other and the maturity observed as adolescents transition into adulthood (Negru-Subtirica et al., 2015; Stringer et al., 2011). As a result, it is not surprising that an individual's psychosocial maturity is predictive of the individual reaching their career objective (Benson, Johnson, & Elder, 2012). Therefore, it is important when considering the development of adolescent career commitment that it is placed within the context of an individual's career identity and their emerging adult identity.

Career and Ego Identity

The way in which the career development tasks are approached by an adolescent is entwined with their career identity (Negru-Subtirica et al., 2015). This means that both of these dimensions are advantageous to explore when drawing conclusions regarding personal career goals (Negru-Subtirica et al., 2015). A theoretical explanation of the intersection between ego identity development and career development was provided by Erikson (1950) and Marcia (1966), and subsequently by their colleagues. Erikson's (1950) theory of identity formation suggests that identity formation is the core development task of individual's within the adolescent age bracket (Crocetti, Jahromi, & Meeus, 2012; Meeus et al., 2010). Erikson's theory was later operationalised by Marcia (1966) who focused on the exploration and commitment elements of identity formation (Crocetti et al., 2015; Crocetti et al., 2012; Meeus et al., 2010). Correspondingly other age appropriate challenges inform and are informed by the level of ego identity formation. The challenge and process of career exploration often results in career commitment which is associated with ego identity enhancement or achievement (Ladany et al., 1997). Marcia's (1966) theory contains four identity states which are achievement, foreclosure, moratorium, and diffusion each of which will be discussed in the context of career development (Crocetti et al., 2015). Achievement as a stage of ego and career development is reached when an individual achieves stability regarding their career commitment following a period of exploration into their potential career opportunities (Crocetti et al., 2012). Achievement is represented by real resolution and stability and is only achieved after considerable working through of sometimes complex processes for most adolescents. Ego identity is informed by and informs career identity in an often mutually experimental manner, in much the same way as other selves are explored (Strauss, Griffin, & Parker, 2012). However, in the experimenting and expanding of possibilities through to the discernment of best options adaptability and flexibility are central for both the first and future career identities (Porfeli & Savickas, 2012; Strauss et al, 2012). So, if ego identity envelopes (and is informed by career identity and other possible selves), the note to self is to be constantly adaptable to and open to possibilities of change in self and career options, at every age.

Career Commitment: Enhancing Career and Ego Identity

Marcia's (1966) explanation of ego identity showed that there are pitfalls and alternatives to achieving a commitment. For example, foreclosure in the present context, is a strong commitment to a vocational pathway without active exploration into other career opportunities. Moratorium is the exploration of a range of vocational possibilities devoid of any career commitment. Diffusion is when an individual does not undergo any systematic exploration or commitment in regards to their possible career pathways (Crocetti et al., 2015; Crocetti et al., 2012; Meeus et al., 2010). When an individual is experiencing diffusion in this context, they avoid making identity related decisions for as long as possible (Dietrich et al., 2013). Each of the identity stages are useful in determining an individual's progression towards identity formation, formation of a career identity, exploration, and commitment in the context of developing an appropriate career identity and trajectory. Therefore, the note to self, for the adolescent is to remind themselves of the benefits of openly testing their career preferences before they make a firm decision and move towards a career identity.

One method of developing an understanding of career identity is by prompting adolescents to work through a structured change process which guides the adolescent primarily through selection and decision-making strategies (Kunnen, 2013). Systematically working through such a process regarding career possibilities promotes consideration of change towards the future, secondarily prompting the student towards a more mature identity. A study by Dietrich et al. (2013) found that students who had achieved career decidedness upon entering college demonstrated higher academic wellbeing than those who were either in the selection process or

those who were still devising a career pathway. Career decidedness has also been associated with increased wellbeing and academic success and successfully completing the transition into adulthood (Heckhausen et al., 2013).

A sound career decision process is one with ample exploration and searching and resulting in a clear commitment (Porfeli & Lee, 2012) that has been well tested (e.g., by work experience) and provides a good fit for the adolescent (e.g., the pre-requisite courses are available to the adolescent and they can achieve satisfactorily to continue the trajectory to a career). For some adolescents, attempting this transition to commitment is more difficult than for others (Ladany et al., 1997). Those who struggle with this transition are at increased risk of becoming marginalized as a result of inadequate career training (Heckhausen et al., 2013). Assisting adolescents in this transition has benefits for the individual in career and general identity formation. Recent research showed that participants in a guided career choice program showed a significant increase in commitment strength in both career and personal identity domains, as well as increases in general identity (Kunnen, 2013). Hence, the challenge for the career counsellor is to systematically prompt and nudge the student to explore by adopting a sufficiently complex model which leads to career commitment (Porfeli & Lee, 2012).

One method for assisting adolescents during this transition is by prompting them to consider possible careers through the filter of a generic model of change to establish whether the change they anticipate will also bring the commitment to the tasks required to qualify for the career. This can be achieved by systematically addressing each of the factors of the Adaptive Change Model (ACM; Bowles, 2006)

as teaching elements to consider during career selection. The ACM describes how choices towards change are made and provide a useful way to frame and understand the foundation of an adolescent's career trajectories (Creed et al., 2003; Dietrich et al., 2013; Ladany et al., 1997). Assisting students to be more prepared and more adaptable builds a sense of power (Hirschi, 2009) with career planning and decision-making associated with building career confidence (Stringer, Kerpelman, & Skorikov, 2011) and prompts career identity (Praskova, Creed, & Hood, 2015). Prompting adaptability in career selection has been shown to positively influence career identity and adjustment (Negru-Subtirica et al., 2015; Skorikov, 2007). Therefore assisting students to use a systematic process such as the ACM will 1) prompt greater discernment, deliberation and decision-making and commitment towards selection of a career, or 2) destabilize and disrupt their previous conceptions and 3) prompt further, more elaborate career exploration and subsequently commitment, or 4) finding even more elaborate ways of making career decisions. Figure (1) contains a graphical representation of the transition through the change processes. This is followed by a description of the change processes and their relevant support factors in the context of informing adolescent career trajectories.

[Insert Figure 1.]

The ACM consists of five stages of change including Openness to Opportunity, Visualization, Planning, Action, and Closure that can be used by career counsellors to assist students to understand the process towards career commitment (Bowles, 2006, 2010, 2012; Bowles & Hattie, 2013). The factors or stages of the adaptive change model provide a useful method for prompting adolescents to remain open to career opportunities (Openness to Opportunity factor), to visualise prospective occupations (Visualization factor), and experiment with ideas about career options. Importantly, students should not foreclose but

remain open to alternatives and test ideas about multiple possible careers. At each stage of the process possibilities are considered and refined and up until the planning stage the selection process can be very fluid with some careers swapped around until rejected (left moving arrows). When there seems to be no options it is very important that students do not disengage and move into a moratorium but revert to previous processes (up-curving arrow) to consider options anew or revise previously less preferred career possibilities. Once there is sufficient commitment and one or a limited number of careers coalesce plans can begin to be made (Planning factor), to formally organize and establish what, when and how to take action (Action factor), as well as knowing when they have made a choice towards the most likely, ‘best-fitting’ possible careers. Closure of this specific change process occurs when a career is achieved or when major milestones towards achieving that goal are achieved (Closure factor; Dietrich et al., 2013; Ladany et al., 1997) such as graduation, completion of an apprenticeship, or entry to work. The stages follow a sequence and are represented by the large down arrows in the figure. The sequence is not prescriptive and may overlap considerably, however applying them as a sequence, as they are independent factors, brings order, efficiency, and discipline to the development of career certainty. They also provide a vocabulary and a means to discuss the stage and the operation and use of the support factors. The left swinging arrows (figure 1) indicate students who have abandoned the endeavor to seek a career – which is to be avoided. Instead the best thing for a student who decides that they can no longer pursue a career is to move to one of the previous stages (upswing arrows) under the guidance of a career counselor and consider the next most appealing option and then follow through to planning, action, and closure. The task of staying focused while moving from one possible career to another requires management of negative emotions, like frustration and disappointment (e.g., when grades don’t meet pre-requisites), a lot of inner drive to sustain the interest and assistance from others. So the five processes are individually influenced by the three support factors of social support, maintaining inner drive, and managing negative emotions (figure 1, right to left moving arrows. Below is a more complete definition of the eight factors in the model and an example of how they work together.

Process Factors Applied to the Formation of a Career Trajectory

Exploring future career opportunities at any age create a disequilibrium which must then be addressed ideally through a framework such as the ACM or through less proactive means (Bowles & Fallon, 2006; Kim, 2013). When experienced adaptively, the process factors of the ACM are useful as they disrupt the current trajectory and prompt consideration of options and processes which guide towards clarifying possibilities, change, and career choices or reconsidering old choices (Bowles, 2006). For example, individuals who were concerned and curious about their career future (Openness to Opportunities factor and Visualization factor), who demonstrate personal control and confidence (Inner Drive factor) are reported to have experienced fewer career barriers and were more successful in regards to achieving their career intentions (Planning/Action; Negru-Subtirica et al., 2015). In this review it is argued that the application of the ACM in order to assist adolescents with a systematic approach to the development of their career trajectory begins with being open to possibilities and opportunities, even at a young age.

Openness to opportunity.

Being open to the opportunity of change is often the preliminary stage, too quickly achieved or disregarded requires an individual to become open to the opportunity of change. During this process an adolescent will be prompted towards many future career opportunities and become open to the broadest possibilities of potential career pathways. It is essential that an adolescent is open to the change process in order to reduce resistance and distraction from the development of their career identity. Further, considering the broadest possible careers from the outset

ensures that there are fewer false starts before finding the career which works and build confidence that a thorough exploration has occurred before making a commitment. Career counsellors can assist students not to foreclose and to remain watchful of how people go about their work and try to understand the motivations rewards and costs of various types of suitable work for the adolescent.

Visualization.

The second stage of the ACM is known as the Visualisation stage in which the adolescent visualises the relevant opportunities. In this stage it is ideal that an adolescent is able to conceive, ideally visually, the relevant outcomes related to developing their career path (Fernandes & Bance, 2015) and identify with those they know who currently do such work. It is through this visualisation process that the individual is able to consider various career outcomes and as a result explore and plan their career opportunities. Career counsellors can set various tasks emphasizing the exploratory and information gathering (and not decision-making) aspects of the process at this stage. Career counsellors can prompt visual data gathering, imagining, and experiencing. Any work experience activities that continue to broaden the exploration of the adolescent's understanding of what the occupation involves and themselves doing it, under the guidance of a career counsellor is worthwhile at this stage.

Planning.

During the Planning stage, the individual prepares a reasonable response to developing a direction to a career (Gollwitzer, 1999) with the assistance of a career counsellor. In the context of forming a career identity, the planning process requires the individual to plan a pathway which meets the requirements of their desired career

outcome. Careful planning is required in order to appropriately prepare and understand prior to committing to a career trajectory (Stringer et al., 2011). Planning requires effort and thought to consider the possibilities from the previous two stages. Sorting, ranking, and short-listing are activities that occur during the planning stage. The ACM therefore assists adolescents to construct a plan based on previous conscious consideration of options which can then be utilised to achieve their career goals. Career counsellors could help adolescents to see the worth of two or three possible plans to provide exit points from education and entry points to career, along a career preference continuum. At the Planning stage as many elements as possible need to be considered prior to shortening the list based on these elements. Consideration of constraints such as, competencies and personal preferences, difficulty of course and desire to study, cost and income once working exemplify the considerations that need to be brought to mind during the planning stage. The end of the Planning stage forms the foundation on which action is taken. Career counsellors now help the adolescent to focus less on exploration and observation of present possibilities and move towards setting about firming pathways into the future.

Action.

The Action stage is characterised by the individual implementing the plan conceptualised in the previous stage and proceeding from a growing commitment shown through actions focused on the future such as selection of subject preferences in mind (Bowles, 2006, 2012). It is important that the action stage is informed by these previous stages as without this deliberation to underpin and sort possibilities before this action orientated stage, the act of action taking may be impulsive, ill-informed, poorly planned, and problematic. From the point of commitment to the

achievement it is important to ensure that the adolescents maintain their inner drive to attend the various hurdles and have advice and support from career counsellors when revision of the planned career trajectory is required.

Closure.

The final stage of the change process is the *Closure* stage whereby the individual focuses on completing the tasks and meeting some indicator of achievement (Bowles, 2006, 2010). At the skill and performance level it is where a degree of automaticity or habituation is achieved. Typically, this stage is seen as the completion or the end of the change processes. At the completion of the process, having systematically considered a range of options and alternatives, an individual achieves a period of career commitment in which they have committed to a vocation (Cheung et al., 2013; Porfeli & Lee, 2012). In terms of careers where there are multiple steps and years required, the initial stage of closure, may be manifest as selecting specific subjects or courses. The final closure point would be graduating and finding work. Between these points plans may be modified, returning to various earlier stages to change direction and repeat various subsequent stages, but never giving up.

The Three Support Factors

In addition to the process factors, the ACM also has three support factors which are envisioned to assist one or each of the change factors. These support factors are Managing Negative Emotion, Inner Drive, and Social Support (Bowles, 2006, 2012; Bowles & Hattie, 2013). The support factors act as key facilitating factors in developing certainty around career identity for adolescents.

Social support.

Social support is an integral element for supporting the process factors and must be consistent, timely, practical, and promote independence (Bowles, 2006; Scull & Johnson, 2000; Prochaska, 2006). Individuals who have less access to resources and fewer social supports are more likely to have poorer career outcomes compared to those with access to social support factors (Creed et al., 2010). Research has found that parents, relatives, teachers, and peers are important support networks for adolescents as they are developing their career trajectory (Fernandes & Bance, 2015). In particular, the importance of career counsellors in orienting students and managing their adaptability throughout the process of career choice is central.

Inner drive.

The second support factor, inner drive, is the motivating force which underpins the process of exploration of career possibilities. This is the support factor which gives purpose and force behind the adaptive change process. Inner drive is required in this context as an individual who is not motivated or persistent may struggle with the process of developing a career pathway over the years required. Correspondingly, social support may be required to bolster and focus the student on their chosen path or default to exit arrows of the change process (figure 1). High levels of motivational engagement in career choices have been found to be predictive of both successful outcomes and higher psychological wellbeing (Heckhausen et al., 2013). At times such motivation needs to be strengthened and maintained if career goals are to be achieved and family and career counsellors are central to maintaining high levels of motivation such as an adolescent's inner drive.

Managing negative emotions.

The final support factor, managing negative emotions, refers to emotions such as anger, guilt, fear, anxiety, and despair which can undermine the change process (Bowles, 2006). Successful management of these emotions is critical as negative emotions will compromise or delay the adaptive change process as well as future career choices and commitment (Adams, Hayes, & Hopson, 1976). Although moderate levels of negative emotions can be managed and utilized to prompt readiness to change, minimising an individual's experience of negative emotions is important for optimising the change process (Bowles, 2010; Bowles & Hattie, 2013). If each of the support factors are present and applied in conjunction with each stage of the change process, this will increase the individual's propensity for adaptive change or in this context, the exploration, planning, and decidedness of a positive vocational path (Bowles, 2006; Bowles, 2010).

Adaptive change profiles: Innovators, Adaptors, and Stabilisers

The ACM also provides an adaptive change profile, which can be used to facilitate the change process (Bowles, 2010, 2012, 2013). Kirton's (1976, 2006) adaptor-innovator theory was extended by Bowles and Hattie (2013) to create three adaptive change profiles namely Stabilisers, Adaptors, and Innovators which are envisioned to sit on a continuum. Stabilisers are individuals who prefer stability and are less prone to change (Bowles & Hattie, 2013). Adaptors are systematic in nature and enjoy structured patterns achieved ordered change (Kirton, 1976, 2006). The final typology is the Innovator who is explorers and enjoys novel situations and solutions to problems and risk-taking (Bowles & Hattie, 2013). Identification with an adaptive

change profile may provide some insights into the identity of the adolescent and their propensity for change. When comparing each of the adaptive change typologies with the stages of Marcia's (1966) identity statuses (achievement, foreclosure, moratorium, and diffusion). It could be construed that each of the adaptive change typologies are likely to be prone to exhibiting different identity statuses. For example, as Innovators are explorative, freethinkers and enjoy novel solutions it is possible that this propensity towards exploration may result in these individuals typically reaching Marcia's (1966) moratorium stage as they continuously explore career opportunities without any commitment (Bowles & Hattie, 2013; Crocetti et al., 2012). Stabilisers however, are more likely to form a strong commitment to a career pathway possibly without active exploration or appropriate planning and action (foreclosure; Marcia, 1966) as these individuals prefer stability and are less prone to change (Bowles & Hattie, 2013). In regards to the Adaptor typology, as these individuals are systematic in nature however not necessarily conformists (Kirton, 1976, 2006), these individuals are likely to be associated with Marcia's (1966) achievement status whereby the individual makes a career commitment following a period of career exploration and careful judgements (Crocetti et al., 2012). Further research is required, however, to establish and validate the relationship between Marcia's (1966) identity statuses and the adaptive change typologies.

The Contradiction of Simultaneously Holding Career Commitment with Adaptability Into an Unknown Future

Preparation for a career is very confusing at present for adolescents as a strong commitment to a career is necessary to sustain them through the courses, training, and justification for the investment and cost of the education that is preparatory for work.

At the same time educational and training institutions are responding to policies indicating that many of the jobs and industries being considered by adolescents may not be there in future (CEDA, 2015). This means that students need to test their career choices and develop adaptability to ensure that they are making good choices, not impulsively choosing and making poor choices that will result in unsustainable commitment or unnecessary schooling. However, this commitment needs to be tempered liberally with the potential future need for the re-application of adaptability if the need for retraining and a second and third career is necessary across the lifespan. Consequently, the commitment to a career may need to be high but only for a short time as the capacity of the adolescent to be adaptable and flexible in future may also need to be high to change careers, places of work or types of work within a career. These are two ideas difficult to hold concurrently and the only solution is confidence built on the note to self: learn the processes to be adaptable and apply them in career choice and life generally.

Conclusion

It has been argued that career counsellors could use a model to prompt consideration of career choice and that a student's individual identity and their career identity will merge and integrate (Negru-Subtirica et al., 2015; Stringer et al., 2011) and mature by doing so. It is suggested that developing a strong identity is enhanced by experimenting with one's career identity and developing certainty and confirming commitment to preferred careers and pathways (Crocetti et al., 2015). Accepting that students may begin their career search activities from one of four identity formations related to careers: achievement, foreclosure, moratorium, or diffusion (Crocetti et al., 2015; Marcia, 1966) means career counsellors can understand the individual beginning point for any career selection. The experimentation of ideas might be

prompted and ordered through the application of the ACM or other prompts resulting in some certainty to guide the future actions of the student. Importantly for adolescents, what is essential is the motivation (Inner Drive) to simply keep trying to find a worthwhile career and to fall-back on positive options with social support, most importantly good career counselling advice and help to manage the negative emotions and experiences by reconceiving the plan and trajectory towards an alternative career. The value added by the ACM is its comprehensiveness and systematic focus on active change towards a career, as well as the relevance of the support factors of inner drive, social support and management of negative emotions that can prompt, sustain, and hold adolescents as they determine their career. It provides a way of imagining and provides a vocabulary for identifying where an adolescent might be in the transition to career commitment.

The aim of the present paper was to argue the benefits of considering career identity in conjunction with general identity development. A second aim was to show how a systematic model of change may be used to assist in the development of career certainty thereby enhancing career and general identity. It was argued that the ACM can be used to assist adolescents to become more certain in regards to their career choices. One of the benefits of applying the ACM in this context is that through the use of this model a considered and planned set of future possibilities are brought to the attention of the relevant parties which creates opportunities to be strategic in regards to developing career trajectories. Importantly, it places the locus of control (Jain & Singh, 2015) for the tasks required with the adolescent with the guidance and support of career counsellors and significant others. Systematic career selection and commitment results in better knowing the self and knowing how to express one's self

and one's preferences which impacts on the whole of life (Blustein, 2013). Future research should attempt to ascertain an in-depth understanding regarding the relationship between student identity, career identity and adult identity through the lens of the ACM as a prompt for career related decision-making processes.

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Career Exploration Begins

Figure 1. The Transition Through the Stages of Change with Support Factors.

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