



Administering Career Construction Counselling to a Disadvantaged Rural Learner with Inadequate Self-Efficacy

by

Anathi Mazongolo

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Supervisor:

Prof. J. G. Maree

PRETORIA

December 2023

DECLARATION

Name of student: **Anathi Mazongolo**

Student number: **21475378**

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| DEGREE AND PROJECT | MEd Administering career construction counselling to a disadvantaged rural learner with inadequate self-efficacy |
| INVESTIGATOR | Ms. Anathi Mazongolo |
| DEPARTMENT | Educational Psychology |
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| DATE OF CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE | 23 November 2023 |
| CHAIRPERSON OF ETHICS COMMITTEE: Prof Funke Omidire | |
|  | |
| Mr Simon Jiane Prof. J.G Maree | |

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Yours sincerely



Dr. Dimpho Kokome (PhD)

deekokome@gmail.com

DECLARATION FROM LANGUAGE AND TECHNICAL EDITOR

Richard van Rensburg

Language Editing Services

Richard.Leslievan@gmail.com

0728212151

CERTIFICATE OF EDITING

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DEDICATION

I dedicated this research to my late father. Daddy, I made it. I hope you are in a better place.
My father was the first who taught me how to read.

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to assess the effectiveness of career construction counselling on a rural disadvantaged learner with inadequate self-efficacy who is ready to embark on a career. Learners from environments challenged by disadvantages face many challenges that are unique to their environment. Maree and Che (2020) stated that learners from such environments tend to feel disempowered by the situation in which they find themselves – unemployment, for instance, is a common characteristic of such situations. Consequently, many learners are left uncertain about their future, and at the same time, their career identity is impaired. Bandura (1977) explained that individuals' achievements are shaped by the dynamic interplay among their behaviour, personal factors, and the environment.

An investigation into the influence of career construction counselling on the contextual experiences of the participant was informed by career construction theory (Savickas, 2005) and self-construction theory (Guichard & Lenz, 2005), which are both based on the constructivist paradigm. Enhancing the resources available to participants is crucial, especially considering that career trajectories are shaped by a combination of individual and contextual factors. To investigate this, the study adopted a qualitative research approach using an intrinsic case study design. The study sampled a single disadvantaged participant between the ages of 18 and 25 from Pietermaritzburg in KwaZulu-Natal. To ensure the accuracy of the data, multiple data generation methods were used including semi-structured interviews, qualitative career assessments, observation of body language, and extensive field notes. The data for the study was analysed using thematic analysis as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). Throughout the research process, I adhered to the ethical standards outlined by the Health Professions Council of South Africa (2016).

The findings of the study suggested that the self-efficacy of the participant was significantly enhanced through the intervention, meaning that the working assumptions and research questions have been successfully answered. The participant appreciated the skills that he learned from the intervention and recommended it for other people in his peer groups.

Key Phrases: career construction counselling, life design, rural disadvantaged learner, self-efficacy

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-------------|
| DECLARATION..... | i |
| ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE | ii |
| ETHICS STATEMENT | iii |
| DECLARATION FROM EXTERNAL CODER..... | iv |
| DECLARATION FROM LANGUAGE AND TECHNICAL EDITOR..... | v |
| DEDICATION..... | vi |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS | vii |
| ABSTRACT..... | viii |
| TABLE OF CONTENTS | ix |
| LIST OF TABLES | xiv |
| LIST OF FIGURES | xv |
| LIST OF APPENDICES | xvi |
| LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS | xvii |
| CHAPTER 1: GENERAL ORIENTATION..... | 1 |
| 1.1 Introduction and Rationale | 1 |
| 1.2 Preliminary Literature Review | 1 |
| 1.2.1 <i>Recent Developments in Career Education and Support</i> | 2 |
| 1.2.2 <i>Challenges in the Implementation of Career Counselling</i> | 3 |
| 1.2.3 <i>Narrative Counselling</i> | 3 |
| 1.2.4 <i>The Ever-Changing World of Work</i> | 4 |
| 1.2.5 <i>Life-Design Career Counselling</i> | 6 |
| 1.3 The Particularly Challenging Situation of Rural Disadvantaged Learners | 7 |
| 1.4 Self-Efficacy and Disadvantages | 9 |
| 1.5 Purpose of the Study | 9 |
| 1.6 Research Questions..... | 10 |
| 1.7 Working Assumptions | 10 |
| 1.8 Concept Clarification..... | 11 |
| 1.8.1 <i>Career Construction Counselling</i> | 11 |

| | | |
|---|---|-----------|
| 1.8.2 | <i>Life Design</i> | 11 |
| 1.8.3 | <i>Self-efficacy</i> | 11 |
| 1.8.4 | <i>Disadvantaged Learners</i> | 12 |
| 1.9 | Epistemology of the Study..... | 12 |
| 1.9.1 | <i>Research Methods and Design</i> | 12 |
| 1.9.2 | <i>Data and Gathering Instruments</i> | 12 |
| 1.9.3 | <i>Data Analysis and Interpretation</i> | 13 |
| 1.10 | Quality Criteria..... | 13 |
| 1.11 | Ethical Considerations..... | 13 |
| 1.12 | Format of the Study..... | 14 |
| 1.13 | Conclusion..... | 14 |
| CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW | | 16 |
| 2.1 | Introduction..... | 16 |
| 2.2 | Successive Industrial Revolutions | 16 |
| 2.2.1 | <i>The First Industrial Revolution</i> | 18 |
| 2.2.2 | <i>The Second Industrial Revolution</i> | 18 |
| 2.2.3 | <i>The Third Industrial Revolution</i> | 18 |
| 2.2.4 | <i>The Fourth Industrial Revolution</i> | 18 |
| 2.2.5 | <i>Brief Discussion of the Industrial Revolution and Changes in the World of Work</i> | 19 |
| 2.3 | Major Traditional Career Theories | 20 |
| 2.3.1 | <i>Person-Environment-Fit/Theories Trait-and-Factor Model</i> | 20 |
| 2.3.2 | <i>Lifespan Developmental Theory</i> | 21 |
| 2.3.4 | <i>Cognitive Behavioural Theories</i> | 22 |
| 2.4 | Postmodern Career Approaches | 23 |
| 2.4.1 | <i>Life Design and Career Construction</i> | 23 |
| 2.5 | Life Design: Objectives and Interventions | 26 |
| 2.5.1 | <i>Objectives of Life Design Counselling</i> | 26 |
| 2.5.2 | <i>Adaptability</i> | 26 |
| 2.5.3 | <i>Narratability</i> | 27 |
| 2.5.4 | <i>Activity</i> | 28 |
| 2.6 | Overview of Self-Efficacy | 28 |
| 2.6.1 | <i>Definition</i> | 29 |

| | | |
|--|--|-----------|
| 2.6.2 | <i>Sources of Self-Efficacy</i> | 29 |
| 2.6.3 | <i>The Self-Efficacy of Rural Disadvantaged Learners</i> | 30 |
| 2.6.4 | <i>Research on the Effectiveness of Life Design on Self-Efficacy of Rural Disadvantaged Learners</i> | 30 |
| 2.7 | Contextual Factors | 31 |
| 2.7.1 | <i>Culture</i> | 32 |
| 2.7.2 | <i>Socio-Economic Status</i> | 33 |
| 2.8 | Developmental Stage and Identity Formation of Adolescence | 34 |
| 2.8.1 | <i>Research on the Outcomes of Identity Formation</i> | 34 |
| 2.8.2 | <i>Specific Needs During the Adolescence Stage</i> | 35 |
| 2.9 | Research on Learners from Environments Challenged by Disadvantages in South Africa | 35 |
| 2.9.1 | <i>Overview of the Impact of Apartheid Laws</i> | 36 |
| 2.9.2 | <i>Current Findings</i> | 36 |
| 2.9.3 | <i>The Aftermath of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Career Development of Disadvantaged Learners</i> | 38 |
| 2.10 | Gaps in the Literature on the Effectiveness of Career Construction Counselling on Rural Disadvantaged Learners | 39 |
| 2.11 | Theoretical Framework | 40 |
| 2.12 | Conclusion | 43 |
| CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY | | 44 |
| 3.1 | Introduction | 44 |
| 3.2 | Research Paradigm | 44 |
| 3.3 | Research Design | 45 |
| 3.3.1 | <i>Qualitative Research Methods</i> | 45 |
| 3.3.2 | <i>Case Study Research</i> | 46 |
| 3.4 | Research Setting | 47 |
| 3.5 | Selection of a Participant | 47 |
| 3.6 | Data Generation and Documentation | 48 |
| 3.6.1 | <i>Data Generation Plan</i> | 55 |
| 3.7 | Data Analysis and Interpretation | 56 |
| 3.8 | Quality Assurance | 58 |
| 3.8.1 | <i>Quality Assurance for Qualitative Data</i> | 58 |

| | | |
|--|---|-----------|
| 3.9 | Ethical Considerations | 60 |
| 3.9.1 | <i>Informed Consent</i> | 60 |
| 3.9.2 | <i>Confidentiality and Anonymity</i> | 61 |
| 3.9.3 | <i>Protection from Harm</i> | 61 |
| 3.9.4 | <i>Voluntary Participation</i> | 61 |
| 3.10 | Conclusion..... | 61 |
| CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS | | 62 |
| 4.1 | Introduction..... | 62 |
| 4.1.1 | <i>Overview of the Data Analysis Process</i> | 62 |
| 4.1.2 | <i>How Quotation Sources were Identified</i> | 63 |
| 4.2 | Background Information of the Participant | 64 |
| 4.3 | The Life Design Process with Hope Dlamini | 66 |
| 4.3.1 | <i>Session 1: Introductory Interview, Rapport Building and an Outline of Ethical Considerations</i> | 66 |
| 4.3.2 | <i>Session 2: The Career Interest Profile</i> | 67 |
| 4.3.3 | <i>Session 3: Earliest recollections</i> | 74 |
| 4.3.4 | <i>Session 4: Genogram and Lifeline</i> | 80 |
| 4.3.5 | <i>Session 5: Life History and a Collage</i> | 84 |
| 4.3.5 | <i>Session 6: Career Construction Interview and Reflections</i> | 85 |
| 4.3.7 | <i>Session 7: Consolidation Session</i> | 92 |
| 4.4 | Summary of Themes and Sub-Themes..... | 94 |
| 4.5 | Summary..... | 97 |
| CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS..... | | 98 |
| 5.1 | Introduction..... | 98 |
| 5.2 | Overview of the Chapters | 98 |
| 5.2.1 | <i>Chapter 1: Introduction and Orientation</i> | 98 |
| 5.2.2 | <i>Chapter 2: Literature Review</i> | 98 |
| 5.2.3 | <i>Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology</i> | 99 |
| 5.2.4 | <i>Chapter 4: Results and Discussion of Findings</i> | 99 |
| 5.3 | Answering the Research Questions | 99 |
| 5.3.1 | <i>Secondary Research Questions</i> | 100 |

| | | |
|----------------------------|---|------------|
| 5.3.2 | <i>Primary Research Question: How Effective is Career Intervention Based on Career Construction Counselling for a Rural Disadvantaged Learner to Enhance His Self-Efficacy?</i> | 103 |
| 5.4 | Limitations of the Study | 104 |
| 5.5 | Ethical Aspects | 104 |
| 5.6 | Recommendations..... | 105 |
| 5.7 | Personal Reflection..... | 105 |
| 5.8 | Conclusion | 106 |
| REFERENCE LIST..... | | 108 |
| APPENDICES | | 122 |
| Appendix A: | Lifeline..... | 122 |
| Appendix B: | Genogram | 123 |
| Appendix C: | Collage..... | 124 |
| Appendix D: | Poem | 125 |
| Appendix F: | Informed Consent | 128 |

LIST OF TABLES

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Table 1.1: | Outline of the study |
| Table 2.1: | Summary of the Four Industrial Revolutions |
| Table 3.1: | Summary of the Data Generation Methods |
| Table 3.2: | Summary of the Content of the CIP |
| Table 3.3: | Summary of the Content of the CCI |
| Table 3.4: | Data Generation plan |
| Table 3.5: | Techniques Used to Enhance Trustworthiness in the Study |
| Table 4.1: | The Three-Digit Coding System Utilised to Reference Data |
| Table 4.2: | Themes Emerging from Session 2 |
| Table 4.3: | Hope's Career Choice Preferences |
| Table 4.4: | Hope's Career Choice Dislikes |
| Table 4.5: | Themes Emerging from Session 3 |
| Table 4.6: | Themes Emerging from Session 4 |
| Table 4.7: | Themes Emerging from Session 5 |
| Table 4.8: | Themes Emerging from Session 6 |
| Table 4.9: | Career Construction Interview |
| Table 4.10: | Themes Emerging from Session 7 |

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1: The Conceptual Framework

Figure 3.1: Six Steps of Data (Content) Analysis

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A: Lifeline

Appendix B: Genogram

Appendix C: Collage

Appendix D: Poem

Appendix E: Informed Assent

Appendix F: Informed Consent

Appendix G: Turnitin report

Appendix H: Approval from the provincial Department of Education

Appendix I: Data transcript

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---------------|---------------------------------------|
| CBT: | Cognitive Behavioural Therapy |
| CCC: | Career Construction Counselling |
| CCI: | Career Construction Interview |
| CCT: | Career Construction Theory |
| CIP: | Career Interest Profile |
| ERT: | Early Recollections Technique |
| LDC: | Life Design Counselling |
| NSFAS: | National Student Financial Aid Scheme |
| REBT: | Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy |
| SCCT: | Social Cognitive Career Theory |
| SCT: | Social Cognitive Theory |
| SES: | Socio-Economic Status |

CHAPTER 1: GENERAL ORIENTATION

1.1 Introduction and Rationale

Childhood experiences significantly impact an individual's social and academic development and the construction of their views and ideals. Where children were raised contributes significantly to their formative years and profoundly impacts their overall personal and educational experiences (Wong, 2015). Growing up in a disadvantaged rural area presents opportunities and challenges quite different from those experienced in an urban area (Mensah, 2013). One of the significant differences is the contrast between the socio-economic status (SES) of the people in the two areas (Mendoza-Castejón & Clemente-Suárez, 2020). Many children in rural areas are raised in impoverished and malnourished conditions, while many in urban areas are raised in a more financially secure environment (Mendoza-Castejón & Clemente-Suárez, 2020). Apart from poverty and malnutrition, apparent and easily identifiable challenges, and other emotionally damaging behaviours, such as parental verbal abuse, are common in rural areas (Chadambuka & Warriia, 2019). Such abuse generally manifests in name-calling, humiliating criticism, and mocking (Mackowicz, 2013). When children hear negative opinions about themselves from their parents, particularly during the early childhood stages of development, they can develop a negative image of themselves and low self-esteem (Mackowicz, 2013). I, as the researcher in this study, was born and raised in such an environment, which inspired me to seek solutions to the abovementioned challenges.

In this study, I investigated the effectiveness of career construction counselling (CCC) in enhancing the self-efficacy of a rural disadvantaged learner who is ready to embark on a career. Research has shown that a CCC intervention can positively influence career decision-making, career exploration, adaptability, and career resilience, in both individuals and groups (Silva et al., 2017). Research studies on CCC interventions have been extensively conducted in Western countries and various other regions worldwide (Silva et al., 2017). In the South African context, only a handful of research studies have been conducted on self-efficacy and CCC interventions, especially with learners from marginalised and minority communities (Albien, 2019).

1.2 Preliminary Literature Review

The introductory literature included in this study encompasses South African and international trends of career counselling, as well as the challenges pertaining to the policy, theory, and practice of career education. The effectiveness of career counselling interventions

in the uncertain world of work is reviewed with particular emphasis on research findings that used postmodern approaches and included participants from disadvantaged backgrounds. Moreover, the review briefly explored the unique challenging situations the disadvantaged learners find themselves in due to their environment. Over and above, the concept of self-efficacy was concisely reviewed with special attention to the studies that were conducted in disadvantaged contexts.

1.2.1 Recent Developments in Career Education and Support

Technological advancement, contemporary transformation in the workplace, and the impact of globalisation have called for “a new conceptualisation of theory, practice, and policy in the world of work” (Schultheiss & Van Esbroeck, 2009, p. 15). Maree (2013) emphasises that in addition to theorising what is effective in career counselling, practitioners must engage extensive research and present findings about the significance of narrative counselling. These research studies can be carried out in a variety of settings including group-based settings and independent private practice with a client and facilitator (Maree, 2013). In the South African context, a handful of studies have explored the effectiveness of group-based narrative counselling with young adults from contexts challenged by disadvantages (Maree et al., 2019; Maree et al., 2022; Naidoo et al., 2019; Santilli et al., 2019). The findings from these studies are consistent. They reported that the group-based career interventions appeared to be an effective answer to the challenge in the South African context, where a large proportion of adolescents have not had a chance to be exposed to career counselling at school and had to navigate their careers without exposure to any career education (Maree et al., 2019; Maree et al., 2022; Naidoo et al., 2019; Santilli et al., 2019). Maree et al. (2013) further reported that considering South African society’s strong focus on group, storytelling, and *ubuntu*, group career counselling might be a cost-effective approach to expose more youth to career counselling services before they graduate from high school. Naidoo et al. (2019) reported that the disadvantage of group-based career counselling is that the confidentiality of the participants may be compromised as some participants may discuss other participants’ confidential information outside of the group.

The following part of the review highlights the challenges that are encountered in the implementation of career counselling in South Africa.

1.2.2 Challenges in the Implementation of Career Counselling

The circumstances that the majority of young people in South Africa live in present several challenges in terms of career facilitation and career choice (Naidoo et al., 2019). South Africa is a remarkably diverse country with eleven official languages (soon to be 12) and various cultural groups. Diverse cultural contexts are associated with different patterns of developmental abilities (Ardila, 2000). When it comes to cultural values, one culture may find it valuable and worth learning particular things while another does not, and vice versa (Ardila, 2000). This implies that administering career counselling to a client who is not from the same culture as the counsellor poses particular challenges (Maree et al., 2019). To be more effective, career counsellors should be aware of nuance (Pope, 2015 in Maree et al., 2019) in dealing with culturally diverse clients.

According to Naidoo et al. (2019), the majority of schools in South Africa do not have access to career counselling and career education. For the few that have access to career services, counsellors often depend on the use of quantitative media (Maree, 2013). Psychometric tests alone no longer adequately serve the needs of 21st-century people (Wen et al., 2022). Hence, it is essential to develop and utilise career counselling approaches that are appropriate for the diverse needs of learners. McMahan et al. (2012, p. 25) claim that presently “no theories exist in South Africa that sufficiently describe the career development of the country’s diverse population groups”. Career counsellors and researchers primarily rely on Western-developed theories that are not decontextualised for the South African context (McMahan et al., 2012). “Western career facilitation practices in particular, characterised by individualism, rationality and empiricism, may be irrelevant to many cultures in a globalised world” (Maree et al., 2018, p. 3). Therefore, Chung (2007, as cited in Maree, 2018) calls for the globalisation of Western approaches in addition to their Westernisation.

1.2.3 Narrative Counselling

Theorists and practitioners of career counselling are progressively using the narrative approach to assist individuals in achieving the inner stability necessary to successfully navigate the world of work in the 21st century (Maree, 2013). This implies reflexive “construction, deconstruction, co-construction, and reconstruction” through active collaboration between the counsellor and the client (Maree, 2022, p. 6). The narrative approach to career counselling is deep-rooted in the postmodern, social constructionist, and constructivist approaches. The assumption that individuals are the primary actors in their careers and life stories lies at the heart of this approach (McAdams & Olson, 2010). During the narrative career counselling

process, the clients' multiple micro and macro stories are “elicited and built on” to facilitate the process of making informed career-related decisions. “Clients’ life plots are uncovered and shaped during this process” (Maree, 2013, p. 5). Sharf (2010) made an interesting comparison that narrative career counselling can be likened to a drama where actors portray their own lives. Further, “personal agency is achieved by clients in that they are active agents in their development while, at the same time, their emotions and passions are highlighted” (Maree, 2013, p.5).

Career counsellors walk alongside their clients on their career journey and assist them to overcome the unique difficulties involved in selecting suitable careers and in writing life and career narratives for themselves. Maree (2013) stated that the writing process is ideal for examining one's own meanings, navigating recurring crossroads, and discovering one's purpose in life. The following section discusses the ever-changing world of work to better understand postmodern people and better serve their career-related needs.

1.2.4 The Ever-Changing World of Work

Before the 21st century began, having a secured career was practically a given. People knew that they could have lifelong employment and slowly but surely advance within the company (Savickas & Porfeli, 2017). However, this is not the case in today’s world of work. Barley et al. (2017) commented that individuals sleep with a job and wake up the next morning unemployed. The world of work is characterised by “volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity” (Wen et al., 2022, p. 1), and it has become a common saying that the workplace is continuously changing (McAdams & Olson, 2010). As a result, career counsellors and clients alike are presented with challenging questions as a result of these changes and uncertainties brought on by the prospering fourth economic wave (Savickas et al., 2015). Several companies can no longer promise everlasting employment and consistent promotion; thus, workers no longer feel obligated to stick with one company for the rest of their lives (Maree, 2019). As predicted by Handy (1995), short-term contracts are more common than permanent employment. Furthermore, it is quite common for present-day companies to list the exact skills and aptitudes that they want in their potential employees instead of advertising precise occupations (Maree et al., 2018). This happens against the backdrop of organisational fluidity whereby companies offer employees fewer and fewer guarantees (Verbruggen et al., 2016). Maree et al. (2018) stated that researchers working on this subject must come up with new terms to explain the most recent advancements in the field and craft innovative approaches to overcoming the challenges to move forward.

The rapid changes that happened in work environments have caused career development to shift from being linear and static to nonlinear and dynamic (Wong, 2015), leaving employees feeling anxious and insecure about their future (Maree, 2020). For that reason, Maree (2013) believes that career counselling services should be made accessible to everyone, regardless of age, creed, and the stage of their career. Verbruggen et al. (2016) shares the same sentiments as Maree (2013) and further added that career counselling interventions must be expanded to cover not only assistance with crucial career-related decisions but also with the management of one's career, such as coping with uncertainty and change. Moreover, Vilhjálmsdóttir and Tulinius (2016) commented that career counselling interventions (including the postmodern approaches) must be diversified and combined with other practical methods, for instance, play therapy or art therapy. They believe that diversifying and combining career counselling with other methods would give a better play in the function of career counselling, while also equipping people to solve complex life problems (Vilhjálmsdóttir & Tulinius, 2016).

Employees nowadays feel estranged and isolated as a result of the changes brought on by the fourth economic wave as previously mentioned. To address this challenge, Maree (2020) suggested that psychologists and career counsellors must be equipped with theoretical and practical knowledge as well as skills to assist clients to utilise these changes to their own advantage. Cardoso et al. (2018) highlighted that one of the many skills that career practitioners need to have is the skill to establish a working alliance and skills for sorting out ambivalence. A lack of such skills makes it challenging for clients to create a life portrait and create a strategy for the future (Cardoso et al., 2018). Moving forward, Hartung and Vess (2013) claim that now there is an increasingly apparent connection between individuals' work and their mental well-being. People are anticipated to become more adaptive, to continually reflect on their circumstances, and to learn how to control and manage themselves without a stable organisational structure that traditionally served as a holding environment (Maree, 2013). They must become “holding environments for themselves and for others” (Maree, 2013, p. 411).

As stated earlier, the theory and practice of career counselling have been inevitably impacted by changes in the workplace (Savickas et al., 2009). Theorists and career counsellors alike are obliged to formulate appropriate and adaptive responses to these changes (Maree, 2019). Due to the changes and unpredictability, “career counsellors can no longer assume that they can draw accurate predictions in an unpredictable world” (Savickas et al., 2009, p. 9). Therefore, Savickas (2015) advises utilising the social constructivist philosophical paradigm as the foundational paradigm that attends to these demands and considers the context of the

client. Life design theory is strongly and positively related to the abovementioned paradigm, which will be expanded on in the subsequent section.

1.2.5 Life-Design Career Counselling

According to Wen et al. (2022), life design intervention is an emerging approach to career counselling in the 21st century. Cardoso et al. (2018) explain that the life design intervention emerged as a response to the challenges in the world of work and career counselling brought on by globalisation and the succeeding digital revolution. A life design intervention can be considered as an approach that originated from combining self-construction theory and career construction theory (Wong, 2015), which both reflect an integration of life story, development process as well as personality characteristics (Cardoso et al., 2018). Furthermore, life design is based on and provides a career counselling intervention strategy that can promote career choice in addition to career construction and self-construction (Maree et al., 2022). Wen et al. (2022) argue that individuals need to design their own lives as a result of having to deal with more complex social relationships and work environments that have emerged in the 21st century.

The use of narratives is at the heart of life design counselling (Maree & Crous, 2012). As mentioned earlier, the life design intervention is fundamentally based on the social constructionist paradigm since it emphasises the value that people place on their subjective lived experiences (Maree & Crous, 2012). Hartung and Vess (2013) mentioned that it was devised and structured in such a way that it extends from childhood into adulthood, enhances how people perceive their own experiences, and encourages positive change. Moreover, life design counselling also considers the difficulties and needs that people face in their particular environments (Maree & Crous, 2012). Furthermore, its main contextual focus is on the connection between an individual and their environment as well as the interplay that takes place within this system with its sub-systems (Wong, 2015). Last but not least, the ultimate goal of this intervention is to enhance people's "career adaptability, narratability, autobiographicity, forward action, and employability" (Maree et al., 2022, p. 5).

The premise that personal development requires adjusting in such a way that allows individuals to cope with a continually changing environment is supported by life design interventions (Hartung & Vess, 2013). Additionally, this intervention believes that choosing a career decision helps people adjust to their changing work environments and fosters social co-construction of meaning (Maree & Crous, 2012). In summary, the life design intervention is holistic, lifelong, and preventative (Wen et al., 2020). Life design intends to assist clients in

reshaping their lives through narration based on their individual needs, aptitudes, interests, and life experiences (Wong, 2015). In this way, clients can revise their narrative identities, establish their self-concept, make life goals, and think about different life options (Wen et al., 2022).

1.3 The Particularly Challenging Situation of Rural Disadvantaged Learners

Learners in rural schools face various challenges unique to their environment. These challenges can be attributed to poverty, unemployment, lack of quality education, and inadequate access to information and communication technology (Afolabi et al., 2008). After 28 years of democracy in South Africa, rural education standards have shown minimal improvement (Du Plessis, 2022). Rural schools are typically remote, underdeveloped, and characterised by challenges that negatively impact quality education (Du Plessis, 2022). These challenges include underqualified teachers, lack of parental interest in children's education, lack of resources, insufficient funding from the state, and little motivation to learn from communities and families (Đurišić & Bunijevac, 2017). The South African School Act of 1996 stipulated that all South African learners should have equal access to quality education and educational opportunities. This stipulation has not yet been met (Du Plessis & Mestry, 2019).

Functionally 'illiterate and innumerate' parents are common in rural areas (Đurišić & Bunijevac, 2017). Du Plessis and Mestry (2019) maintain that South African history, particularly the adverse impact of apartheid, has contributed significantly to rural parents lacking the opportunities, resources, and development commonly found in more affluent communities. The low literacy rate in rural communities can be linked to high unemployment, poverty, and famine (Du Plessis & Mestry, 2019). According to Lehti et al. (2019), parental unemployment, for instance, can negatively affect children's cognitive achievement. These effects are worse for children growing up in disadvantaged families and are more detrimental if they are experienced during early childhood, as this is the stage during which emotional and cognitive skills develop (Lehti et al., 2019). Parental unemployment is also associated with lower self-esteem and well-being among children, higher school dropout rates, lower academic expectations, lower educational achievement, and lower motivation (Evans, 2005). Other factors that lead to low motivation and high school dropout rates among rural learners include the low value attached to education by parents and guardians in rural areas and home environments that are not conducive to learning (Afolabi et al., 2008). In addition, parental unemployment and poverty are often associated with forced child marriages. In many disadvantaged rural families, marrying their daughters to wealthy men at an early age is a strategy for economic survival for many parents (Malhotra & Malhotra, 2016). Parents receive

the bridal prize (lobola) from the groom's family, and the burden of feeding, clothing, and educating their daughters is also no longer theirs (Malhotra & Malhotra, 2016).

In rural areas, emotionally damaging behaviours such as parental verbal abuse are common (Chadambuka & Warriá, 2019). Verbal abuse by parents is often accepted as a 'normal' way of communicating, falsely referred to as a form of 'tough love' (Shamer, 2022, p. 2). According to Mackowicz (2013), obedience is the quality that parents mainly desire in their children, and they frequently attempt to enforce obedience through destructive behaviours such as shouting, swearing, criticising, and frightening. When parents criticise or humiliate their children, they often use generalisations to claim that they always do something wrong or never do anything properly (Mackowicz, 2013). Such behaviors can have a long-lasting emotional impact on a child's life (Chadambuka & Warriá, 2019). Shamer (2022) reports that one of the many adverse effects of parental verbal abuse is decreased self-esteem and self-efficacy in children. Bandura (1994) states that, at the same time, compliments and verbal encouragement from others are a source of self-efficacy (social persuasion) for children. Verbal encouragement from others can help people overcome self-doubt and assist them to concentrate on doing their best to complete any given task successfully (Cherry, 2020). Bandura (1994) identified social modelling as another way of enhancing self-efficacy. However, benefits from social modelling are often lacking in rural areas. The lack of role models to inspire and motivate learners to study and actualise themselves is too prevalent in these areas (Evans, 2005).

Scant literature is available on the relationship between self-efficacy and education in rural contexts (Crosby et al., 2012), despite the number of challenges that they face (Irvin et al., 2016). This is not the case only in South Africa (Mensah, 2013). For example, in the United States of America, more than 30% of the schools are located in rural areas, yet less than 6% of education-focussed research is devoted to rural schools (Mensah, 2013). The literature also reveals that little research has been done on the relationship between dwelling places of rural students and their self-efficacy and career decision-making (Irvin et al., 2016). Sumida and Kawata (2021) conducted a study analysing the academic performance discrepancy between urban and rural schools in sub-Saharan Africa and their findings revealed a statistically significant disparity between the two settings in favour of urban schools. They further mentioned that these discrepancies particularly in recent years can be "attributed mostly to differences in school and family characteristics" (Sumida & Kawata, 2021, p. 9). Their findings are consistent with those of Ramnarain and Hlatshwayo (2018) in terms of attribution factors between the two settings. Ramnarain and Hlatshwayo (2018) also discovered that the

attribution remained constant from 2004 to 2011 and that the attribution to differences in family characteristics increased significantly compared to differences in school characteristics.

Furthermore, Hendricks et al. (2015) conducted a study with students from disadvantaged contexts and discovered that the most crucial factors influencing their objectives and ambitions were self-efficacy, self-esteem, and social support.

1.4 Self-Efficacy and Disadvantages

Self-efficacy is a significant factor in achievement, especially for disadvantaged learners (Motlagh et al., 2018). Research has shown self-efficacy to be almost as predictive of achieving good educational qualifications by 26 years as cognitive skills (Motlagh et al., 2018). In response to what self-efficacy entails, Chan and Lam (2010) argue that it is about a person's ability or readiness to undertake a specific task. Self-efficacy is a component of social cognitive theory, which holds that an individual's achievement is determined by the interaction between their behaviour, personal characteristics (beliefs and thoughts), and environment (Bandura, 1994). Hendricks et al. (2015) identified self-efficacy, social support, and self-esteem as the most critical factors influencing the aspirations of adolescents from low-income backgrounds. In their opinion, “self-efficacy stood out as the principal determinant of life aspirations and motivation among adolescents” (Hendricks et al., 2015, p. 15). Hendricks et al. (2015) suggested that programmes involving youth from disadvantaged communities focus on developing their self-efficacy. Such programmes could be based on CCC, which, according to Savickas (2010), encourages people to do all they can to improve their situation. Maree (2015) agrees with Savickas (2015), adding that learners in disadvantaged communities are exposed to very few stereotypical careers. Therefore, there is a pressing need to develop new approaches to expose learners to the world of careers more adequately and help them make informed career decisions.

1.5 Purpose of the Study

This study explored the influence that an intervention based on CCC principles can have on rural disadvantaged learners' self-efficacy. These learners and adolescents from disadvantaged environments tend to feel disempowered by the situation they find themselves in – unemployment, for instance, is a common characteristic of such situations. Consequently, many learners are left uncertain about their future, and at the same time, their career identity is impaired.

Lack of career information and the general unavailability of career counselling services remains a significant challenge in the disadvantaged environments in which these learners find themselves (Du Plessis & Mestry, 2019). Maree et al. (2022) report that more than 90% of learners in such environments do not have access to adequate career counselling. Most of them, as a result, have limited knowledge about themselves and available occupations. Their families, too, have little knowledge and experience of different careers and related academic fields and are accordingly unable to assist their children in this regard (Maree & Che, 2020). As a result, most of these children complete their high school education without knowing the career they want to pursue when they reach the tertiary education level (Awinsong et al., 2015). This study aimed to address this gap in career counselling practice by investigating the effect of the administration of CCC on a learner with inadequate self-efficacy from a disadvantaged rural environment.

1.6 Research Questions

The primary research question for this study was as follows: How effective is career intervention based on career construction counselling for a rural disadvantaged learner to enhance her self-efficacy?

In terms of the secondary research questions, the following sub-questions were to be explored to answer the primary research question and better understand the ‘bigger picture’ and connections between the data. The following two descriptive research questions were asked:

1. How can career construction counselling inform intervention and influence a learner with inadequate self-efficacy growing up in a disadvantaged rural area?
2. What factors can cause a learner growing up in a disadvantaged rural area to develop inadequate self-efficacy?

Further, the following two exploratory research questions were asked:

3. What were the main differences between the pre- and post-intervention themes that emerged from the narrative data?
4. What aspects of the intervention in particular improved the participant’s self-efficacy?

1.7 Working Assumptions

The following were my general working assumptions regarding the study:

- CCC has the potential to instil and enhance self-efficacy in rural disadvantaged learners.
- Career counselling services are limited in rural schools, which results in learners not having adequate access to career and vocational education.
- After the intervention and reflection, the participant will be empowered and believe more in their capabilities and strength.
- The intervention will help the participant make important career choices based on his life story and career interests.

1.8 Concept Clarification

1.8.1 Career Construction Counselling

According to Hartung and Vess (2013, p.2), CCC “entails an interpersonal process of helping people author career stories that connect their self-concepts to work roles, fit work into life, and make meaning through narratives about self and work”. Savickas (2018) defined career construction as a type of intervention that provides a perspective of how people choose and use work. This narrative concerns how individuals use what they know and have readily available to make informed decisions that shape their career construction process (Savickas, 2019). Within the context of the present study, CCC was regarded as a type of intervention that forms part of career counselling.

1.8.2 Life Design

According to Savickas et al. (2009, p. 244), “the life-design counselling framework implements the theories of self-constructing (Guichard & Lenz, 2005) and career construction (Savickas, 2005) that describe vocational behaviour and its development”. Life design forms the conceptual framework of this study and a life design intervention was used to assist the participant to reflect on himself and to assist him in shaping his career life.

1.8.3 Self-efficacy

This concept was initially established by the renowned American psychologist Albert Bandura. Bandura (1994, as cited in APA, 2009) defines self-efficacy as people's perceptions about their capacities to achieve specific levels of performance that impact events that affect their lives. People's self-efficacy beliefs influence how they feel, think, motivate themselves, and act (American Psychological Association [APA], 2009).

1.8.4 Disadvantaged Learners

The concept of disadvantaged learners refers to those categorised as living at or below the poverty line and who lack the resources and experiences readily available to their more advantaged peers (Maree, 2020). In the current study, the term rural disadvantaged learner refers to a learner between 18 and 25 years of age who grew up in an area where services such as quality education and career counselling were unavailable or unaffordable.

1.9 Epistemology of the Study

Kivunja and Kuyini (2017, p. 96) define epistemology as “a collection of logically linked concepts and propositions that provide a theoretical perspective or orientation that tends to guide the research approach to a specific topic”. This study was approached from an interpretive/constructionist paradigm and qualitative research methodology was adopted to answer the research questions and confirm the working assumptions. Researchers working from this perspective acknowledge that people’s subjective experiences are valid, multiple, and socially constructed (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2006). The above-mentioned paradigms are explained briefly in this section. A detailed explanation, justification as well as advantages and disadvantages are covered in Chapter 3.

1.9.1 Research Methods and Design

Research methodology is concerned with how researchers design a study to enable them to obtain valid and reliable results while also meeting their research objectives and answering their research questions (Cresswell & Poth, 2018). The effectiveness of a life design intervention with a learner from a rural environment challenged by disadvantages was explored through a descriptive, explorative single-intrinsic intervention case study design. As previously mentioned, qualitative research methods were used to conduct this study, and the participant was selected through purposive sampling. Creswell and Poth (2018) assert that qualitative research is interested in studying a phenomenon by understanding how people interpret the world around them. A detailed explanation of the research methods and designs, in conjunction with advantages and disadvantages, is discussed in Chapter 3 of the study.

1.9.2 Data and Gathering Instruments

In qualitative studies, data generation refers to the method and theory applied by researchers to obtain and measure data from a sample of interest to answer the research questions (Göran, 2019). In the attempt to answer the research questions and ensure the validity

of the data, the study used multiple instruments of data generation, including semi-structured interviews, qualitative career assessments, observation of body language, and extensive field notes (Göran, 2019). Furthermore, with the consent of the participant, the interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim, and used as the study's primary data set. A detailed explanation and justification of the data generation and documentation procedures are discussed in Chapter 3.

1.9.3 Data Analysis and Interpretation

Qualitative data analysis aims to generate thick in-depth descriptions of the data beyond common-sense interpretations (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Nieuwenhuis (2016) stated that analysing qualitative data encompasses searching for themes/patterns to identify, analyse, and report the data. A thematic analysis approach was used to analyse data for this study. The present study precisely followed the six steps of qualitative thematic analysis outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006; in Braun & Clarke, 2021). See Chapter 3 for a detailed explanation of the data analysis and interpretation.

1.10 Quality Criteria

Quality assurance strategies were applied to improve the credibility, dependability, conformability, and transferability of this study according to the seminal work of Lincoln and Guba (1994; in Cypress, 2017). The quality assurance guidelines used are covered in detail in Chapter 3 of this study.

1.11 Ethical Considerations

The Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA, 2016, p. 2) states that researchers “need to consider the possible adverse impacts of their research on vulnerable groups and thus have a duty to observe the highest possible standards to protect the rights of research participants”. The above statement emphasises that when conducting research, especially research involving vulnerable populations like disadvantaged children, the researcher should always be conscious of the ethical responsibilities and requirements for fair and reasonable treatment throughout the research process (HPCSA, 2016). In this respect, I received permission from the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education to conduct research in a school as well as ethical approval from the University of Pretoria (EDU078/22). Further details of the ethical obligations that the study adhered to is discussed further in Chapter 3.

1.12 Format of the Study

Table 1.1

Outline of chapters

| Chapter | Title | Content Covered |
|---------|--------------------------------|---|
| 1 | Introduction | Background and context of the study, problem statement, research questions, objectives, significance of the study, definition of terms, and chapter summary. |
| 2 | Literature Review | Overview of the theoretical and empirical literature related to the research topic, key concepts and theories, research gaps and controversies, hypotheses and research propositions, and chapter summary. |
| 3 | Research Methods | Research design and approach, sampling strategy, data generation methods and instruments, data analysis procedures, ethical considerations, and chapter summary. |
| 4 | Findings and Discussion | This chapter presents the findings of the study. Furthermore, findings are organised according to the study's research questions and working assumptions. Tables and flow charts are used to summarise the findings, and detailed information including field notes are located in the appendix. |
| 5 | Conclusion and Recommendations | The implications of the research findings are presented in this last chapter. This encompasses implications for practice along with implications for future research studies. The findings are consolidated with the theoretical framework and literature discussed in the second chapter. This chapter ends with a strong conclusion that summarises the significance of the study's findings. |

1.13 Conclusion

The chapter above provided a concise background of the study. My research focused on administering CCC to enhance the self-efficacy of a learner from environments challenged by disadvantages. The chapter briefly explored the literature. In the next chapter, the study explores in broader detail and discusses how the focal topic, and the associated literature relates to the South African context. Furthermore, the research questions that study aimed to provide answers to were outlined in this chapter as well as the steps and measures that were taken to answer the 'how' question of the study were outlined. The chapter closed with a brief overview

of the ethical obligations to be considered for the execution of the study following good practice requirements for a study of this nature.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Employees today face greater challenges than ever before due to the ongoing changes and unpredictability in the workplace (Hooley, 2019). To succeed in today's rapidly changing work environment, employees must be adaptable and willing to learn new skills (Hooley, 2019). The ability to adapt to changing circumstances has become increasingly important as organisations have had to respond to a wide range of challenges, including technological advances, economic uncertainty, and global pandemics (Santilli et al., 2019). Blustein et al. (2019) states that career counselling must therefore be able to assist clients to develop their narratability, intentionality, activity, and adaptability skills, which in turn enhance their overall well-being.

The purpose of this study was to explore the effectiveness of CCC with a rural disadvantaged learner with inadequate self-efficacy. The present chapter, therefore, aims to present a systematic and broad overview of the literature addressing the numerous theories that underpin this study. A review of the economic waves, with a special emphasis on the third and fourth waves, are given at the outset of this chapter. The above highlighted discussion provides insights into how the world of work has transformed from the 1870s to the present. Furthermore, the discussion also develops our understanding regarding the necessity to shift from the 20th-century approach to career counselling approaches to the postmodern career approaches that are deemed suitable to serve the career needs of the present population. As a result, the major career approaches are discussed with particular attention given to the postmodern approaches. A brief overview of self-efficacy grounded on the work of Bandura (1977) in his theory of social cognitive theory follows. The objectives and interventions of life design are examined pertaining to the present research study, considering culture, context, and types of interventions that might be appropriate in circumstances of disadvantage. The identity formation of adolescents in the South African context is explored by using Erikson's (1968) points of view on the subject. The chapter concludes with an overview of studies on career counselling interventions and narrative counselling, findings and gaps in the literature, and research on learners from circumstances challenged by disadvantage.

2.2 Successive Industrial Revolutions

The construct industrial revolution in contemporary history is defined as the transition process from a handicraft and agrarian economy to one controlled by industry and machine production

(Schwab, 2017). The state of the economy at any given time has a considerable impact on career development (Hirschi, 2018). Maree et al. (2015) suggested that the best way to understand the historical development of career counselling and practice is to trace its relationship to the different industrial revolutions. The industrial revolution has undergone four major phases (see Table 2.1), each marked by significant advancements in technology and shifts in the way society produces goods and services (Osunsanmi et al., 2022). Table 2.1 provides a summary of the four industrial revolutions and thereafter I elaborate briefly on the table's contents.

Table 2.1

Summary of the Four Industrial Revolutions

| Industrial Revolution | Period | Key Innovations (Schwab, 2017; Maree et al., 2015; Hirschi, 2018). | Impact (Friedman, 2005; Schwab, 2016). | Psychology: Epistemological Basis (Maree, 2020; Savickas, 2019). | Model in Career Psychology (Maree, 2020; Savickas, 2019). |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|---|---|--|
| First Industrial Revolution | Late 18th to early 19th century | Steam engine, textile machinery, iron production. | Mass production, mechanisation of labour, urbanisation. | Psychodynamic theory | Friendly volunteers |
| Second Industrial Revolution (Digital Revolution) | Late 19th to early 20th century | Electricity, internal combustion engine, telegraph, assembly line. | Increased productivity, expansion of transportation networks, and a rise of consumer culture. | Problem-focused therapies & cognitive-behavioural theory | Vocational guidance |
| Third Industrial Revolution (Digital Revolution) | From the 1960s to present | Personal computers, internet, smartphones, renewable energy, automation | Further automation and digitisation, personalised products and services, increased connectivity, and data sharing | Postmodern approaches | Career education |
| Fourth Industrial Revolution (Industry 4.0) | Ongoing since the late 20th century | Artificial intelligence, robotics, blockchain, 3D printing, virtual and augmented reality | Automation of knowledge work, increased personalisation, and blurring of physical and digital worlds. | Transpersonal psychology and multicultural counselling theory | Career counselling and life design |

Note. Table is adapted and modified from Maree et al. (2015).

2.2.1 The First Industrial Revolution

The First Industrial Revolution started in the late 18th century in Britain and was marked by the mechanisation of textile production and the development of steam power (Hirschi, 2018). The first industrial revolution laid the foundation for modern industry (Schwab, 2017). Furthermore, it also marked a shift from agrarian-based economies to industrial-based economies (Hirschi, 2018).

2.2.2 The Second Industrial Revolution

The Second Industrial Revolution began toward the end of the 19th century (Chigwada & Nwaohiri, 2021). The second revolution was marked by the development of “mass production” and the electrification of factories (Chigwada & Nwaohiri, 2021). The second revolution also saw the development of transportation infrastructure, such as the automobile and airplane, which facilitated the movement of people and goods on a global scale. Maree et al. (2015, p. 5) state that it was during this phase that the concept of ‘job’ was first introduced (Hirschi, 2018). The Second Industrial Revolution was later superseded by the Third Revolution.

2.2.3 The Third Industrial Revolution

The Third Industrial Revolution, “also known as the digital revolution,” started during the late 20th century (Schwab, 2017, p. 36). The third revolution was marked by the development of computers, the internet, and other digital technologies (Hirschi, 2018). Moreover, this revolution transformed the way businesses operated, making it easier and faster to communicate, automate tasks, and store and process data (Schwab, 2017). Santilli et al. (2019, p. 15) explained that a career during this phase was regarded as the pursuit of a specific job during an employee’s working life characterised by a “gradual climb up the career ladder involving ever-increasing complexity levels and responsibilities”. Employees were provided with structure, security, and guaranteed promotions, hence they remained loyal to their employers for years (Santilli et al., 2019). The Third Industrial Revolution was eventually superseded by the current industrial revolution.

2.2.4 The Fourth Industrial Revolution

The Fourth Industrial Revolution, “also known as Industry 4.0” refers to the current era of technological advancement and digital transformation that is reshaping the way we live and work (Schwab, 2017). Industry 4.0 builds on the three previous revolutions by combining

digital technologies with advanced manufacturing techniques such as robotics, the internet of things, and artificial intelligence (Chigwada & Nwaohiri, 2021). The fourth revolution promises to bring about even more substantial changes to the way in which goods are produced and services are delivered, with a focus on customisation, flexibility, and efficiency (Hirschi, 2018). Schwab (2017) made an interesting argument that Industry 4.0 represents a novel age of innovation that will essentially transform the way people live and work. Min et al. (2018) shared the same views as Schwab (2017) and further added that the present revolution will not only bring about new opportunities and benefits but also create new challenges and risks that must be addressed.

2.2.5 Brief Discussion of the Industrial Revolution and Changes in the World of Work

There are many different viewpoints on what work means, and the meanings that individuals ascribe to the world of work are changing hastily (Maree et al., 2019). According to Bimrose and Brown (2019, p. 9), the traditional notion of "climbing the corporate ladder" is gradually declining. During the past revolutions, many people believed that the key to achieving remarkable success in the workplace was to steadily advance through the ranks of a single organisation (Bimrose & Brown, 2019). This was typically done through moving up the hierarchy from entry-level positions to higher management roles (Maree et al., 2019). However, in the present day's fast-changing work environment, career paths are often less linear and more varied (Schwab, 2017). Many individuals may switch careers multiple times throughout their working lives, pursue non-traditional work arrangements, or work for multiple employers simultaneously (Hirschi, 2018).

This shift away from the traditional ladder-climbing career trajectory is due in part to changes in the nature of work itself as well as evolving attitudes towards work-life balance and job satisfaction (Bimrose & Brown, 2019). Many individuals now prioritise flexibility, autonomy, and meaningful work over simply advancing up the corporate ladder (Maree et al., 2019). As a result, career counsellors must have the required skills to assist clients to navigate these changing career paths and identify opportunities that align with their values, interests, and skills (Santilli et al., 2019), whether that involves pursuing a traditional career path or taking a more non-traditional route (Santilli et al., 2019).

To conclude, the four consecutive Industrial Revolutions have had a noteworthy influence on human history, changing the way individuals live, work, and interact with one another, and with the world around them (Schwab, 2017). The following section discusses the major theories in career development and practice.

2.3 Major Traditional Career Theories

Traditional career theories have influenced career development and practice, providing a foundation for the development of various career interventions and instruments (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2021). Traditional career approaches were centred on a linear process of selecting a career in which the final objective was definite. Furthermore, these approaches assumed that individuals made career choices based on a clear understanding of their interests, skills, and values and that the goal of career development was to find a job that matched these criteria. (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2021). In addition, traditional approaches to career counselling adopted a deductive process of career planning and management.

Traditional career approaches are not perceived as irrelevant in the present century. However, they appear to lack the subjective reality, meanings, and feelings that clients uphold about their career paths (Min et al., 2018). The above-mentioned constructs cannot be evaluated empirically, they need a qualitative approach. Traditional approaches focussed more on external factors, such as job requirements and labour market trends, rather than exploring individuals' subjective experiences, values, and aspirations (Min et al., 2018). Schreuder and Coetzee (2021) argued that the traditional career models can still be useful in measuring certain aspects of career development, particularly for individuals who are just starting their careers (Swanson & Fouad, 2015). For example, measures of career interests, personality traits, and aptitudes can provide valuable information for career decision-making and job matching (Swanson & Fouad, 2015).

In addition, traditional career approaches concentrate on a range of professional options and pathways within those options (Min et al., 2018). According to these approaches, people can make opportunities for themselves to learn from those who are already in a certain profession or field by conducting interviews with them, job-shadowing them, or even trying out many positions without committing to one in the long term (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2021). This approach can be particularly beneficial for young adults who wish to continue their education but are confused about which course to choose (Min et al., 2018). The following section discusses the major traditional theories identified by Schreuder and Coetzee (2021).

2.3.1 *Person-Environment-Fit/Theories Trait-and-Factor Model*

During the 20th century, psychologists and other researchers relied on the use of scientific methods to study career development and vocational behaviour (Swanson & Fouad, 2015). This period is often referred to as the vocational guidance movement (first wave of career development), and it was marked by a focus on objective measurement and assessment

of individual traits, interests, and abilities (Swanson & Fouad, 2015). Furthermore, these models make a presumption that most people have reached a particular level of ‘maturation’ regarding their mental and physical development, which implies that career paths were predicated on the notion that an individual's personality, thoughts, and feelings will remain unchanged (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2021). One of the key figures in this movement was Frank Parsons, who is often referred to as the "father of vocational guidance" (Sharf, 2016, p. 69). Parsons (1909; in Sharf, 2016) emphasised the importance of scientific assessment and matching in career counselling, and his work laid the foundation for the trait-and-factor approach to career counselling. Other researchers and practitioners in the field also emphasised the importance of objective assessment and measurement, and they developed a range of instruments and techniques for assessing individual traits and interests (Sharf, 2016).

2.3.2 *Lifespan Developmental Theory*

According to Schreuder and Coetzee (2021), Super's (1980) lifespan developmental theory represents a second wave in career development. These approaches placed more emphasis on an individual's lifetime growth and development than the first-wave approaches, which emphasised matching people to specific jobs (Sharf, 2016). Moreover, lifespan developmental theories suggest that vocational behaviour is not solely determined by an individual's traits or interests but is also influenced by a range of developmental factors, such as biological, psychological, social, and cultural factors (Min et al., 2018). Subsequently, the notion of the ‘self’ evolved into one that can change with time.

The theory of Super's career development asserts that people experience five phases of career development throughout the course of their lives (Sharf, 2016). These stages involve “growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, and decline” (Super, 1980, as cited in Schreuder & Coetzee, 2021, p. 93).

2.3.2.1 Brief Discussion of Super's Views on the Five Different Stages of Development. During the growth stage, which typically occurs in childhood, individuals begin to develop their self-concept, interests, and values (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2021). The exploration stage, which typically occurs during adolescence and early adulthood, involves exploring different career options and gathering information about them (Sharf, 2016). The establishment stage, which typically occurs in young adulthood, involves committing to a particular career path and establishing oneself in that field (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2021). The maintenance stage, which typically occurs in mid-adulthood, involves maintaining one's skills and knowledge in a particular career and making adjustments as necessary (Hartung, 2019).

The decline stage, which typically occurs in later adulthood, involves transitioning out of the workforce and preparing for retirement (Super, 1980; Hartung, 2019).

The exploration phase is of special interest to this study because it is typically regarded as a stage whereby adolescence and young adults explore various careers (McMahon & Watson, 2020). Some adolescents during this stage may seek a job or think about a career trajectory depending on outside influences like their parents or other relatives. Some adolescents may work part-time at their parents' businesses. Even though this approach considered how people evolve throughout their lives, it was still primarily concerned with outside factors rather than the individuals' sense of meaning and purpose in life (Sharf, 2016). Nevertheless, Super's (1957; McMahon & Watson, 2020) career development theory has significantly influenced modern theories.

In summation, Super's theory emphasises the importance of understanding the various stages of career development that individuals go through over the course of their lives, and how these stages impact vocational behaviour (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2021). McMahon and Watson (2020) further added that this understanding can help career counsellors provide appropriate guidance and support to individuals as they navigate their career trajectories.

2.3.4 Cognitive Behavioural Theories

Cognitive behavioural theories are based on the assumptions of the social cognitive theory (SCT). The SCT proposes that people can acquire knowledge and develop career-related skills and behaviours through social interactions with others. Individuals tend to acquire knowledge through observing and modelling the behaviour of others, for instance parents and role models, as well as through direct experience and personal feedback (Duffy & Dik, 2016). Cognitive behavioural theories are applied in career development to help clients overcome negative thought patterns and behaviours that may be hindering their career development (Ponterotto et al., 2000).

Self-efficacy is a key aspect of cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) treatment. According to Bandura (1997; Duffy & Dik, 2016, p. 15), self-efficacy refers "to an individual's belief in their ability to perform a specific task or achieve a particular goal". Career practitioners can enhance their clients' self-efficacy by helping clients to identify their strengths and assisting them in developing a plan to overcome perceived barriers to their career success (Duffy & Dik, 2016).

Rational emotive behaviour therapy (REBT) is a kind of CBT approach used in career counselling to help clients challenge undesired or unhelpful thoughts and ideas and, in doing

so, avoid negative or unwanted emotions and behaviours. In career counselling, REBT can be used to help individuals identify and challenge irrational beliefs that may be hindering their career development (Duffy & Dik, 2016). The foundation of REBT is the premise that negative emotions are not caused by the events themselves but rather by the ideas and thoughts that people have about such situations (Dryden & Branch, 2015).

Social cognitive career theory (SCCT) emphasises the role of social and contextual factors in career development (Lent et al., 1994). According to this theory, individuals learn about potential career trajectories through observing others who have pursued similar careers and through experiences such as internships or job shadowing (Rogers & Creed, 2010). Furthermore, they also develop a sense of self-efficacy in their ability to perform tasks required for a particular career through personal experiences and feedback from others (Rogers & Creed, 2010).

SCCT also highlights the importance of outcome expectations, or the perceived likelihood of achieving certain outcomes associated with a particular career, in career development (Duffy & Dik, 2016; Lent et al., 1994). For instance, if an individual perceives that a particular career will lead to high levels of job satisfaction, financial success, and opportunities for advancement, they may be more likely to pursue that career. Moreover, SCCT acknowledges the role of barriers and support in career development, including discrimination, lack of social support, and access to resources (Duffy & Dik, 2016). SCCT suggests that addressing these barriers and enhancing support can help individuals overcome obstacles to achieve their career goals (Duffy & Dik, 2016).

In summary, SCCT highlights the role of social and contextual factors, self-efficacy, outcome expectations, barriers, and supports in career development (Rogers & Creed, 2010). The SCCT provides a framework for understanding the complex process of career decision-making and development (Rogers & Creed, 2010). The following section discusses the postmodern career approaches.

2.4 Postmodern Career Approaches

2.4.1 *Life Design and Career Construction*

In this section, I first discuss literature that suggests that there is a need for a new career approach in response to the rapid changes in the world of work. Next, I discuss the life design approach as a relatively new approach in career development. This is followed by a discussion of the benefits of life design specifically for rural disadvantaged learners. Moreover, this

section closes with a brief discussion of suitable interventions and skills for rural disadvantaged learners to be successful in the world of work.

2.4.1.1 The Need for Holistic Approaches in Career Counselling. The need for new career counselling approaches has been widely recognised in response to the changing nature of work in the 21st century (Savickas et al., 2015). As noted by Korsakienė and Smaliukienė (2014), the traditional career counselling approaches were developed during a time when the labour market was stable, predictable, and less diverse than it is now. The contemporary world of work as stated earlier is characterised by rapid changes, such as technological advancements, globalisation, and the gig economy, which have led to increased uncertainty and complexity in career decision-making (Korsakienė & Smaliukienė, 2014). Furthermore, Brottts and Myers (2019) argued that traditional career counselling approaches tend to emphasise individualistic and deterministic perspectives, which do not fully recognise the role of social, cultural, and economic factors in career development. Therefore, there is a growing need for career counselling approaches that embrace diversity, inclusivity, and complexity, which acknowledge the subjective experiences and meanings of individuals in their career journeys (Savickas et al., 2015). The next section discusses life design as a relatively new approach to career development.

2.4.1.2 Life Design as a Suitable Career Counselling Approach. The dynamic nature of individuals' personalities and environmental influences are compounding factors in career development (Lent & Brown, 2019). Maree (2020) advocates for the use of life design interventions in career counselling to help individuals construct meaningful and fulfilling careers. Life design intervention is a client-centred approach to career counselling that emphasises the importance of self-awareness, exploration, and action (Savickas, 2015). The life design approach is grounded in constructivist and narrative theories, which recognise the role of subjective experiences, meaning making, and storytelling in career development (Brottts & Myers, 2019). Typical psychometric tests in career counselling tend to focus on measurable skills related to numeracy, literacy, problem-solving, aptitude, traits, and personality (Maree et al., 2022). The following section discusses the benefits of life design particularly for rural disadvantaged learners.

2.4.1.3 The Benefits of Life Design for Disadvantaged Learners. The life design intervention involves a range of activities and exercises aimed at helping clients to identify their interests, strengths, and values, as well as to develop a career story that is meaningful and

authentic to them (Savickas, 2013). The approach also emphasises the importance of action and experimentation, encouraging clients to try out different career options and reflect on their experiences (Maree, 2020). Incorporating life design intervention into career counselling can help clients to construct careers that are congruent with their identities and aspirations (Savickas, 2013). Additionally, life design can enable them to develop resilience and adaptability, which are essential skills in the contemporary world of work (Brotts & Myers, 2019).

Kenny et al. (2018, p. 7) argued that even though standardised psychometric tests are an important component of career counselling, they fall short when it comes to uncovering and promoting “the eliciting, constructing, deconstructing and reconstructing of individuals’ life stories within its respective contexts”. Emerging adults who grew up in disadvantaged contexts need more than just objective test scores to guide them as they enter the workforce. These individuals often face unique challenges and barriers that can make it difficult for them to succeed in traditional educational and career journeys (Naidoo et al., 2019). In addition to objective test scores, Kenny et al. (2018) argued that career counsellors working with these individuals need to take a more holistic and individualised approach that takes into account the specific challenges and strengths of each person. This might include exploring an individual's personal and family history, their culture and community context, and their unique experiences and perspectives (Kenny et al., 2018). Furthermore, the following section discusses the types of interventions and skills that are deemed necessary for disadvantaged learners to succeed in the workplace.

2.4.1.4 Comprehensive Career Counseling for learners from disadvantaged contexts: Navigating Soft Skills Development, Systemic Barriers, and Culturally Sensitive Approaches. Schwarz et al. (2017) emphasised that career counsellors can work with these individuals to develop a range of soft skills, such as teamwork, communication, problem-solving, and adaptability, which are essential for success in the workforce. Moreover, career counsellors can also provide guidance on finding and applying for jobs, developing resumes and cover letters, and preparing for job interviews (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2021; Schwarz et al., 2017). In addition to supporting the building of these practical skills, career counsellors can also provide emotional and psychological support to help these individuals build confidence, resilience, and a sense of self-efficacy (Schwarz et al., 2017). This might include providing encouragement, support, and validation, as well as helping individuals to set realistic goals and develop strategies for achieving them (Hendricks et al., 2015).

Furthermore, Hendricks et al. (2015) made an interesting statement that career counsellors need to recognise and address the systemic barriers that may impact emerging adults from disadvantaged contexts. This might involve advocating for policies and programmes that promote equity and inclusion in the workforce as well as providing targeted support and resources to help individuals navigate the job market (Hendricks et al., 2015).

To sum up, career counselling for emerging adults who grew up in disadvantaged contexts requires a more comprehensive and culture-sensitive approach (one example of such an approach is the life design approach) that considers the unique challenges and strengths of each person. By providing practical and emotional support, career counsellors can help these individuals to overcome barriers and achieve their career goals (Hendricks et al., 2015; Naidoo et al., 2019; Swartz, 2017).

2.5 Life Design: Objectives and Interventions

2.5.1 Objectives of Life Design Counselling

This section covers three life design counselling goals: adaptability, narratability, and activity.

2.5.2 Adaptability

Adaptability is a crucial skill in today's rapidly changing and unpredictable job market (Kenny et al., 2018). Schwarz et al. (2017) argued that career counsellors must support individuals in developing this skill as part of their career development process (Schwarz et al., 2017). The definition of adaptability formulated by Savickas et al. (2009) is still relevant and applicable in the 21st century, as we are witnessing rapid and continuous changes in the workplace due to various technological, economic, and social factors. Savickas et al. (2009) defined adaptability as the capacity to make adjustments to changing work demands, and to modify one's career-related behaviours, goals, and beliefs in response to ever-changing circumstances. The above definition emphasises the importance of flexibility, resilience, and openness to new experiences in managing one's career in a rapidly changing world (Kenny et al., 2018). These skills are increasingly important in the current job market, where new job roles and industries are emerging, and existing job roles are being transformed by technology and automation (Schwarz et al., 2017). In addition, Pillay (2021) argued that the COVID-19 global pandemic has further highlighted the need for adaptability in the workforce, as remote work and other changes have become necessary for many industries to survive. Therefore, career counselling can perform a significant role in assisting individuals to enhance adaptability

skills by providing them with the resources and tools required to navigate changes in their careers and to stay competitive in the job market (Pillay, 2021).

2.5.2.1 Dimensions of Career Adaptability. Savickas and Porfeli (2014, p. 15) identified “four dimensions of career adaptability, which include career concern, career control, career curiosity, and career confidence”. These dimensions reflect different aspects of an individual's ability to adapt to changing career circumstances and to pursue their career goals effectively (Rossier, 2015). Career concern refers to a person's willingness to deal with the future and to make long-term career plans (Rossier, 2015). Career control involves a person's capacity to shape their career through proactive decision-making and goal setting (Savickas & Porfeli, 2014). Career curiosity refers to an individual's openness to learning and exploration of new career possibilities (Savickas & Porfeli, 2014). Career confidence involves a person's belief in their capacity to effectively manage career transitions and challenges (Hartung, 2019). Rudolph et al. (2017) Mentioned that understanding and developing these dimensions of career adaptability can help individuals better manage their careers in a changing and uncertain job market. Career counsellors can help clients to identify and strengthen these dimensions through various interventions, such as career assessments, coaching, and skills training (Rudolph et al., 2017).

2.5.3 Narratability

Narratability is a notion in career counselling that refers to a person's ability to construct a coherent and meaningful story about their career experiences and aspirations (Rudolph et al., 2017). As Hartung (2019) explains, this involves being able to tell one's story in a clear, organised, and compelling way, using language that effectively communicates one's values, goals, and strengths. Savickas and Porfeli (2014) state that in life design counselling, facilitators employ dialogue to allow individuals to express their narratives, and these narratives frequently originate from the client's subjective experiences.

Narratability is important in career counselling because narratability can help individuals make sense of their career experiences, and gain insight into their motivations and interests (Rudolph et al., 2017). Furthermore, narratability plays a profound role in assisting individuals in developing a clearer understanding of their career goals and aspirations (Hartung, 2019). By constructing a narrative about their career journey individuals can better understand how their past experiences have shaped their current situation, and how they can use their strengths and skills to pursue their future goals (Hartung, 2019). Additionally, Rabie et al. (2020) argued that the ability to tell a clear and compelling story about one's career can be an

important asset in job interviews and networking as narratability allows individuals to communicate their strengths and abilities effectively to potential employers and colleagues (Rabie et al., 2020). Career counsellors can help clients develop their narratability by providing guidance and feedback on how to construct a compelling career story (Rudolph et al., 2017). Furthermore, career counsellors can help clients identify and articulate their values, goals, and strengths in a clear and organised way (Rudolph et al., 2017).

2.5.4 Activity

In life design career counselling, activity is a key component of helping individuals to develop a sense of purpose and direction in their lives (Hartung, 2019). According to Savickas (2019), life design involves a process of continuous exploration and engagement in activities that align with one's values, interests, and strengths.

Career counsellors can use activity-based interventions to assist individuals in exploring their values and interests, and identify potential career trajectories (APA, 2020). For example, a counsellor might ask a client to engage in informational interviews, job shadowing, or volunteer work to gain hands-on experience in a particular field or industry (APA, 2020). Through these activities, clients can gain better insights into their interests, values, and skills, and use this information provided to make informed future and career decisions (Hartung, 2019).

Additionally, counsellors may use activity-based assessments to assist clients to identify their strengths and interests. For example, the career construction interview (CCI) developed by Savickas (2005) is an activity-based assessment that asks clients to construct a life story and identify key themes and values. The CCI

involves assisting clients by making use of favourite magazines, TV shows, and websites to initially reflect on and explore the self they are constructing in relation to where they may best like to be themselves with regard to work and career situations (Hartung, 2019, p. 96).

The activity based assessment can help clients to understand their motivations and aspirations better and use this information to develop a plan for their future (APA, 2020).

2.6 Overview of Self-Efficacy

This section discusses the concept of self-efficacy and its sources. This discussion is followed by an overview of research findings on the effectiveness of life design on the self-efficacy of rural disadvantaged learners.

2.6.1 Definition

Self-efficacy is a psychological construct that refers to an individual's belief in their ability to successfully execute a behaviour or attain a desired outcome (Motlagh et al., 2018). Another definition of self-efficacy is “as an individual's confidence about his ability to mobilise the motivation, cognitive resources, and actions necessary to successfully execute certain tasks in certain contexts” (Jalaluddin, 2017, p. 25). Self-efficacy is a central aspect of Bandura's social cognitive theory (SCT) (Motlagh et al., 2018). SCT posits that behaviour is influenced not only by environmental factors and personal characteristics but also by individuals' beliefs about their capabilities (Bandura, 1986). Bandura (1986, as cited in Afolabi et al., 2008) further mentioned that self-efficacy is domain-specific, meaning that an individual's confidence in their ability to perform a particular task does not necessarily translate to other domains. For instance, a person may feel confident in their ability to give a public speech but may feel less confident in their ability to play a musical instrument (Afolabi et al., 2015). The following section discusses the sources of self-efficacy.

2.6.2 Sources of Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy beliefs are shaped by a variety of factors, including past experiences, social modelling, verbal persuasion, and physiological and emotional states (Cherry, 2020). For example, an individual who has successfully completed a task in the past may feel more confident in their ability to perform that task again in the future (Cherry, 2020). Similarly, observing others who have successfully performed a task may increase one's self-efficacy beliefs, as can receiving positive feedback or encouragement from others (APA, 2020).

Research has shown that self-efficacy can have a significant impact on a variety of outcomes, including academic achievement, career success, health behaviours, and mental health (Frey & Vallade, 2018). Individuals with high self-efficacy are more likely to set challenging goals, exert effort to achieve them, and persist in the face of setbacks (Frey & Vallade, 2018). They are also more likely to attribute their successes to their own efforts and abilities, which can increase their motivation and confidence (Frey & Vallade, 2018). On the other hand, individuals with low self-efficacy may avoid challenges, underestimate their abilities, and attribute their failures to factors outside of their control (Cherry, 2020). This can lead to a cycle of low motivation and self-doubt, which can negatively impact their achievement and well-being (APA, 2020).

2.6.3 The Self-Efficacy of Rural Disadvantaged Learners

Research has shown that rural disadvantaged learners often exhibit lower levels of self-efficacy than their urban counterparts (Mendoza-Castejón & Clemente-Suárez, 2020). This may be due to a variety of factors, such as a lack of access to resources and opportunities, social isolation, and limited exposure to successful role models (Naidoo et al., 2019). Additionally, Jalaluddin (2017) argued that rural disadvantaged learners may have fewer opportunities to engage in mastery experiences and receive social persuasion. According to the SCT, both mastery experiences and social persuasion are important sources of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1994; Mendoza-Castejón & Clemente-Suárez, 2020). Hendricks et al. (2015) maintained that there are also strategies that can be employed to enhance the self-efficacy of rural disadvantaged learners. For instance, providing opportunities for these learners to engage in successful experiences and receive positive feedback can help build their confidence (Naidoo et al., 2019). Additionally, exposing them to successful role models and providing support and encouragement can also increase their self-efficacy (Hendricks et al., 2015). Such intervention that can fulfil the above-mentioned suggestions is life design counselling.

The following section presents evidence that supports the assumption that life design counselling can enhance the self-efficacy of rural disadvantaged learners.

2.6.4 Research on the Effectiveness of Life Design on Self-Efficacy of Rural Disadvantaged Learners

There is limited research on the effectiveness of life design counselling specifically on enhancing the self-efficacy of rural disadvantaged learners (Reid et al., 2016). However, there is some evidence to suggest that life design interventions can be effective in enhancing self-efficacy among disadvantaged learners in general (Maree & Che, 2020). Life design interventions involve a systematic approach to helping individuals explore and clarify their values, interests, and strengths to make informed decisions about their future (Savickas, 2012). Through engaging in life design activities, rural disadvantaged learners can increase their confidence in their ability to achieve their goals and navigate challenges (Reid et al., 2016).

A research study by Maree and Che (2020), which focussed specifically on examining the “effect of life-design counselling on the self-efficacy of a learner from an environment challenged by disadvantages” (p. 1), revealed that a life design intervention can help clients enhance their self-efficacy, re-establish their career, and assist them in setting their career goals. The study further revealed that life design enables clients to pursue their career goals and rekindled their sense of hope and optimism about the future (Maree & Che, 2020).

Moreover, a research study by Akosah-Twumasi et al. (2018) found that a life design intervention significantly increased the career decision-making self-efficacy of rural, first-generation college students. The intervention involved a series of workshops and individual coaching sessions aimed at helping students clarify their values and interests, explore career options, and develop action plans (Akosah-Twumasi et al., 2018). Results showed that the intervention led to significant increases in participants' self-efficacy related to career decision-making (Akosah-Twumasi et al., 2018). A similar study by Vos (2019) revealed similar findings. Vos (2019) further reported that life design counselling was effective in improving the overall well-being and career decision-making of disadvantaged university students in South Africa.

Additionally, similar studies by Savickas and Porfeli (2017), as well as a study by Brots and Myers (2019), revealed similar findings to the above-discussed South African studies. Brots and Myers (2019) further added that life design interventions can help rural disadvantaged learners to identify and engage in mastery experiences and receive social persuasion. Through setting and achieving goals, these learners can build their confidence and belief in their own abilities (Brots & Myers, 2019). Life design interventions may also expose them to successful role models and provide support and encouragement, further enhancing their self-efficacy (Akosah-Twumasi et al., 2018).

Overall, life design interventions hold promise for increasing the self-efficacy and career readiness of rural disadvantaged learners. The following sections provide an overview of contextual factors that affect the educational and career development of rural disadvantaged learners.

2.7 Contextual Factors

As mentioned earlier, rural disadvantaged learners face unique challenges that are shaped by their geographic location, economic and social circumstances, and cultural context (Mendoza-Castejón & Clemente-Suárez, 2020). Contextual factors such as culture, language, and socioeconomic status can have a significant impact on their career development and educational experiences as well as the outcomes thereof (Mendoza-Castejón & Clemente-Suárez, 2020). In this section, I discuss the role of culture and socioeconomic conditions on the career development of rural disadvantaged learners.

2.7.1 Culture

Culture plays a significant role in the career development of rural disadvantaged learners (Dlamini, 2014). According to Flores and Heppner (2013), culture influences an individual's perception of their abilities, aspirations, and expectations. In rural areas, where there is often a lack of economic opportunities and limited access to resources, culture can significantly impact an individual's career decisions and outcomes (Leong & Hartung, 2017).

2.7.1.1 The Impact of Culture on the Career Development of Disadvantaged Learners.

Akinlolu (2022) conducted a study where he analysed the impact of culture and gender stereotypes on career decision-making amongst a group of South African students in the field of construction. The findings revealed that cultural factors such as family values and community expectations influenced the career choices and aspirations of female students (in particular) from rural areas in South Africa (Akinlolu, 2022). Furthermore, the study found that female students were often discouraged from pursuing careers that were seen as traditionally male-dominated, such as engineering or science (Akinlolu, 2022). Mitchell and Krumboltz (2015) shared the same views as Akinlolu (2022) and further mentioned that some cultures prioritise traditional gender roles, leading to further limited career opportunities for women.

Additionally, a study by Dlamini (2014, p. 9), which explored the efficacy of life design intervention for “the career development of Swazi women from polygynous family settings” found that the cultural context of the participants plays a significant role in their career aspirations and decision-making. The participants' cultural values, such as collectivism and respect for elders, influenced their career choices, as they sought careers that were seen as socially acceptable and aligned with their cultural values (Dlamini, 2014). Albien and Naidoo (2019) shared the same sentiments as Dlamini (2014) and further added that some rural communities view certain occupations as more desirable, influencing the career choices of individuals within those communities.

Moreover, cultural factors can also impact the extent to which rural disadvantaged learners are aware of and able to access career resources and information (Flores & Heppner, 2013). For instance, some cultural beliefs may discourage seeking outside support or discourage individuals from leaving their hometowns for education or job opportunities (Nwoye, 2015). It is from such a cultural background that the participant of this study was born, bred, and studied. Furthermore, Kahu et al. (2019) stated that cultural factors such as language

barriers as well as unfamiliarity with academic settings may also impact academic performance and future career opportunities.

To address these challenges, Dlamini (2021) suggested that it is important to take a culturally sensitive approach to career development for rural disadvantaged learners. This might involve working closely with families and communities to understand their aspirations and beliefs around education and career as well as providing targeted support and resources to help emerging adults explore a range of career options (Leong & Hartung, 2017).

2.7.2 Socio-Economic Status

The impact of SES on the career development of rural disadvantaged learners in South Africa has been a topic of interest for researchers and policymakers alike (Sholikhah & Muhyadi, 2021). SES refers to an individual's or family's social and economic position in relation to others, based on factors such as income, education level, and occupation (Adler & Stewart, 2010) The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC, 2020) reported that SES and poverty are significant barriers to career development for rural disadvantaged learners in South Africa.

2.7.2.1 The Impact of SES on the Career Development of Disadvantaged Learners.

Maree and Che (2020) argued that a key impact of SES on career development is limited access to education. This is deplorable because disadvantaged learners often have limited access to quality education, which can result in limited job opportunities and lower-paying jobs (Hendricks et al., 2015). Without proper education, disadvantaged learners often struggle to compete with their counterparts in prosperous communities who had access to better educational opportunities (Maree et al., 2008; Hendricks et al., 2015). Furthermore, Albien and Naidoo (2017) mentioned an important impact of SES on career development that is often overlooked is limited exposure to different career trajectories. Rural disadvantaged learners in particular may have limited access to information about different careers and industries, which can limit their career options (Albien & Naidoo, 2017). Further, rural disadvantaged learners may also lack access to role models and mentors who can provide guidance and support in pursuing their career goals (Akosah-Twumasi et al., 2018). According to Akosah-Twumasi et al. (2018), economically disadvantaged learners have limited access to social capital and connections compared to their counterparts from high-SES communities. Building connections and social networking nowadays is helpful in career development, as these networks can provide access to job opportunities, mentorship, and other resources (Akosah-Twumasi et al., 2018).

The aforementioned impact of SES makes it difficult for disadvantaged learners to develop the skills, knowledge, and experience necessary to pursue their desired careers (Maree et al., 2008). On top of that, Albien and Naidoo (2017) stated that they may face discrimination and biases in the job market due to their SES, which can further limit their opportunities. The needs particular to the adolescent stage are discussed in the section that follows.

2.8 Developmental Stage and Identity Formation of Adolescence

Adolescence is a critical stage of development marked by significant changes in cognitive, social, and emotional domains (Jacobs & Collair, 2017). During this stage, individuals begin to form their sense of identity, which is influenced by a variety of factors including biological, psychological, and sociocultural influences (Erikson, 1968, as cited in Schreuder & Coetzee, 2021). Identity formation involves a process of exploration, reflection, and consolidation, as individuals seek to understand who they are, what they believe in, and what their place is in the world (Jacobs & Collair, 2017).

According to Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, the key task of adolescence is the development of a sense of identity (Erikson, 1968; Maree & Che, 2020). The adolescence stage involves a period of exploration, during which adolescents try out different roles and identities, followed by a period of consolidation, in which they integrate their experiences and develop a stable sense of self (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2021). The process of identity formation is influenced by a range of factors including cultural and family background, SES, and gender (Crocetti et al., 2017). For instance, individuals from marginalised groups may face additional challenges in identity formation due to discrimination and limited opportunities (Crocetti et al., 2017). Jacobs and Collair (2017) commented that in addition to exploring different identities, adolescents are faced with other important tasks such as making choices about their future trajectories, including educational and vocational choices.

2.8.1 Research on the Outcomes of Identity Formation

Research has revealed that adolescents who develop a strong sense of identity are more likely to experience positive outcomes such as increased self-esteem, better mental health, and greater academic achievement (Hendricks et al., 2015). Conversely, adolescents who struggle with identity formation may experience negative outcomes such as depression, anxiety, and academic difficulties (Hendricks et al., 2015; Schwartz et al., 2015). Hendricks and Kanjiri (2021) highlighted the role of social media in shaping the identity development of adolescents. Social media platforms provide a space for young people to explore different aspects of their

identity (Schwartz et al., 2015). Through sharing content and engaging with others on social media, adolescents can develop a sense of belonging and connection to “like-minded” individuals (Schwartz et al., 2015, p. 36). However, social media can also contribute to feelings of anxiety, pressure to conform, and social comparison, particularly among adolescents who are figuring out who they are (Hendricks & Kanjiri, 2021). Hendricks and Kanjiri (2021) advised that mental health professionals need to be aware of the potential risks and benefits of social media use and support adolescents in navigating these complex issues.

2.8.2 Specific Needs During the Adolescence Stage

As mentioned earlier, identity formation is a critical process for all youth, however, Shirima et al. (2021) stated that it can be particularly challenging for disadvantaged adolescents. Disadvantaged adolescents may face a variety of obstacles to identity formation, such as discrimination, poverty, and a lack of access to resources and opportunities (Shirima et al., 2021). These challenges may lead to a sense of uncertainty, insecurity, and low self-esteem, which can negatively impact career development (Hendricks et al., 2015).

According to Hendricks and Kanjiri (2021), disadvantaged youth who have trouble with identity formation may have limited career aspirations and struggle to make informed decisions about their future. This is because identity formation plays a critical role in career development, as it shapes an individual's sense of self as well as their interests, values, and skills, which are all important factors in choosing and pursuing a career trajectory (Hendricks & Kanjiri, 2021).

Despite the aforementioned challenges relating to the adolescence stage and identity formation, Schwartz et al. (2015) mentioned that there are strategies that can support identity formation and promote career development for disadvantaged youth. For instance, mentoring programmes and interventions that provide access to educational and training opportunities may help youth develop a clearer sense of self and identify their strengths and interests (Hendricks et al., 2015). Additionally, interventions that reduce discrimination and bias in the job market may help create more equitable career opportunities for disadvantaged youth (Albien & Naidoo, 2017).

2.9 Research on Learners from Environments Challenged by Disadvantages in South Africa

The present section starts off with an overview of the research findings conducted with disadvantaged learners in South Africa. This discussion is followed by the research findings on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the career development of disadvantaged learners in

South Africa. Additionally, gaps that currently exist in the literature and suggestions for future studies suggested by the research follow at the end.

2.9.1 Overview of the Impact of Apartheid Laws

The end of apartheid in South Africa brought about a significant commitment from all sectors of society to enhance education for all South Africans (Daniel, 2021). The apartheid regime had deliberately disadvantaged the majority of the population, particularly Black South Africans (Naidoo et al., 2019). This was done through the implementation of discriminatory policies in education, which resulted in gross inequalities in access to quality education (Naidoo et al., 2019). Following the dismantling of apartheid, the new democratic government recognised the urgent need to address these disparities and make education accessible and equitable for all citizens (Du Plessis & Mestry, 2021). Efforts were made to enact policies and implement programmes aimed at transforming the education system and providing equal learning opportunities (Daniel, 2021). Notwithstanding these efforts made to improve education for all in South Africa, Maree and Che (2020) insist that disadvantaged communities continue to face a significant challenge.

2.9.2 Current Findings

In South Africa, there has been significant research conducted on learners from environments challenged by disadvantages (Chetty, 2019; Du Plessis, 2021; Hendricks et al., 2015; Maree, 2016; Maree & Che, 2020). The present study aims to understand the unique circumstances and barriers still faced by students in disadvantaged communities today and explore strategies to improve their educational outcomes (Du Plessis & Mestry, 2022; Du Plessis, 2020). The study conducted by Hendricks et al. (2015, p. 8) focusing on adolescents from a low-income community in Cape Town highlights the importance of “self-efficacy, self-esteem, and social support” in shaping their aspirations. Research findings by Dwiarya and Suastini (2023) reveals that self-efficacy is essential in preparation for the careers of high school learners. Accordingly, “there is a need for proper and fast handling in alleviating the problem of student self-efficacy” (Dwiarya & Suastini, 2023, p. 5). One technique for addressing self-efficacy difficulties in high school learners is the implementation of career counselling using the life design approach (Maree & Che, 2020).

Maree (2016) mentioned that it is not uncommon for students to realise that they have made an inappropriate choice regarding their chosen field of study and enrolment, even after they have already started their studies. Maree (2016) further emphasised that detailed

assessments should be conducted well in advance of making significant choices, particularly regarding education and career trajectories. Delaying the assessment process and making choices without careful consideration is “short-sighted and irresponsible” (Maree, 2016, p. 7). Reid et al. (2016) mentioned that the delay in choosing a field of study or career would be significantly higher in disadvantaged communities.

In the argument put forth by McMahon et al. (2015), it is contended that the pervasive poverty faced by the majority of black South Africans directly impacts the educational resources available to black children, thus hindering their potential for success in school. The lack of school success results in “occupational deprivation and a decrease in opportunities for further education” (McMahon et al., 2015). Furthermore, McMahon et al. (2015, p. 6) concur with the findings of Mouton et al. (2012) that “there are fewer chances for children from low socioeconomic backgrounds to be enrolled in school and these same children are also more likely to drop out of school”. Hendricks et al. (2015) claim that black South African students may have trouble affording the type of education necessary for high-status professions like doctors, attorneys, and engineers; as a result, their job aspirations may be unrealistic.

2.9.2.1 Analysis of the Success of Group Career Counselling for Disadvantaged Learners.

Scant literature is available on the effectiveness of group-based career counselling in South Africa (Maree & Che, 2022). According to Naidoo et al. (2019), group-based career counselling intervention has the potential to help overcome barriers to access by reaching a larger number of people, including those in environments challenged by disadvantages (Naidoo et al., 2019). In the South African context, where there may be limited resources and access to individual counselling services, group counselling provides an opportunity to make career support more widely available (Maree et al., 2022). Maree et al. (2019) conducted a study where they examined the effectiveness of group-based narrative counselling with young adults from contexts challenged by disadvantages. Evidence from this research suggested that group-based career interventions appeared to be a perfect answer to the challenge in the South African context (Maree et al., 2019). This was in the context where a large proportion of adolescents had not had a chance to be exposed to career counselling at school and had to navigate their way without exposure to any career education (Maree et al., 2019). These findings are consistent with those reported by Santilli et al. (2019), Naidoo et al. (2019), and Maree et al. (2022). Furthermore, Nwoye (2015) maintained that South Africans have a strong focus on the group (as opposed to individuality), storytelling, and *ubuntu*, therefore, group career

counselling might be a culturally relevant and cost-effective approach to expose more youth to career counselling services before they graduate from high school.

2.9.2.2 An Overview of Findings on Career Aspirations of Disadvantaged Students.

Recent findings by Abe and Chikoko (2020) indicated that a significant majority of black South African students (over 80%) aspired to pursue high-status occupations. In contrast, only a small percentage (2%) showed an interest in skilled, semi-skilled, or unskilled occupations (Abe & Chikoko, 2020). These findings suggest a strong preference among black South African students for occupations that are perceived to have higher social status and potentially offer better economic opportunities (Abe & Chikoko, 2020). Watson et al. (2010, p. 53) concur with Abe and Chikoko (2020) and further claim that “barriers that stand in the way of students challenged by disadvantage are the same barriers that affect their career development and aspirations for the future”.

Chuong and Operario (2012) argue that the presence of parents in the home has a positive impact on learners’ academic success and career aspirations. When parents are consistently present and actively involved in their children's lives, they can serve as role models, providing guidance, support, and encouragement in their educational pursuits (Chuong & Operario, 2012). This is unfortunately not the case in the majority of disadvantaged communities. Daniels (2021) reported that many students from disadvantaged communities do not live with their biological parents. Daniels (2021, p. 1) further added that South Africa has a legacy of child-headed households as a result of HIV/AIDS, and “time will tell whether a similar picture will emerge due to COVID-19 deaths”.

2.9.3 *The Aftermath of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Career Development of Disadvantaged Learners*

According to Graham (2022), the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on disadvantaged learners in South Africa. These learners, who hitherto face substantial difficulties in accessing educational and career opportunities, have been further disadvantaged by the disruptions caused by the pandemic (Graham, 2022; Maree, 2022). According to Swart et al. (2022), the shift from traditional to remote learning has posed remarkable challenges for disadvantaged learners. The limited access to reliable technological devices, internet connectivity, and essential resources has impeded their ability to fully engage in online learning (Maree, 2021). This has resulted in a loss of instructional time, limited

exposure to educational resources, and reduced access to career guidance and support services (Pillay, 2021).

Swartz et al. (2022) indicated that the closure of vocational training institutions and schools has interrupted the learning and skill development of disadvantaged learners. Many of these learners heavily depend on schools and training institutions as a crucial pathway to gaining the knowledge and skills necessary for career development (Swartz et al., 2022). This argument is in agreement with what has been reported by Albien and Naidoo (2018) that for some underprivileged learners, the only time they see books is when they are at school, and the home reading culture does not exist in some households. Continuing the discussion, Pillay (2021) documented that the closure of educational institutions has not only disrupted their educational advancement but has also limited their opportunities for hands-on training and practical experience. Furthermore, the economic meltdown brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic including job losses, business closures, and reduced employment opportunities as noted by Parry and Gordon (2020), has negatively impacted the availability of entry-level jobs. Disadvantaged learners face increased competition for limited employment opportunities and the COVID-19 pandemic made it even more challenging for them to enter the job market and develop their careers (Parry & Gordon, 2020).

2.10 Gaps in the Literature on the Effectiveness of Career Construction Counselling on Rural Disadvantaged Learners

Albien and Naidoo (2018) highlighted an alarming disparity in the focus of career development research in South Africa. They found that less than 8% of the research in this field is specifically dedicated to black South Africans, despite black South Africans comprising nearly 80% of the country's population (Albien & Naidoo, 2018). The above mentioned statistic underscores a significant gap in the literature, as the current literature largely fails to adequately address the career development needs, challenges, and experiences of the majority population (Albien & Naidoo, 2018). Similar findings were reported by Maree and Che (2020), and they further advised that for career development and academic achievement to be accomplished, extensive research on this population must be conducted.

Stywayi et al. (2021) reported that even though there is a considerable body of research on career development and educational disparities in South Africa, much of it tends to overlook the unique challenges faced by children from rural disadvantaged backgrounds. Stywayi et al. (2021) further advised that there is a need for longitudinal studies that track the career trajectories of these children from early childhood through adulthood. Considering the

influence of socio-economic factors, limited access to resources, cultural dynamics, and geographic isolation on their career choices and success is much needed (Stywayi et al., 2021). Additionally, limited attention has been given to the role of career guidance and support services tailored to the needs of rural disadvantaged learners (Albien & Naidoo, 2018).

A study by Hendricks et al. (2015) suggested that life skills programmes for disadvantaged youth must include the development of their self-efficacy. Evidence from the literature suggests that self-efficacy is one of the major career barriers that adolescents in disadvantaged contexts experience or perceive while deciding on or aiming for future careers (Hendricks et al., 2015). In respect of self-efficacy, limited research has been done on the difficulties that exist.

Maree and Venter (2020) argue for the implementation of postmodern styles of career assessment that can empower learners to make independent career choices. These authors have highlighted gaps in the methods used to address these problems in the context of the Global South (developing country), especially currently. CCC interventions, as well as life design counselling, have indeed been utilised in numerous intervention research studies conducted by researchers (including postgraduate students) on the impact of career counselling with learners from diverse backgrounds (Dlamini, 2014; Le Grange & Maree, 2022; Maree & Magare, 2023; Maree & Che, 2020; Maree & Venter, 2020; Ruiters & Maree, 2022). These approaches emphasise a proactive and holistic approach to career development, taking into account individuals' unique life stories, personal values, and aspirations. However, none of these studies focused on assessing the effectiveness of CCC on enhancing the self-efficacy of a rural disadvantaged learner in particular, hence this study addresses this gap.

2.11 Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework consists of theories presented by specialists in the discipline in which researchers want to conduct a study, “which they draw upon to provide a theoretical coat hanger for their data analysis and interpretation of results” (Kivunja, 2018, p. 46). Varpio et al. (2019) asserted that a theoretical framework basically describes the philosophical perspective within which the problem is rooted (Varpio et al., 2019). This study is situated within the framework of life design theory, which is regarded as the first-ever coordinated career counselling theory (Maree & Che, 2020). The life design theory integrates Guichard and Lenz’s (2005) theory of the self-construction and Savickas’s (2005) career construction theories, and applies the “construction, deconstruction, co-construction, and reconstruction of individuals’ life stories” (Maree et al., 2022, p. 6). Both career construction theory and self-

construction theory are based on the social constructivism/constructionism paradigm, and they reflect an integration of life story, development process as well as personality characteristics (Ruiters & Maree, 2022). The life design intervention framework is long-term, where people develop their careers and self against the distinctive background circumstances that play a significant role in their lives wherever they go (Maree, 2022; Savickas et al., 2009). Life design interventions aim to prepare people for realistic adjustments during transitions, which render the framework to be preventive as well (Maree, 2020). Rossier (2015) maintained that the implementation of prevention strategies may effectively help support and benefit individuals who are underprivileged with limited psychological resources.

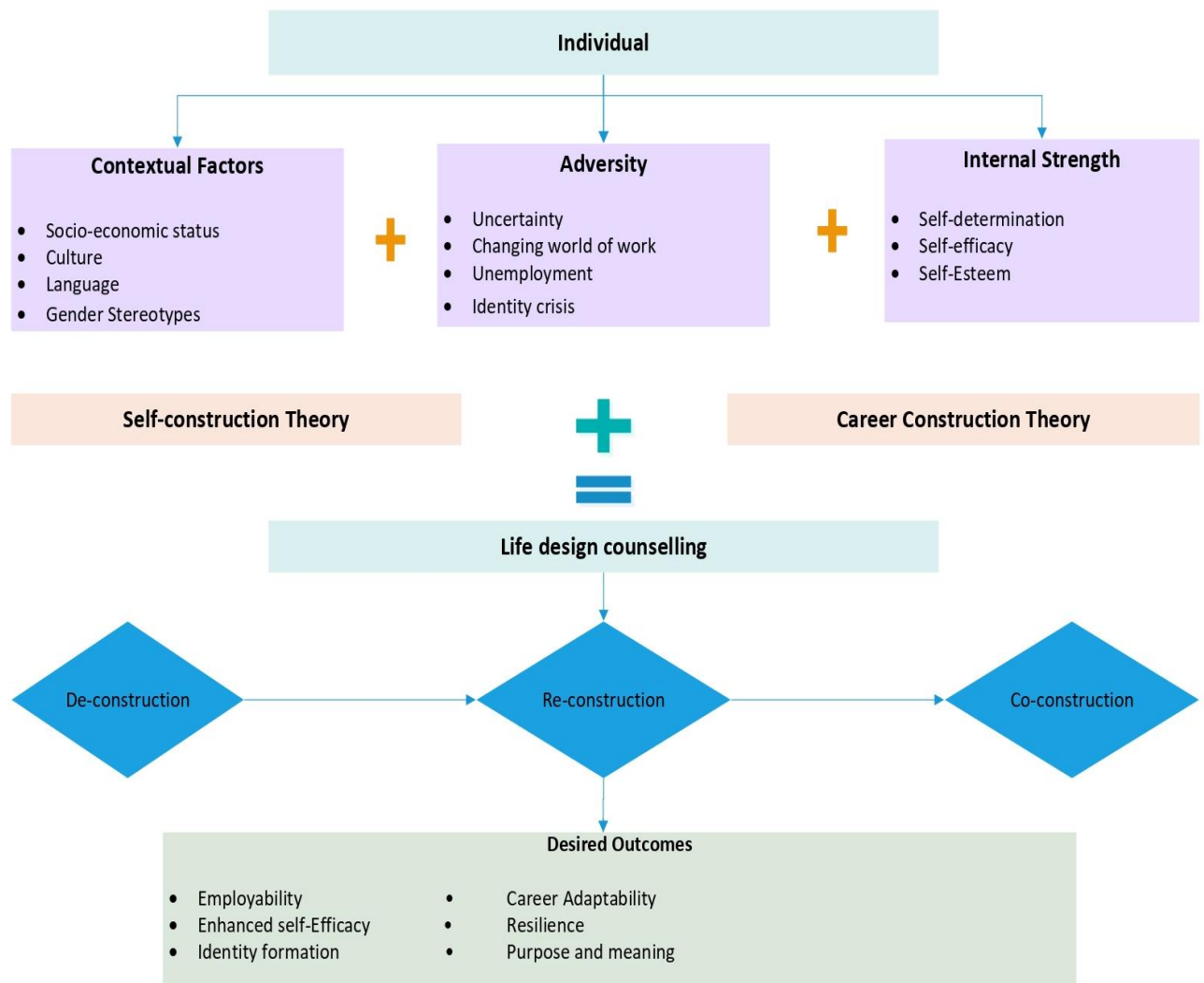
The life design approach can be particularly beneficial and helpful during interventions with disadvantaged learners who exhibit self-efficacy problems (Maree, 2020). Growing up in a rural disadvantaged area presents unforeseen curves and bends in a person's career journey (Maree, 2020). Learners who grew up in such an area tend to drop out before they complete their high school education, making it particularly hard for them to find work in the shifting postmodern world of work (Maree, 2020). Therefore, life design counselling (which also enhances learners' career adaptability skills) is an appropriate theoretical framework for the intervention to enhance the self-efficacy of the participant in this study (Maree, 2020). Self-efficacy is regarded as one of several important career skills that needs to be acquired by learners. Other important career skills that need to be attained include self-determination, the potential to make well-informed decisions quickly, the ability to recognise and grasp opportunities, and the ability to weave career movements into a coherent life story (Vilhjálmsdóttir & Tulinius, 2016, particularly for those from a disadvantaged rural background. Career construction and self-construction theories will guide the inquiry into the impact of life design counselling on the self-efficacy of the participant's self-efficacy. The relationship between the concepts in the study is schematically shown in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1 first indicates that all individuals who seek career counselling intervention have unique contextual factors, adversity/presenting problem, and their current strengths and available resources (Savickas, 2019). Maree et al. (2018) advocate the integration of multiple theories into the conceptual framework, asserting that addressing research-based questions necessitates more than one theory. The theory used to guide this intervention is situated within the framework of life design counselling, which originates and extends from self-construction and career construction theory (Maree et al., 2022). The purpose of career intervention programs is to inspire individuals to take control of their own life stories (Savickas & Porfeli, 2017). The narrative perspective conceptualises that a career can be understood as a series of

interconnected chapters, wherein each chapter is influenced and shaped by preceding chapters and has implications for future chapters (Maree & Magare, 2023). In other words, the present experiences one goes through inevitably leave an imprint on subsequent experiences in their career journey (Maree & Magare, 2023). Figure 2.1 is a demonstrated how concepts are related in the study.

Figure 2.1

The Conceptual Framework



Note. Adapted and modified from Maree et al. (2018).

Through life design counselling, the intervention first aims to assist the participant to narrate their career-life stories and draw on these narratives to guide themselves on how to enhance their self-efficacy and resolve career decision-making difficulties. Life stories and career stories are filled with “themes and patterns which can be used to make meaning of

adversity by turning pain into hope” (Le Grange & Maree, 2022, p. 181). Through applying career- and self-construction, the intervention aims to encourage the participant to reflect on their career lives and identify their key life themes and their career interest patterns. Reflecting upon these reflections will assist in clarifying their career decisions and enhance their career adaptability resources, enabling them to successfully navigate through transitional periods (Maree & Magare, 2023).

Rural disadvantaged learners experience challenges that are unique to their context (Du Plessis, 2022) and their unique contextual factors negatively impact their career development (Maree & Che, 2020). Therefore, this intervention helps the participant enhance their employability, resilience, and identity formation, which can help them find purpose and meaning. Ultimately, the intervention aims to enhance the participant’s sense of self-efficacy.

2.12 Conclusion

The chapter above presented a systematic and broad overview of the literature addressing the numerous theories that underpin this study. A review of the economic waves, with a special emphasis on the third and fourth waves, was given at the beginning of this chapter. This discussion provided insights into how the world of work has transformed from the 1870s to the present. The discussion emphasised the necessity to shift from the 20th century approach to career counselling to the 21st century postmodern career approaches that are deemed more suitable to serve the career needs of the people currently. The major career approaches were discussed in this chapter with particular attention given to the postmodern approaches. A brief overview of self-efficacy grounded on the work of Bandura (1977) in his theory of social cognitive theory followed. The objectives and interventions of life design were examined pertaining to the present research study, considering culture, context, and types of interventions that might be appropriate in circumstances of disadvantage. The identity formation of adolescents in the South African context was explored by using Erikson's (1968) points of view on the subject. The chapter concluded with an overview of studies on career counselling interventions and narrative counselling, findings, and gaps in the literature, ranging from the impact of apartheid laws to the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, research on learners from environments challenged by disadvantages was presented. Lastly, the theoretical framework guiding this intervention was presented.

Chapter 3 discusses the research design and methodology that was used to answer the research questions in more detail.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter explored the existing literature on the effectiveness of CCC in enhancing the self-efficacy of a rural disadvantaged learner, highlighting the changes that are currently taking place in the world of work and the unique challenges that rural disadvantaged learners face. Building upon this foundation, this chapter explores the methodology and data analysis adopted in this research study to answer the research questions.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the study's research approach, enabling readers to evaluate the rigor and validity of the findings. To achieve this, the study will outline in further detail the adopted research paradigm and design, data generation methods, data analysis techniques as well as the ethical considerations that the study adhered to.

3.2 Research Paradigm

According to Morgan (2007, p. 49), paradigms refer to “a system of beliefs and practices that influence how researchers select both the questions they study and the method they use to study those questions”. This study is rooted in the interpretive/constructivist paradigm, which assumes that reality is socially constructed. The interpretive/constructivist paradigm focuses on understanding human beings' subjective meanings and experiences by observing and becoming involved with them and identifying recurring themes in their descriptions of their subjective experiences (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). Understanding individuals and how they interpret the world around them is particularly emphasised in the interpretive/constructivist paradigm (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2006). The choice to adopt the interpretive/constructivist paradigm was driven by both the nature and objective of this study, as I aimed to comprehend and elucidate how individuals derived meaning based on life experiences and everyday interactions that shaped their career choices. Leavy (2017, p. 6) asserted that “research questions determine the approaches and methods to be used to address the problem at hand”. To put it another way, the approaches and methodologies employed in research are selected based on how well they produce relevant data to address research questions (Leavy, 2017).

As the present study primarily focussed on examining the ‘what’ and ‘how’ aspects of the research problem (Creswell, 2003), the interpretive/constructivist paradigm was deemed suitable because it enabled me to understand how the participant in the study ascribed meaning

to his personal experiences that influenced his self-efficacy and career decisions (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). The understanding and making meaning of a participant's life when a researcher and participant engage are among the interpersonal processes listed in career construction theory (Maree & Hansen, 2011). During the data generation, a subjective approach to research questions was used. Adopting a subjective approach was crucial, as it enabled me to actively interact with the participant to co-construct his life-career story. I utilised a narrative (storied) approach to prompt the participant in eliciting his career-life journeys, fostering autobiographical details that connected his past experiences with his present and future.

3.3 Research Design

According to Nieuwenhuis (2007, p. 76), a research design is defined as “a plan or strategy that goes from the underlying philosophical assumptions to specifying the selection of participants, consideration of the data-gathering techniques to be used, and the data analysis to be done”. Creswell and Poth (2018) maintain that the choices that the researcher makes while conceptualising and planning the study make up the research design. The selection of a research design for the present study relied on both my assumptions as well as my skills and practice (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). The data generation was influenced by both the assumptions and the skills/practices of me as the researcher. The qualitative research methods based on the interpretive/constructivist perspective were followed in the study to investigate the research problem and answer the research questions.

3.3.1 Qualitative Research Methods

Research methodology is concerned with how researchers design a study to enable them to obtain valid and reliable results while also meeting their research objectives and answering their research questions (Frost, 2011). The present study followed a qualitative research methodology to investigate the research problem. Qualitative research methods “are non-numerical and aim to understand social action in the specific context, rather than generalise to some theoretical population” (Rahman, 2017, p. 103). The qualitative research approach is subjective, incorporates multiple realities, and is inductive in nature, with the researcher generally exploring meanings and insights in a given situation (Rahman, 2017). The qualitative research approach was deemed suitable for the nature and purpose of this study because of its effectiveness in thoroughly investigating a specific problem and comprehending the interpretations that different groups and individuals ascribe to social problems. Moreover, Creswell and Poth (2018) asserted one of the advantages of qualitative methods is that they

produce a thick detailed description of participants' feelings, opinions, and experiences and interpret the meanings of their actions (Rahman, 2017). The participant in the study was accordingly permitted to speak freely about his subjective experiences, and, in this way, deep qualitative data was produced.

Qualitative research requires a smaller sample size than quantitative studies, which raises the issue of generalisability in qualitative studies (Schofield, 2007). As the present study sampled a single case, the findings cannot be generalised but will be transferred, meaning the study's findings could be applied to contexts similar to the research context described in my study (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2006). In qualitative research studies, validity refers to the thickness and richness of the data obtained (Nastasi & Schensul 2005). In the present study, I used multiple data generation and analysis techniques (triangulation) to enhance the validity and reliability of the study. Babbie and Mouton (2005) consider triangulation one of the best strategies to enhance validity and reliability. It is also regarded as the best strategy to overcome the bias of relying on a single method.

3.3.2 Case Study Research

The study followed an intrinsic, descriptive, exploratory case study design involving a single participant. Cumpston et al. (2019) argued that case study design is used when a researcher aims to generate a comprehensive, holistic, multi-dimensional understanding of a complex issue in its real-world setting. Yin (2002, p. 13) defines a case study as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used”. A unit of analysis (a case) can be an individual, a group, an organisation, or a local community (Yin, 2012). As mentioned earlier, an intrinsic case study design (as opposed to an instrumental one) was adopted in the present study. Such a study represents nothing other than itself, which insinuates that the primary focus of intrinsic case studies is on the case itself (Creswell, 2014).

According to Zainal (2007), an intrinsic case study design is typically used when a researcher wants to learn more about the uniqueness of a particular case rather than about a general problem. In an intrinsic case study, the researcher must define the phenomenon's distinctiveness, which sets it apart from other phenomena (Yazan, 2015). Using an intrinsic case study design includes obtaining in-depth holistic data that help to explore and describe the data in a real-life environment, which would have otherwise been difficult to obtain using other research approaches (Zainal, 2007).

Additionally, this study adopted an intrinsic case study research design because of the purpose and nature of the research questions, which necessitated comprehensive and detailed investigation. The chosen design was used in this intervention to determine the effectiveness of CCC in enhancing the self-efficacy of a rural disadvantaged learner. Considering the fact that a single intrinsic case study focuses on a single case, and its findings are used for the purpose of enlightening a specific case under examination (Creswell & Poth, 2018), this design was more appropriate for this study since I was interested in studying a rural disadvantaged participant with inadequate self-efficacy.

3.4 Research Setting

The study was conducted in a selected local preschool (Setting) in a particularly poor location. Due to its proximity and conducive nature, it was considered convenient for both the participant and I. This is a small village situated in the KwaZulu-Natal province, South Africa. This is a unique village that is known for its high levels of crime, gangsterism, unemployment rate, and elevated rate of high school dropouts compared to other schools under the uMgungundlovu district. The village was purposefully selected because of its unique characteristics, for instance, it is rare to find a village that has such elevated levels of crime and gangsterism. I purposefully judged that the participant would most probably benefit from the intervention, considering the harsh conditions that he lives in.

3.5 Selection of a Participant

Researchers employ sampling to systematically select a representative subset of the population of interest in a research study (Sharma, 2017). According to Maree et al. (2018), the selection of participants in a case study design implies being able to select a case either through probability or purposive sampling in a manner that is consistent with the purpose of the study. As mentioned earlier, this study was conducted using qualitative research methodologies; therefore, non-probability purposive sampling was used to select a willing participant. Terre Blanche and Durrheim (2006) state that purposive sampling focuses on specific demographic features of interest, enabling the researcher to answer the research questions more effectively. A non-probability sampling technique draws on subjective, non-randomised methods for selecting participants. Consequently, not all members of a particular population stand an equal chance of being selected to participate in the study (Sharma, 2017).

In this study, the participant's selection was dependent on my judgment based on pre-selected significant features representative of the phenomenon under investigation (Tuckman

& Harper, 2012). I purposively selected a willing participant between 16 and 25 years. The participant had to be an emerging adult from a disadvantaged rural environment in the Pietermaritzburg area (KZN) who was ready to embark on his career. The participant had to be able to communicate proficiently in either Zulu or English or both. He also needed to be interested in participating in life design counselling to enhance his self-efficacy, a key component of the proposed research. The gender of the participant was not a significant variable in this research. In pursuit of finding a willing and appropriate participant, I drew on my network, which I established during my time as a peer educator, a student, and a community volunteer in the area.

Owing to the specific criteria required for this research, non-probability purposive sampling was deemed the most suitable sampling technique, which allowed for an in-depth study of the participant's subjective experience. The individual setup provided an intimate environment that enhanced the therapeutic relationship between the participant and me. The one-on-one setting offered him a safe and secure space where he could openly discuss personal experiences, which might have been challenging and unethical to share within a group setting. The use of qualitative questionnaires in the interviews allowed the participant to provide open-ended answers, which subsequently provided comprehensive data for analysis.

3.6 Data Generation and Documentation

In qualitative studies, data generation refers to the method and theory applied by researchers to obtain and measure data from a sample of interest to answer the research questions (Göran, 2019). In an attempt to answer the research questions and ensure the validity of the data, I used multiple methods of data generation, including semi-structured interviews, qualitative assessments, observation of body language, and extensive field notes¹ (Babbie & Mouton, 2005). I used semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions as a primary data generation method. Open-ended questions enabled the participant to provide deep, relevant data that would help answer the research questions, rather than more structured questions limiting the participant's response (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2006).

Following the selection of the participant, he was invited to take part in the data generation sessions, and each session took approximately an hour.² Furthermore, the sessions were conducted in both Zulu and English, and since I am bilingual, there was no need for an

¹See Table 3.2, Section 3.5.1, p 49-51, for a summary of the data-generation instruments.

²Please find the Procedure table that explains the details of the procedure on page 52, Section 3.5.2 of this document.

interpreter. The data generation sessions were conducted in an enabling, conducive environment within walking distance for the participant. The sessions were in the form of a conversation between the participant and I, during which I adhered strictly to the ethical guidelines. In all the sessions, the participant was treated with the utmost respect. Furthermore, with the participant's consent, the sessions were audio-recorded, transcribed word for word, and used as the study's primary data set.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the data and to overcome any bias that may have occurred due to the reliance on a single data generation methodology, the data-gathering instruments that were used are outlined in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1*Summary of the Data Generation Methods*

| Assessment Instrument/ Technique | Explanation of Instrument/Technique |
|---|---|
| Career interest profile | <p>According to Le Grange and Maree (2022), the career interest profile (CIP) is an entirely qualitative questionnaire, not a psychometric instrument.³ The CIP is utilised by career facilitators to support clients in making informed decisions regarding their careers and subjects of interest (Maree & Che, 2020). Maree (2013, p. 72) added that the CIP “provides career counsellors with a strategy to help clients not only choose ‘appropriate’ careers but, more importantly, advance their unfinished stories, construct life trajectories, construct themselves and use their careers to design and live successful lives”. The CIP has been designed to be user-friendly and follows a logical sequence of questions, starting with simple ones and progressing toward more challenging questions (Maree, 2013). The CIP is designed to be inclusive, enabling career counsellors to provide support to individuals from environments challenged by disadvantages. This makes it relevant and effective in a multi-cultural context like South Africa. In the context of this research study, the CIP was used to elicit the participant’s career-life story and narratives. See Table 3.2 for a brief summary of the CIP’s four parts.</p> |
| Career construction interview | <p>The career construction interview (Savickas, 2010) is employed to help individuals gain a deeper understanding of themselves and does not primarily centre around making career or study decisions. According to Hartung (2019), during the interview, individuals are prompted with a series of questions that encourage them to share stories about themselves and their aspirations. These narratives shed light on subjective themes related to both personal life and career goals (Hartung, 2019). Life-career themes provide a clear understanding of one's</p> |

³ For the summary of the four parts of the CIP, refer to table 3.2 on page 52 of this study.

self-concept and identity, enabling individuals to reflect upon how they can use work to be authentic and subsequently turn their pain into hope and make meaningful social contributions (Maree, 2013). The CCI comprises an introductory section as well as five additional questions (see Table 3.3).

| | |
|--|--|
| Early Recollections Technique (ERT) | The earliest memories of an individual serve as the fundamental building blocks for their career and life narratives (Glavin et al., 2017). Early recollections (ER) do not happen by chance; they tend to resurface as significant themes or inclinations throughout an individual's life. Dalene (2023) proposed that the earliest recollections technique (ERT) is a helpful tool for individuals to explore their unique work approach by uncovering their strengths and adaptability skills. ERT aims to foster personal development, enhance self-awareness, and facilitate overall meaning-making processes (Dalene, 2023). During the intervention, the ERT was used to supplement the CCI once a safe and secure space was established for the participant. This collaborative and facilitative procedure aims to foster a co-constructive conversation with the participant. |
| Collage | According to Gerstenblatt (2013), a collage is an artistic way of visually portraying a narrative by combining diverse images, pictures, and photographs sourced from magazines, newspapers, or the internet. The collage enabled the client to narrate his career and life story in a creative and relaxed manner. During the discussion of the collage, the participant had a chance to explore his individuality and illuminate his career and life story. As a result, the collage served as a visual supplement to the conversation on designing the participant's life journey. |
| Lifeline | According to Dalene (2023) the lifeline serves as a subjective visual tool in career assessment, enabling individuals to uncover significant aspects that might impact their future career choices. McMahon and Watson (2020) viewed the lifeline as an autobiographical narrative technique that arranges the participants' life in chronological order, enabling visualisation of interpersonal relationships and family patterns. In this intervention, the participant and I collaboratively explored to what extent the depicted life experiences impacted his career journey. In that way, we served as co-constructors of the lifeline. |

| | |
|--|--|
| Genogram | Storlie et al. (2018, p. 90) defined genograms as a technique that allows practitioners to “map the family structure clearly and to note and update the map of family patterns of relationships and functioning as they emerge”. The genogram portrays the individuals who are recognised as part of an individual’s family, based on their perspective. Additionally, the genogram also illustrates the connections and relationships among them (Storlie et al., 2018). The genogram is a helpful tool when used in conjunction with the lifeline as it offers a valuable understanding of the family dynamics, which play a crucial role in identifying potential trans-generational themes that are significant for an individual’s growth (Dalene, 2023). |
| Semi-structured and informal interviews | The interviews were done in all the sessions as a rapport-building activity in order to get to know the participant better. Gerstenblatt (2013) claimed that interviews are a powerful technique for rapport building, especially in situations where establishing a comfortable and trusting relationship between the researcher and the participant is essential. Furthermore, informal interviews differ from formal interviews in that they are more relaxed, conversational, and less structured (Gerstenblatt, 2013). |

Note. Compiled from Jude and Maree (2020).

Table 3.2*Summary of the Content of the CIP*

| Part | Type of Data Generated | Paradigm | Associated Process |
|-------------|--|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | In this part, the participant is required to write down his biographical details and identify the key factors that have shaped him within his family background. | Career development | Guiding and advising |
| 2 | Part 2 comprises career choice-related questions. The participant was asked to list the three most-preferred careers and three least-preferred careers as well as reasons for these choices and advice he received from his teachers regarding study and career choices. | Vocational guidance | Guiding and advising |
| 3 | The participant was requested to identify and rank his six highest-preferred career categories from a total of 19 career categories. | Vocational guidance | Education and facilitating |
| 4 | The participant was asked to respond to narrative questions. | Life designing | Designing and healing |

Note. Compiled from Maree and Magare (2022)

Table 3.3*Summary of the Content of the CCI*

| | Part | Question | Rationale | Part of the story |
|--------------------|-------------|--|--|--------------------------------|
| Scene | A | How can I be useful to you as you construct your career? | Clients are considered the ultimate experts in their own lives. Therefore, clients should express their goals and establish a context for counselling through effective communication. | Autobiographical author |
| Self | 1 | Who did you admire when you were growing up? Tell me more about him/her. | Role models represent how clients perceive themselves and their fundamental aspirations. | Social actor |
| Stage | 2 | Are there any magazines or television shows that you follow consistently? If so, which ones and why do you enjoy them? | Provides information about environments that are suitable for clients' lifestyles and align with their preferences. | Motivated agent |
| Script | 3 | What is your favourite book/movie? | The story uncovers the individuals who encountered a similar obstacle as the clients and demonstrates their strategies for overcoming it. | Autobiographical author |
| Self-advice | 4 | Tell me your favourite saying or motto? | Client's present-moment self-advice is revealed. | Autobiographical author |
| Back-story | 5 | What is your earliest recollection? | Early memories and preoccupations expose the fundamental issues that clients encounter. | Autobiographical author |

Note. Compiled from Maree (2014), and Savickas (2018).

3.6.1 Data Generation Plan

The data generation plan for the present study was developed with the research questions in mind – investigating the effect of the administration of CCC on a learner with inadequate self-efficacy from a disadvantaged rural environment, as outlined in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4

Data Generation Plan

| Session | Activity | Technique | Session goal | Participant reflection guideline |
|---------|---|--|--|--|
| 1 | 1. Introductions 2. Discussion of the ethical considerations 3. Obtaining informed consent 4. Orientations to the intervention | 1. Interviews 2. Discussion 3. Reflections | 1. Orientate the participant to the intervention 2. Build rapport 3. Goalsetting | Why am I here and what can I expect from these sessions? |
| 2 | Qualitative exploration of client's understanding of self-efficacy and his current level of self-efficacy. | 1. Interviews 2. CIP | To get insights into his current level of self-efficacy and his career interest | What careers interest me the most? |
| 3 | Qualitative exploration of childhood significant memories | 1. Earliest recollections technique 2. Reflections | Explore the participants early stories | How do my early stories link to my present? |
| 4 | Qualitatively explore his family patterns and trans-generational themes | 1. Lifeline 2. Genogram 3. Discussion of life events | Explore the participants life events and he dealt with past challenges | What did I learn about myself and my family's influence? |
| 5 | Visual narration | Collage | Visually exploring the participants' career themes | Open-ended |
| 6 | 1. My career story 2. Open discussion | Career construction interview | Define significant events that inform self-efficacy | Where would I like to be in the future? |
| 7 | Open discussion | Interview | 1. Re-Defining self-efficacy 2. Reflect on all the techniques 3. Termination | Open-ended |

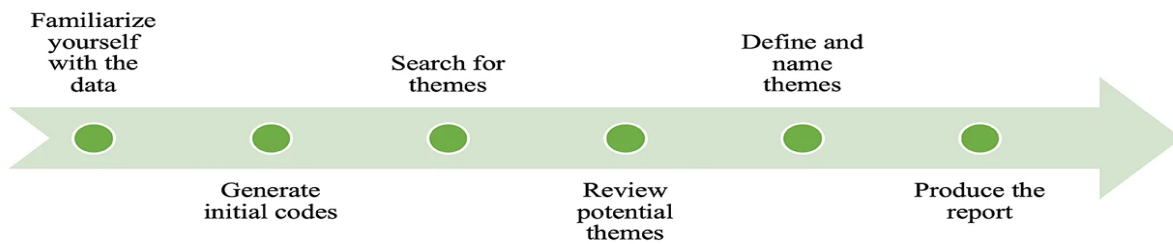
The following section provides a description of how study's data was analysed and interpreted.

3.7 Data Analysis and Interpretation

Saldaña (2014) postulates that in qualitative research studies, the process of data analysis is not a linear progression but rather cyclical/recursive. This implies that instead of being distinct stages, data generation, analysis, and interpretation are interrelated and carried out concurrently. Johnson and Christensen (2014, p. 68) call the “cyclical process of generating and analysing data during a single study interim analysis”. Qualitative researchers use the interim analysis to gain thick in-depth descriptions of the data that goes beyond common-sense interpretations (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2006). Mouton (2017) stated that qualitative researchers use themselves as primary instruments instead of relying on statistically sophisticated instruments for analysing data. Qualitative approaches commonly rely on the application of an inductive technique for coding and developing themes (Johnson & Christensen, 2014).

To organise and interpret the data generated in broad detail, I adhered to the six steps of thematic analysis outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006, as cited in Terry et al., 2017).⁴ Thematic analysis is a qualitative data analysis technique that involves examining a data set to identify, analyse, and report repeated patterns (Kiger & Varpio, 2020). Nieuwenhuis, (2016) mentioned that thematic analysis offers an accessible and theoretically flexible approach for generating codes from the qualitative data set. Codes are the most fundamental elements of analysis that can capture interesting aspects of data relevant to the research questions (Terry et al., 2017). Braun and Clarke (2013) elucidated that thematic analysis is versatile as it offers researchers the theoretical flexibility to conduct qualitative analysis. In addition to offering theoretical flexibility, thematic analysis also permits flexibility in terms of the research question, sample size, data-gathering method, and approaches to meaning generation.

⁴ Refer to Figure 3.1 for the six steps of thematic analysis.

Figure 3.1*Six Steps of Data (Content) Analysis*

Note. Compiled from Clarke and Braun (2013), Clarke and Braun (2017) and Terry et al. (2017).

The thematic data analysis process began with me as the researcher looking for and noting patterns of significance and issues of potential interest in the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The thematic method of analysis involves frequent moving backwards and forwards between the entire data set, the coded extracts of data being analysed, and the analysis of the data produced (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Finally, I adhered to the six steps of thematic analysis outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006) for further interpretations and meaning-making of the generated data. I identified the main themes, emerging themes, and sub-themes. Then, data was analysed and compared for similarities and differences, and similar data were clustered together to constitute a particular theme (Terry et al., 2017).

Step 1: I immersed myself fully in the data, dedicating meticulous time to reading and re-reading the data. My goal was to become more familiar with the content, understand the context, and identify potential patterns or interesting areas for exploration.

Step 2: I initiated the coding process to code the data. Coding consists of systematically labelling and categorising pertinent segments of the data that depict distinct ideas, concepts, or themes (Terry et al., 2017). This procedure entailed identifying significant parts of the data and ascribing them with descriptive labels.

Step 3: After generating initial codes, I searched for overarching themes that link different codes together. These themes are recurring patterns of meaning found within the data and contribute to creating a coherent and meaningful explanation of the phenomenon under investigation in this study.

Step 4: The identified themes were reviewed and verified if they accurately reflected the data. I thoroughly refined, combined, and split the themes, with the purpose of ensuring that they captured and conveyed the essence of the data meaningfully and coherently.

Step 5: I defined the final set of themes and provided a concise explanation for each one of the themes. I ensured that each theme was representative of a pattern identified in the data set and that all themes were supported by relevant instances from the primary data set.

Step 6: The sixth phase marked the final stage of the data analysis, which involved compiling a comprehensive report. The report comprised an introduction to the study, a depiction of the research design and techniques employed, a demonstration of identified themes along with corresponding quotes for support as well as a thorough discussion regarding implications and interpretations deduced from these findings.

3.8 Quality Assurance

Cypress (2017, p. 255) defined quality assurance of research studies as “strategies and policies for ensuring that data integrity, quality, and reliability are maintained at every stage of the project”. This encompasses strategies for preventing errors from entering the data sets, implementing safeguards prior to data generation, and instituting protocols during study data usage (Cypress, 2017). Maree and Magare (2022) maintained that validity and reliability are important techniques for ensuring the quality of the study in any research study. However, in qualitative studies, the terms reliability and validity are not commonly used, instead, trustworthiness and dependability are used to assess the quality of the data (Nieuwenhuis, 2016).

3.8.1 Quality Assurance for Qualitative Data

The concept of trustworthiness in qualitative research is used to indicate the validity and reliability of the findings (Maree & Magare, 2022). Trustworthiness of a study refers to the “degree of confidence in data, interpretation, and methods used to ensure the quality of a study” (Lincoln & Guba, 1994, as cited in Amankwaa, 2016, p. 125). Moon et al. (2016) suggested that it is essential for researchers in every study to establish procedures and protocols necessary for ensuring the study is credible and worthy of consideration by readers. Therefore, this study implemented four strategies – credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability – to ensure the trustworthiness of its data (Nieuwenhuis, 2016). Table 3.4 clarifies how the four strategies of ensuring quality were applied in the present study.

Table 3.5*Techniques Used to Enhance Trustworthiness in the Study*

| Strategy | Approach | Provision by the researcher |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| Credibility | Triangulation | In this study, various methods of data generation were utilised, including qualitative techniques, interviews, observation, and reflections. |
| | Member checking | All data gathered was summarised, reviewed and verified with the participant to ensure that I did not make any errors during the interpretation and meaning making. |
| | Prolonged involvement in the site | I spent sufficient time with the participant, which enabled her to build rapport and develop an enhanced understanding of the participant and his unique context. Prolonged engagement with the participant assisted in ensuring that the interpretations and reporting on findings are based on a nuanced and detailed comprehension of the participant's lived experiences. |
| | Reflective journal | Throughout the data generation process, I maintained a reflective journal to document personal observations, experiences, events, and challenges encountered. |
| Dependability | Audit trail | In order to provide an audit trail, I diligently maintained a comprehensive and transparent record of every step taken throughout the research process. This included documenting decisions made during data generation, analysis, and interpretation. Through this meticulous approach, other researchers will be able to easily track the |

| | | |
|------------------------|---------------|--|
| | | path followed by me and evaluate both the credibility and robustness of the study. |
| Confirmability | Triangulation | Multiple data generation techniques were used to overcome my potential biases that may have resulted from relying on a single method. |
| Transferability | Reflectivity | I recorded observations, providing a comprehensive account of the participant's specific environment and intervention. Ample information was included regarding the surrounding circumstances to allow readers to assess how applicable the findings are in comparison to other familiar settings. |

Note. Adapted and modified from Nieuwenhuis (2016), Maree at al. (2008), and Maree and Magare (2022).

3.9 Ethical Considerations

The Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA, 2016, p. 2) states that researchers “need to consider the possible adverse impacts of their research on vulnerable groups and thus have a duty to observe the highest possible standards to protect the rights of research participants”. The above statement highlights the utmost importance of researchers being mindful of ethical responsibilities and ensuring fair treatment during the research, particularly when working with vulnerable populations such as disadvantaged children (HPCSA, 2016). These requirements must be upheld throughout every step of the research process. (HPCSA, 2016). The present study incorporates various ethical principles such as maintaining confidentiality, respecting privacy and anonymity, ensuring informed assent, promoting voluntary participation, and safeguarding against potential harm.

3.9.1 *Informed Consent*

The informed consent informed the participant about the study, including its nature and purpose, so he fully understood the intervention and what was expected from him. I read and explained all the sections of the informed consent letter to the participant, giving him sufficient time to ask questions and clarify anything he may not understand. After clarifying everything, the participant was asked to provide his informed consent in writing.

3.9.2 Confidentiality and Anonymity

The details of an individual participant's life events are the main focus of intrinsic case studies. Therefore, Bos (2020) maintained that confidentiality and anonymity must be considered in such studies. I ensured the confidentiality and anonymity of the participant by not revealing the information that he shared during the data generation and I gave him a pseudonym to protect his identity. The audio recordings and transcripts are stored in a secure place accessible only to my supervisor and I.

3.9.3 Protection from Harm

The participant was provided with accurate and comprehensive information about the potential impact of the study in order to ensure safety from possible harm (Bos, 2020). According to Arifin (2018), individuals participating in the study may potentially face emotional and psychological challenges due to the personal nature of the information being obtained. As a result, measures were implemented to ensure that counselling would be provided or suitable professional referrals could be made when necessary.

3.9.4 Voluntary Participation

The participant was reminded of his choice to participate in the study and his freedom to withdraw at any given point if he no longer felt comfortable to continue participating.

3.10 Conclusion

The chapter provided a comprehensive overview and justification of the adopted research paradigm and design as well as research methods used to draw the conclusions in the present research. Furthermore, it provided a detailed explanation of the steps and techniques used to address the research questions, including factors such as sample size, selection of the participant, data generation techniques, intervention plan as well as techniques used to analyse the data. Additionally, this chapter outlined how validity and reliability were ensured through appropriate measures taken in these regards. This chapter concluded with a description of the ethical principles that the study adhered to. The following chapter presents the findings obtained.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

As explained in the previous chapters, this study aimed to assess the effectiveness of career intervention based on CCC for a rural disadvantaged learner to enhance his self-efficacy. This section discusses the findings of qualitative data analysis. To establish a comprehensive picture of the themes and patterns identified, this report begins with an in-depth exploration of the participant's background. Subsequently, it presents a detailed explanation of how the life design-based intervention process was perceived by the participant involved in the study. Furthermore, in-depth discussions of each of the seven sessions are provided with references to the transcriptions.

In my discussion of the findings, my primary objective will be to impartially evaluate and connect the results of my study with the existing body of literature while critically analysing these outcomes. I will employ a structured four-fold approach that encompasses the following key dimensions:

1. I examine whether my study's findings align with earlier research to identify areas of agreement.
2. I scrutinise any results that deviate from established prior research, highlighting disparities, and exploring potential reasons for differences.
3. I determine whether my study has unveiled entirely new findings not previously documented, emphasising their novelty and significance.
4. I analyse my study's findings to identify and understand any discernible trends or patterns contributing to a deeper comprehension of the subject.

Throughout this process, I prioritise impartiality and substantiate my assessments with evidence and reasoned analysis.

4.1.1 Overview of the Data Analysis Process

As indicated in Chapters 1 and 3, thematic data analysis was used to analyse the study's data for the following reasons (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Braun & Clarke, 2021; Terry et al., 2017). Thematic analysis was deemed suitable for this research due to its well-established reputation for providing a robust and flexible approach to qualitative data analysis (Terry et al., 2017). The thematic analysis offers a systematic and comprehensive way to identify, analyse, and interpret patterns or themes within qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Its flexibility

enabled me to adapt the analysis to the unique characteristics of the data and research context, ensuring that I captured the richness and depth of the information gathered (Terry et al., 2017). Additionally, thematic analysis is particularly well-suited for uncovering nuanced insights and exploring complex phenomena, which aligns well with the nature and objectives of my research (Braun & Clarke, 2021).

The six steps of thematic analysis outlined in Chapter 3 were meticulously followed in this chapter. The various codes were categorised into major themes and sub-themes, followed by a thorough review to confirm their relevance to the coded data and data set. These themes and sub-themes successfully captured the intended meaning. Despite facing challenges, I ensured that the identified themes and sub-themes were relevant to the research question, even though it was sometimes difficult to connect a specific theme with a particular research question.

4.1.2 How Quotation Sources were Identified

Eight different sources of information were used to gather qualitative data. To help readers locate specific data sets easily, these sources have been labelled with alphabetic characters (A-H). Although observation was mentioned as one of the data generation methods in Chapter 3, it did not provide any significant information. Henceforth, this source is excluded from further discussions within this chapter.

- A. Interviews
- B. Career Interest Profile
- C. Earliest Recollections Technique
- D. Lifeline
- E. Genogram
- F. Collage
- G. Career Construction Interview
- H. Reflections

4.1.2.1 The Referencing System. Table 4.1 displays the three-digit coding system employed for referencing the transcribed data.

Table 4.1

The Three-Digit Coding System Utilised to Reference Data

| | Data Source | Page Number | Line Number⁵ |
|----------|-------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| A | Interviews | 68-119 | 1625-3424 |
| B | Career Interest Profile | 7-31 | 1-556 |
| C | Earliest Recollections | 32-52 | 557-1238 |
| D | Lifeline | 53 | 1241 |
| E | Genogram | 54 | 1243 |
| F | Collage | 64 | 1555 |
| G | Career Construction Interview | 68-119 | 1625-3424 |
| H | Reflections | 119-223 | 3426-3490 |

4.1.2.2 How the Three-Digit System was Used in the Context of this Study. The referencing system that I used in my study utilised the format (x;x;x), where the first number corresponds to the session number, the second figure represents which page contains the data, and the last digit denotes precisely which line of text includes a response. For example, (6;81;2091), “I always try to push myself because I feel like nobody understands me the way he did”. In this instance, “6” refers to the session number, “81” refers to the page number, and “2091” refers to the line on which the response starts.

The following section discuss the relevant background of the participant who was deemed suitable and was selected to participate in the study. The following section discusses the relevant background of the participant who was deemed suitable and was selected to participate in the study.

4.2 Background Information of the Participant

Hope Dlamini (pseudonym) was 16 years old during the time of the intervention. Hope is a black African male who resides in Pietermaritzburg KwaZulu-Natal. Hope was the second born of two boys. He reported that his father died when he was five years old, and his mother

⁵ Line numbers in Table 4.1 indicate the total number of transcribed lines for the particular source.

is currently working in Durban as a domestic worker. Hope reported that he is currently living with his aunt and cousins in their maternal grandmother's house.

Hope was doing Grade 11 during the intervention and repeated Grade 10 twice. He said that he repeated Grade 10 not because he was struggling academically; he did not progress because he did not take his academics seriously. Hope's primary language is Zulu, and he understands a bit of English. Hope goes to a school where all subjects are taught in isiZulu including English, as a result, he required translations for almost every question in the CIP. Hope also required reassurance, as he would ask for the sake of making sure he was on the right track.

Hope is enrolled in the commerce stream at school. He mentioned that he enjoys accounting and economics, and his least favourite subjects are Life orientation and English. Hope mentioned that he never received any form of career guidance before. Therefore, he sought career counselling because he was uncertain about his subject choices. He mentioned that he is more passionate about Science, however, he was advised not to take it because it is difficult to pass. He reported that he also enjoys his chosen subjects because he feels like he will be in a better position to come up with solutions to failing businesses. He is further motivated that doing Accounting will enable him to assist his mother. He mentioned that his mother buys stuff in Durban at a stalk price and resells it in the village at a high price. He mentioned that after matric he wants to pursue a career in accounting. After completing it, he will then pursue his science passion.

Growing up, Hope mentioned that he struggled to make friends. As a result, he spent most of his time with his mother. He mentioned that he also struggled with his identity. He would often find himself questioning who he was and he felt different compared to the other boys his age. Hope reported that going to church and confiding in his late cousin's brother helped him overcome this challenge. Hope is a Christian, as a result, his family members advised him to go to a Bible college after completing matric.

Hope described himself as someone who is solution-focused with excellent technical skills. He further mentioned that his most powerful weapon is talking. As a result, he is able to motivate people. He further identified himself as a unique child who was born in a disadvantaged area, and he believes that meeting someone who would be able to recognise his uniqueness would change his life for the better. He is interested in learning new things, and as a result he spends most of his time in the library at school. He mentioned that he gets irritated by people who are comfortable with not knowing things and what is happening around them.

Hope was chosen due to his alignment with all the study's criteria. A comprehensive discussion was conducted with Hope to elaborate on the study's objectives and boundaries, and he provided informed consent to actively participate. Hope expressed his desire to gain deeper self-awareness, as he believes it will empower him to make well-informed decisions during the transition from high school to university.

4.3 The Life Design Process with Hope Dlamini

The following sections provide detailed discussions of the seven counselling sessions that occurred. I employed a range of colours to emphasise different sub-themes. After identifying the primary themes, I subsequently organised the sub-themes within these overarching themes. Recorded conversations with the participant have been transcribed and added to an appendix, along with other sources of information that convey what was communicated by the participant to me. The information is presented in a way that preserves confidentiality and protects the identity of the participant. During the data analysis process, the research faced several challenges. The participant's responses were short and scanty particularly during the first sessions. The participant started giving more explanatory responses toward the last sessions. Furthermore, on the questions that required him to reflect on internal factors, he struggled to understand the questions, which required much probing and explanation from me. The following sections provides the analysis of life design.

4.3.1 Session 1: Introductory Interview, Rapport Building and an Outline of Ethical Considerations

During the first session, Hope displayed a notable sense of ease and enthusiasm in anticipation of commencing the sessions, thus facilitating the establishment of rapport. Vasquez-Tokos (2017) states that establishing rapport at the start of research data generation is crucial because it establishes trust, encourages openness, and enhances the quality of data. He further discusses that participants are more likely to share their genuine thoughts and experiences when they feel comfortable and respected, ultimately leading to more reliable and valuable research findings (Vasquez-Tokos, 2017). Despite his minimal verbal contributions during the session, Hope appeared highly attentive as the intervention was introduced. Notably, he exhibited a willingness to openly articulate his personal identity and beliefs. For instance, at the outset of the session, he proposed initiating with a prayer.

In this session, the ethical guidelines pertaining to the study were outlined to the participant. The ethical guidelines as outlined by the Health Professions Council of South

Africa highlights the importance of obtaining informed consent, protecting the rights and well-being of participants, ensuring confidentiality, and conducting research in an ethical and responsible manner (HPCSA, 2016). I adhered to these principles to ensure ethical conduct throughout the course of the data generation.

4.3.2 Session 2: The Career Interest Profile⁶

The themes and sub-themes presented in Table 4.2 were discerned during session 2.

Table 4.2

Themes Emerging from Session 2

| Themes | Sub-Themes |
|-------------------------|---|
| Vocational Personality | Career-related interests Career-related abilities |
| Career Adaptability | Belief in the pursuit of goals |
| Perceived Self-Efficacy | Self-belief in academic success Perceived problem-solving efficacy Perceived public speaking self-efficacy Perceived technical self-efficacy |
| Self-Construction | Self-awareness Self-identity Self-efficacy Self as an expert |
| Life Themes | Past memories Present experiences Future aspirations |
| Resilience | Internal and external support Hope and optimism |

As Hope worked on the CIP, he asked me to provide translations of all the questions in isiZulu. He remained attentive and verbally articulated the majority of his responses before

⁶ I discuss each session individually, starting with the sub-themes identified during that particular session. Once all seven sessions have been elucidated, I present a summary table of themes and relevant sub-themes.

recording them in writing. Additionally, he demonstrated a keen awareness of potential errors and promptly corrected them by erasing and revising as needed.

A. CIP Part 1

Hope mentioned that his mother holds an N5 certificate in Early Childhood Education, but she is currently employed as a domestic worker. His late father, on the other hand, left school during the fifth grade and used to work in Johannesburg, although the specific nature of his job there remained uncertain to Hope. He mentioned that his family encouraged him take History and Geography at school so that he will be eligible to study social work or become a pastor. He mentioned that his family encouraged him to take history and geography at school so that he will be eligible to study social work or become a pastor. Hope explained that his family recommended those particular career trajectories for him based on his inclination for helping others and his evident passion for church activities, along with his skill in preaching and motivating people. Hope indicated Economics, Accounting Science, and Business Studies as his favourites subjects, with isiXhosa, Mathematics and Life Orientation and Life Orientation as his least favourite subjects.

B. CIP Part 2

In this section, the career choice categories have been organised into two distinct groups: preferences and dislikes. These categories are then arranged in order of preference, with Hope's career choices and the rationale behind them ranked from the most preferred (1) to the least preferred (5).

Table 4.3

Hope's Career Choice Preferences

| | Career Choice | Motivation |
|---|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1 | Accountant | "Because I am interested on how business operates, either it is making a profit or a loss" |
| 2 | Teacher | "Because I would like to see the coming generation learn and gain knowledge from me" |
| 3 | Police officer | "Because I would like to end crime by myself" |
| 4 | Designer (structural and fashion) | "I like new beautiful things and I can make them by self" |

| | | |
|---|-------------|--|
| 5 | Engineering | “I am interested in fixing cars and coming up with new things” |
|---|-------------|--|

Hope’s career choice dislikes were ranked as follows – from most disliked (1) to (3) least disliked as shown in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4

Hope’s Career Choice Dislikes

| | Career Choice | Motivation |
|---|------------------|---|
| 1 | Medical doctor | “I like saving peoples’ lives, but I am scared of blood...” (2;22;225) “... I want to save them only through prayer and the power of God” (2;22;230). |
| 2 | Military soldier | “I also like to save the nation, but I also don't like to shed blood” (2;22;31). |
| 3 | Fire fighter | “I like to be a firefighter, but I do no like doing the job that puts me at risks” (2;22;34). |

C. CIP Part 3

Hope's preferred career categories in part 3 of the CIP aligns with his preferred career choices in part 2. He indicated that his first preferred career category was the **mathematics and/or accountancy industry** and indicated marketing category as his second preferred. Hope expressed his desire to become an **accountant** due to his keen interest in assessing whether a business is generating profit or incurring losses, along with his enthusiasm for offering solutions to address associated challenges. Furthermore, **his teachers have encouraged him to pursue a career in accounting based on his outstanding performance in the subject.**

Verbal persuasion, as a source of self-efficacy, encompasses the input from others regarding their beliefs in an individual’s abilities (Bandura, 1994). Frey and Vallade (2018) argued that verbal persuasion plays a crucial role in shaping an individual's self-efficacy and, consequently, influencing their future career aspirations. When individuals receive positive and encouraging feedback from mentors, teachers, or trusted individuals, it can significantly boost their belief in their capabilities (Frey & Vallade, 2018). This heightened self-efficacy, in turn, empowers them to set more ambitious career goals and persist in the face of challenges (Frey

& Vallade, 2018). These findings indicate that Hope's belief in his own capability to excel in his accounting career might have been shaped by the positive feedback he received from his accounting teacher.

Nota et al. (2015) highlights the preventive role that can be played by teachers and parents in activities that encourage learners to think about their futures before they have to negotiate major transitions in their lives. In a similar vein, Del Corso and Rehfuss (2011) encourage the utilisation of positive feedback, which was consistently provided to Hope during the intervention. Del Corso and Rehfuss (2011) also advise against giving negative feedback to young individuals as they strive to attain their goals. The results of the current study are consistent with the findings of the two studies cited above. Notably, the study observed a noteworthy influence of feedback on an individual's self-efficacy in their career choices. For instance, in the case of Hope, he received positive reinforcement from his teacher for his outstanding performance in Accounting, which significantly enhanced his self-efficacy and confidence in pursuing a career in accounting. Conversely, he encountered negative feedback from his family and members of his community concerning his potential success in the science stream during high school. This adverse feedback led to self-doubt, ultimately influencing his decision to not opt for the science stream, underscoring the significant impact of external feedback on individuals' career decisions.

For his third choice of a preferred career category, Hope opted for the practical-technical category, which aligns with his fourth and fifth career preferences. Hope mentioned that he excels in technical tasks and is creative when it comes to generating new ideas. His fourth career category is word artistry, as he revealed his talent for writing poems and motivating others, particularly when they are feeling low. His fourth career category is word artistry, as he revealed his talent for writing poems and motivating others, particularly when they are feeling low. His fifth choice is office-based activities, while his sixth is in the field of information and communication technology.

D. CIP Part 4: Career-Story Narratives

Part 4 of the CIP covers career stories or narratives. In response to the first question that sought to understand how I could be of help to him, he responded that he wanted me as the researcher to assist him in terms of determining the advantages and the disadvantages of his preferred career choices, and also to give him strength to prove his dreams and motivation. He mentioned that he is interested in science more than commerce, however, people in his community discouraged him saying that he must not go to the science stream at school because

he is going to fail because science is very difficult. As started earlier, verbal persuasion as a component of self-efficacy entails receiving input from others regarding their perceptions of one's capabilities and limitations (Bandura, 1993). This suggests that the family and society's lack of support and demotivating words regarding Hope's subject choices contributed to his low self-efficacy in this regard.

Hope indicated his strength as reading, motivating, fixing technical things, counting money, using the internet, writing poems and designing clothes. His perceived strength aligns with his preferred career categories as well as career choices, which suggests that Hope is an introspective or self-aware individual (Murray, 2021). Hope indicated that people perceived him as someone who is capable of bringing change, especially the people in his community. They also see him as a child who is unique from other children and also smart. Hope expressed a passion for engaging in activities that are enriching and future-oriented such as uplifting others through motivational support and reassurance that things will be better with time. He also mentioned a strong interest in conducting interviews and expanding his knowledge. He made it clear that he is not fond of being associated with individuals who exhibit bullying behaviour because he knows how it feels to be bullied.

When asked about his values, Hope expressed a strong appreciation for respect, love, integrity, time, courage, independence, culture, family, and education. He also believed he possessed exceptional talents in offering advice, retaining information, emotional intelligence, writing poetry, and delivering speeches.

Regarding his admiration for three individuals since he was young, he first mentioned his current accounting teacher, praising her inspirational teaching style and expressing a desire to emulate her when he grows up. He also expressed admiration for Mr Nkosi (pseudonym), a fashion designer who he commended for his impeccable dress sense and tireless efforts to improve his community. Lastly, he cited Nelson Mandela as his third role model, lauding Mandela's dedication to the welfare of his people and his unwavering commitment to their liberation.

Regarding the question about the key influences in his life, Hope identified several key sources of influence in his life, including his family, childhood friends, church community, role models, his late father's colleagues, challenges that he went through, and high school teachers. He mentioned that these individuals played a crucial role in supporting him during his most challenging times, offering both direct and indirect motivation to persevere. He also acknowledged that there were individuals who had a negative impact on his life, serving as bad influences. Despite this, he found that the lessons he learned from these experiences

significantly influenced his perspective and behaviour, ultimately shaping how he perceives the world and interacts with it.

Hope held the following leadership position in his life. He was elected as a class representative when he was doing Grade 10 for the second time. He also took on the role of coaching a community soccer team, even though he was not a soccer player himself. Currently, he serves as a youth and choir leader at his church. Furthermore, he expressed a desire to be an authoritative leader, aspiring to lead by empowering and guiding his people. Other questions asked and their associated answers were as follows:

- ❖ My three favourite mottos or quotations are ...? “If you are tired of starting over, stop quitting.... If you want to lift yourself, lift someone else.... I am because we are, since we are, therefore I am”
- ❖ My favourite TV programme is ...? “*Skeem Saam*, because it is very educational and addresses current issues”
- ❖ My favourite website is...? “Go study: very informative, they post about bursaries, study skills and jobs”
- ❖ My favourite app/pages on social media is/are....? “Twitter, I get to learn a lot about what is happening around me”

When prompted to reflect on his three most significant life achievements, Hope pointed out that one of his notable successes was having a Facebook page with a huge following. He explained that this accomplishment fulfilled a childhood aspiration of having a Facebook page with a large and engaged audience. Canel (2016) made an interesting argument that early childhood dreams are not mere coincidences; rather, they often emerge as dominant themes or tendencies in an individual's life due to several interconnected factors. Early childhood dreams, shaped by a child's innate interests, early experiences, and budding passions, can serve as foundational blueprints for their future and career aspirations (Canel, 2016). My study's results are consistent with the argument put forth by Canel (2016), highlighting that Hope's childhood dream forms significant themes in his life and career story.

Hendricks and Kanjiri (2021) underscored the influence of social media on the identity development of adolescents. Social media platforms offer a valuable arena for young individuals to explore various facets of their identity (Hendricks & Kanjiri, 2021). By actively participating in content sharing and interaction with peers on social media, adolescents have the opportunity to cultivate a profound sense of belonging and connection with those who share similar interests and values (Schwartz et al. 2015). Evidently, social media offers a great

platform for Hope to nurture his identity and get to know what is happening around him, while simultaneously exhibiting his talent for crafting poetry and providing motivational content. Continuing on this subject, given the dynamics of the 21st century, it appears that Hope's active engagement in social media and his concern about staying up to date will likely contribute to his adaptability in the face of potential future changes. As Jeong and Hong (2022, p. 92) stated, “social networks are closely related to individual task performance, adaptation performance, career planning and success, and individual job and organisational performance”.

Additionally, he recognised two other major accomplishments: **the presence of strong and supportive friendships as well as a family that consistently encouraged him to prioritise his education**. Considering the fact that rural disadvantaged contexts are faced with the challenge of lacking positive role models, Chuong and Operario (2012) mentioned that the presence of parents has a positive impact on learners' academic success and career aspirations. When parents are consistently present and actively involved in their children's lives, they can serve as role models, providing guidance, support, and encouragement in their educational pursuits (Chuong & Operario, 2012; Henricks et al., 2015).

In response to the question about failures, Hope candidly shared his experiences with three endeavours that did not yield the desired outcomes. He attempted to establish himself as a **local artist, ventured into entrepreneurship by opening a business, and pursued a soccer career, but he did not succeed in joining any school or community teams for soccer**. Other questions asked included:

- ❖ People usually ask for help with the following three issues...? **“School work, seeking advice on how to save money, asking me to assist them fix their technical stuff”**
- ❖ If I were to write my life story, the following would be:
 - a) **Title of a book:** “Evolution of life”
 - b) **Chapters:** “How I started to see life” “The kind of mistakes that helped me become a better person” “How I met my purely and decent life”

When asked about the challenges he faced in his youth, Hope shared that he endured a series of difficult experiences. These included **being a target of bullying during his childhood, the loss of his father, being associated with negative peer influences, and enduring emotional and physical abuse**. He also mentioned that **he repeated a grade in school**.

Hope has undoubtedly faced substantial challenges from a young age, and some of the difficulties continue to be a part of his life. He revealed that he was a target of bullying during his childhood and had been influenced by negative peer associations. As a result of these

experiences, Hope has developed a strong aversion to being associated with individuals who engage in bullying behaviour or participate in actions that he deems unethical or wrong. These findings are in line with research, as Le Grange and Maree (2022) refer to this transformation as actively mastering what you have passively suffered. The concept of actively mastering what you have passively suffered provides a concise way to describe the process of actively taking control and gaining proficiency in areas or aspects of life that were previously endured without much personal agency or control (Savickas, 2018).

4.3.3 Session 3: *Earliest recollections*⁷

The themes and sub-themes presented in Table 4.5 were discerned during Session 3.

Table 4.5

Themes Emerging from Session 3

| Themes | Sub-Themes |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Vocational Personality | |
| Perceived Self-Efficacy | |
| Rural Disadvantages | Inadequate service delivery Exposure to danger |
| Lived Adolescence Stage Experiences | Identity formation Exposure to risky behaviours Negative peer influence |
| Resilience | Dealing with trauma Courage and perseverance Personal agency |
| Traditional Values | Family Cultural context Community and reputation Responsibility |
| Life Themes | Past memories |

⁷ The reader is reminded that exploring earliest recollections is a topic that has received minimal attention in African contexts. The experiences shared here align with Maree's (2020) and Ruiters and Maree's (2022), emphasising the importance of contextualising interventions and techniques originally developed in different settings. This is particularly crucial when applied to vastly diverse contexts, such as African settings. In addressing this matter, guidance was sought from the participant, who serves as the sole and ultimate expert on their own experiences – unique and unparalleled.

Future aspirations

A. *Earliest Recollection 1: Innocent Youth Devastated by False Rape Accusation*

This is what Hope could recall from his early days when he was growing up as a child:

I did not go to school that day. My aunt was at the clinic at that time. A white police van stopped by the gate at home (3;36;106) [...] It was a very serious case and it was attended by the police captain. The captain asked if where my next of kin was, and I told him that she was not around she was at the clinic (3;36;110). [...] Then he left his number and asked me to tell my aunt to call him when she comes back, and we must visit the police station the following day at 8 o'clock. The next morning, we woke up and went to the police station, when I arrived the captain and detective were waiting for me with papers and asking questions left right and centre (3;36;113).

Hope went on to explain that he was accused of raping a child who lives next to his home.

I was very young at that time. I even ended up crying. After that we were told to go home. As soon as we got home, my aunt received a call from the captain, and he said that he was sorry. They confused me with someone else (3;33;115).

Hope explained that memory as being the hardest moment of his life:

I remember at one point, we called the victim and she was asked if she recognised the voice, and she said yes that voice was of the person who raped her she remembers it very clear (3;37;136). [...] I did not hold any grudges against her because I felt like she was trying very hard to build the case and she wanted the suspect to be arrested immediately. I am glad that they managed to find the right suspect fast (3;37;138). [...] Otherwise, that thing could have ruined my future because cases do not just disappear. At this point maybe I would be arrested since I am old now (3;37;141). [...] That's one part I am grateful for because it could have ruined my life and my reputation. Imagine there are so many people who knows me, and I am very involved in church. Teachers at school knows me as a very respectful child. It could have really destroyed me (3;37;161). [...] But God Planned otherwise (3;37;164). [...] I am just a trusted child in the family, aunt was confused but she also believed me that I did not do it" (3;38;175). [...] That incident made me think of another thing we were taught about in another workshop at the library. It was said that the people in the villages especially boys do

not understand sexual assault. It was said that some also slept with animals. Things happen here I was so uncomfortable to hear all of that (3:38;190).

Hope and I jointly constructed the following heading for this recollection: “Innocent youth devastated by false rape accusation”. The following key life theme became clear from this story: Firstly, exposure to early childhood trauma. From the earliest memories, it is clear that Hope faced substantial adversity during childhood, primarily resulting from false accusations of rape. False accusations can have significant and long-lasting effects on individuals, even in late life (De Roos & Jones, 2020). De Roos and Jones (2020) further asserted that psychological and emotional trauma from being wrongly accused can lead to feelings of mistrust, anger, and anxiety. These findings strongly resonate with Hope, as he expressed his aspiration to become a police officer when he grows up, with a keen desire to independently solve criminal cases. This aligns with the concept of actively mastering what one has passively suffered, as previously discussed by Ruiters and Maree (2022). Hope has effectively transformed his pain into motivation and hope, channelling it towards his goal of not only addressing his own adversities but also assisting others who may face similar challenges. He stated that he believes that you help yourself through helping others.

B. *Earliest Recollection 2: Courageous Youth’s Heroic Act Rescues Family Livestock*

What happened was that the cows at home were missing (3;39;210). [...] when I was supposed to be the one herding them (3;39;210). [...] It had rained the day before and all the rivers were full, so it was almost impossible to the other side (3;39;113).

Hope further explained that his mother warned him not to cross the river because it was full, however, he chose to go against his mother’s order and chose to take a shorter route:

As I was approaching the river, I saw the cows on the other from the I decided to cross the river (3;39;215). [...] I am used to crossing the river because even when I go to school, I cross because using the road takes longer (3;39;216).

Hope further elaborated that when he attempted to place his first foot into the river, he found that he couldn't reach the riverbed. Undeterred, he continued and put his second foot in. Before he realised it, he was adrift in the river, a wave of shock and fear sweeping over him. Desperately, he tried to swim, but the water's force was overwhelmingly strong:

The only way for me to survive was to swim down to the base of the river. I swam I till I touched the rocks (3;39;221). [...] That is how I managed to swim to the other side of

the river (3;39;223). [...] Another thing that helped me survive is that I am a boy and I am used to swimming since I live in the village, and it was not the first time of being exposed to such situation (3;40;272). [...] That how it feels like to grow up in a rural area. There is a lot of dangerous situations that one has been exposed to (3;39;237).

Hope went on to explain that upon returning home, he chose to keep the incidents to himself. He was well aware that if he confided in his mother, he would likely face punishment for not following her instructions. In his own description, he admitted to being rather indolent when it came to household traditional chores, preferring activities that did not demand too much of his energy.

Hope and I jointly constructed the following heading for this recollection: “Courageous youth’s heroic act rescues family livestock”. The following key life themes became clear from this story: Firstly, the particularly challenging situations of rural disadvantaged learners. Maree and Jude (2020) elucidated that learners situated within disadvantaged contexts encounter a plethora of distinctive challenges unique to their environment. These challenges encompass inadequate services delivery as well as exposure to dangerous situations and circumstances (Du Plessis, 2022). Furthermore, the emergence and persistence of these challenges can be attributed to a complex interplay of multifarious factors. In the case of Hope, it is evident that he resides in an area characterised by inadequate service delivery and a lack of proper infrastructure, notably the absence of essential bridges within his community. Furthermore, his journey to school necessitates a considerable and challenging walk. Mokoena and Van Breda (2021) posited that the significant distance to school and the associated safety concerns represent prominent challenges contributing to the heightened incidence of school dropouts within disadvantaged communities. These findings are consistent with the outcomes of the study, as they parallel the observed high rates of high school dropouts within the geographical area in which the research was conducted.

Secondly, assignment of specific tasks and duties is based on gender. Cheteni et al. (2019) asserted that gender roles continue to be a significant concern within rural disadvantaged communities. In these areas, there are often persistent and traditional expectations regarding what roles and responsibilities are assigned to individuals based on their gender (Cheteni et al., 2019). These roles can limit opportunities and hinder progress, particularly for women and other gender minorities. In the geographical region where Hope lives, it is apparent that individuals assigned a male gender at birth have greater opportunities to acquire diverse skills and explore their surroundings. For instance, Hope's beliefs that his

survival in the water was attributed to being "a boy" and his presumed familiarity with swimming underscores this gender-based distinction. In traditional rural settings, boys often assume responsibilities related to the care of livestock, which further illustrates the gender-specific roles and expectations prevalent in these communities. If Hope had been assigned female at birth, his survival in the water might have been less likely, as these traditional roles tend to limit girls' exposure to activities like swimming and livestock herding.

Leon and Hartung (2017) asserted that in rural disadvantaged areas where there is often a lack of economic opportunities and limited access to resources, culture can significantly impact an individual's career decisions and outcomes. A study by Akinlolu (2022) revealed that cultural factors such as family values and community expectations influenced the career choices and aspirations in favour of boys. Girls were often discouraged to follow career trajectories that are male-dominated and those that will make them study far from home (Akinlolu, 2022). These observations are consistent with the findings of the study, as they highlight that Hope displayed no apparent apprehension about pursuing education and employment opportunities that required him to be geographically distant from his home.

Thirdly, a strong sense of resilience and courage is noted. Ungar (2015) described resilient individuals as having a remarkable ability to persevere, adapt, and remain determined in the face of adversity. In the case of Hope, it is evident that he is a courageous individual who does not let challenges stop him from achieving his goals. When he was faced with adversity, he used his skills to cope and conquer.

C. Earliest Recollection 3: Transforming the Consequences of Inappropriate Attempt to Fit in into Positive Growth

Hope narrated that when he turned 12 years old, he made a decision to go and make friends, because he did not have any and he spent most of his time with his mother. He explained that making friends has been one of the most challenging tasks for him because he felt different from the other children his age. Then he met two boys who lived next to his home who eventually became his friends:

One of these two boys had elder brothers who smoked cannabis, one day he came with an idea that they must steal his brother's cannabis so that we can find out what is it that they enjoy about smoking (3;43;366). [...] When his brother went out, we used that opportunity to steal his cigarettes (3;44;390).

Hope explained that they smoked for three months without being caught.

When he was asked where he got the money from to buy cannabis, he answered that by that time he was still his mother's baby, therefore it was easy to get money from his mother. During school holidays they would go to the farms to seek piece jobs during the planting and harvesting season. The money that they earned through this work was used to buy cannabis. When asked why he continued to smoke for so long, he responded as follows:

There is that moment after smoking where you just feel like you are floating on the air (3;44;392). [...] Smoking makes you just relax and forget about many things. Even if you just want to think about things deeply, that is the part I enjoyed the most about smoking (3;44;395).

Hope explained that he got into trouble for smoking, leading to a severe reprimand from the family elders. As a consequence, he was sent to live with his maternal uncles in a different village. Interestingly, he viewed this change as a stroke of luck because he believed that had he remained in his previous environment, he might not have been able to quit smoking. His former friends who stayed behind continue to smoke to this day. Upon relocating to the new village, Hope encountered the challenge of rebuilding his social circle and making new friends all over again.

Hope and I jointly constructed the following heading for this recollection: "Transforming the consequences of inappropriate attempt to fit in into positive growth". The following key life themes became clear from this story: Firstly, the lived adolescence stage experiences were noted. Hope's lived experience offers valuable insights into the challenges and dynamics of adolescent friendships, peer influence, and risky behaviour. His journey from isolation to forming friendships and engaging in substance use is a common narrative during adolescence (Schwartz et al., 2015). Hendricks and Kanjiri (2021) asserted that adolescents often seek to establish their identities and gain social acceptance, making them vulnerable to peer pressure and risky behaviours. The desire to fit in and be like their peers can lead them to make choices they might not make otherwise (Hendricks & Kanjiri, 2021). In Hope's case, the decision to experiment with cannabis was likely influenced by his desire to bond with his newfound friends and fit into their group, reflecting the concept of peer conformity and the impact of peer networks on substance use.

Hope's description of the pleasurable sensations associated with smoking such as "floating in the air" aligns with the findings reported by Jacobus and Tapert (2014) on the subjective experiences of substance use in adolescents. Jacobus and Tapert (2014) explained that adolescents report that substance use offers feelings of relaxation and escapism, which can

be appealing, especially in disadvantaged contexts. Kugbey (2023) contended that many adolescents turn to substances as a way to cope with stress, anxiety, or other emotional issues. This use is often driven by the desire to feel better or forget their problems temporarily. The findings discussed above align with Hope's personal account, wherein he articulated that smoking provided him with a coping mechanism to momentarily escape from his problems. He described how, after smoking, his ability to ruminate and overthink was temporarily alleviated.

Secondly, the protective role played by family and the community during the adolescence stage was important. Hope's journey, including his reprimand and subsequent relocation, exemplifies the pivotal role of family and community intervention in addressing adolescent risky behaviour. A study by Kugbey (2023) underscores the importance of family and community support in preventing substance abuse and facilitating positive behavioural changes. Hope's narrative aligns with the aforementioned research findings, as he articulated that his transition to live in his maternal uncles' household represented a fortuitous turning point in his life. He expressed the belief that had he remained in his prior environment, he might have continued smoking to the present day.

D. Overall Reflection on the Themes

Hope recounted his earliest recollections with a demeanour akin to that of a triumphant protagonist who had overcome significant challenges. His recollections align with his preferred career categories in the CIP. Hope emphasised that he does not want a career that will put his life at risk. Furthermore, he admitted that his early experiences might have contributed to his career interests. From his earliest recollections, it is evident that Hope endured dangerous circumstances in his early life. Glavin et al. (2017) put forth an interesting remark that early recollections in one's life are not random memories but rather tend to resurface with purpose, often as significant themes or inclinations that shape an individual's life journey, including career choices. Seemingly, Hope's earliest recollections form important themes in his life and career narratives.

4.3.4 Session 4: Genogram and Lifeline

In the course of the session, both the genogram and lifeline assessments were administered. It has been noted in previous research that the integration of these two assessment instruments proves to be beneficial, as it enables a comprehensive understanding of the family structure and the discernment of recurring themes that have had an impact on the family's

development over successive generations (Fritz & Van Zyl, 2015). The themes and sub-themes presented in Table 4.6 were discerned during session 4.

Table 4.6

Themes Emerging from Session 4

| Themes | Sub-Themes |
|----------------------------|--|
| Vocational Personality | |
| Perceived Self-Efficacy | |
| Resilience | Early childhood adversity Courage and perseverance Personal agency |
| Traditional Values | Family dynamics Cultural context Responsibility |
| Life Themes | Past memories Present experiences Future aspirations |
| Relocation And Instability | |

A. *Genogram*

The genogram illustrates the specific individuals who hold significance to Hope, shedding light on their interpersonal connections and relationships with both Hope and each other. Commencing with the exploration of the genogram, it became apparent that this session triggered strong emotions within Hope. He opened up about his family background, acknowledging that his parents were customarily married. Nevertheless, he displayed hesitation when it came to incorporating individuals from his father's side of the family. Of note is that he was given freedom to include and exclude the people who he was comfortable with. His reluctance stemmed from a deep-seated irritation and anger, as he felt that these family members had little involvement in his life.

Hope's reluctance to include his father's side of the family in the genogram was rooted in a troubling history. He shared his experience of feeling deceived by these relatives, describing a scenario where, during his father's lifetime, they portrayed themselves as caring

and loving. During that time, he mentioned that he enjoyed spending some quality time with them. However, their behaviour took a distressing turn after his father's passing, as they mistreated him. Hope anticipated that his uncles would step into the role of father figures in his life, as they had explicitly promised to do so during his father's funeral.

Following his father's passing, Hope shared a narrative recounting a period when his mother was employed as a domestic worker in a distant city. During this time, he resided in one of his uncle's households. Within that familial environment, he described feeling as though he was not treated as a child but rather had been assigned the responsibility of tending to the livestock, including the care of cows, despite his young age. In rural traditional settings, it is customary for boys to assume the role of livestock caretakers. Hope went on to explain that he believed his uncle took advantage of his situation, given that he did not have any male children of his own; all of his children were girls.

Furthermore, Hope disclosed that his mother is shouldering a considerable burden, stemming from both the deceased and living relatives on his father's side. He revealed that these relatives have fathered numerous children with different women but never entered into formal marriages with any of them. As a consequence, it is his mother who has assumed the responsibility of caring for all these children. Hope pointed out that his mother's resources are rather limited, as she is employed as a domestic worker. The situation is further compounded by the fact that she has to financially support and provide for these children who are connected to the extended family. This places a significant strain on her, and it highlights the challenges she faces in ensuring the well-being of all these individuals, adding a layer of complexity to her own life.

These touching narratives shed light on the complex emotions and unresolved issues that Hope carries regarding his father's family. This emotional reaction during the session underscores the significance of further exploring and processing these feelings in order to better connect and understand the impact of these past experiences on Hope's present emotional landscape and relationships. A research study conducted by Rohner et al. (2022) investigated the perspectives of individuals who had experienced childhood adversity within their families and how it influenced their attitudes toward starting families of their own. Through in-depth interviews, the study found that those who had endured adversity in childhood exhibited a wide range of emotions and concerns about parenthood (Rohner et al., 2022). Many participants expressed a desire to break the cycle of adversity and create a nurturing environment for their own children. However, they also harboured anxieties about their ability to be effective parents, drawing from their past experiences.

The study's findings align with Hope's perspective when he was asked about his aspirations for starting his own family. He expressed some degree of desire to get married in the future but remained uncertain. When it came to the prospect of having children, Hope was also unsure about his potential as a parent. He elaborated on his reservations, mentioning that nowadays he perceives having children, whether planned or unplanned, as a huge responsibility. He worried about the possibility of his own early demise and the consequences it might have for his offspring, considering, "What if you bring a child into the world and then pass away prematurely? Who will take care of that child?" Evidently, his hesitations and anxieties about having children appear to originate from the loss of his own father during his formative years and the subsequent repercussions of that experience. These sentiments align with the conclusions presented in the research conducted by Rohner et al. (2022).

B. Lifeline

Hope's lifeline is notably sparse, even after my attempts to probe deeper. Hope conveyed that he does not have much to contribute because he feels that he has not experienced much in life. However, a few significant points stand out from his timeline.

First, Hope began attending preschool at the age of 3, a relatively early start to his education. Unfortunately, his life took a saddening turn when he lost his father at the tender age of 5, a significant event that undoubtedly had a profound impact on his early years, as his mother had to go look for a job and he had to go and live in his uncle's house.

Further examination of his timeline reveals a pattern of frequent relocations, indicating a degree of instability in his living arrangements. Notably, he made a transition to a new school when he entered Grade 10, and he encountered academic challenges as he repeated Grade 10 on two occasions. During the second session, Hope clarified that these repetitions were not due to academic struggles but rather stemmed from his diminished commitment to school. He revealed his strong interest in pursuing a career as a pastor, which led to his increased involvement in church activities. However, this devotion to his faith occasionally caused him to miss school days.

These revelations offer valuable insights into Hope's life journey, confirming the existence of themes such as early educational experiences, family loss, mobility, and a strong spiritual interest. His multifaceted experiences may shape his unique perspective and aspirations, emphasising the importance of understanding the individual context and life story of each research participant (Maree & Che, 2020).

Hope's over-commitment at church and aspirations of becoming a pastor were an act of fulfilling his parents' desire. He indicated in part one of the CIP that his parents advised him to become a pastor. These findings agree with the research conducted by Akosah-Twumasi et al. (2018), which suggests that young individuals often make career decisions influenced not only by their personal aspirations but also by the expectations of their parents and society as a whole. This reflects the deeply ingrained values and beliefs within their culture or family that emphasise conformity to established norms and traditions when selecting a career.

Hope's strong emphasis on the significance of parental guidance and his beliefs is consistent with the research findings presented by Ruiters and Maree (2022). Their study supports the notion that career and vocational decision-making often relies on interpersonal relationships that serve as models for comparison and reference (Ruiters & Maree, 2022). In Hope's case, the role of parents as influential figures in his career choices is a testament to the broader pattern observed in research, where individuals frequently look to their closest relationships as sources of inspiration and guidance when making significant career decisions. This emphasises the importance of understanding how personal relationships, especially with parents, can shape and mould an individual's career aspirations and choices.

4.3.5 Session 5: Life History and a Collage

The themes and sub-themes presented in Table 4.7 were discerned during session 5.

Table 4.7

Themes Emerging from Session 5

| Themes | Sub-Themes |
|-------------------------|--|
| Vocational Personality | Career-related interests |
| Career Adaptability | Belief in the pursuit of goals |
| Perceived Self-Efficacy | Self-belief in academic success Perceived public speaking self-efficacy |
| Self-Construction | Self-identity |
| Resilience | Hope and optimism Faith |

During this session, Hope was asked to create a collage and provide a brief overview of his life history. However, several challenges arose. While crafting the collage, Hope

encountered difficulties as he expressed frustration in finding magazine pictures that truly represented his identity. Consequently, he resorted to printing most of the images from the internet. He also voiced his preference for activities that do not require physical effort, mentioning his enjoyment of engaging in conversations and responding to questions. In a subsequent session (session 6), additional reflections on the interpretation of his collage were carried out, and his life history was presented at the outset of this chapter in section 4.2.

4.3.5 Session 6: Career Construction Interview and Reflections

The themes and sub-themes presented in Table 4.8 were discerned during Session 6.

Table 4.8

Themes Emerging from Session 6

| Themes | Sub-Themes |
|--|---|
| Vocational Personality | |
| Career Adaptability | Belief in the pursuit of goals Innovative self |
| Perceived Self-Efficacy | Self-belief in academic success Perceived cognitive abilities self-efficacy Perceived public speaking self-efficacy |
| Self-Construction | Self-identity Self-efficacy Self as an expert |
| Life Themes | Future aspirations |
| Resilience | Faith Personal agency |
| Career Decision-Making Difficulties | Uncertainty career-related unconscious confusion |
| Lived Adolescence Stage Experiences | Uncertainty about his identity |

In the sixth session, a noticeable change was observed in Hope's demeanour as he appeared more determined and outspoken. He shared that he had taken the initiative to conduct independent research on the internet regarding the topics discussed in the previous session.

While reflecting on the activities we had undertaken thus far, Hope demonstrated a strong recollection of the significant content and experiences from our previous sessions. Joubert and Guse (2021) stated that if a client remembers most of the things discussed during a psychological intervention, it typically indicates their active engagement and investment in the process. It suggests that the client values the content and is likely to be applying the insights gained to their development (Joubert & Guse, 2021). These research findings are in accordance with the observations made during this session with Hope.

4.3.6. *Career Construction Interview*

The CCI session with Hope followed the CCI interview questions provided by Maree (2014). The themes we explored during this session were also recognised in the CIP, which allowed Hope to engage in further self-reflection and offer self-guided advice.

Table 4.9

Career Construction Interview

| | Question | Response |
|--------------------|--|--|
| Scene | How can I be useful to you as you construct your career? | He responded that he wants me to assist him in terms of determining the advantages and the disadvantages of his preferred career choices, and also to give him strength to prove his dreams and motivation. |
| Self | Who did you admire when you were growing up? Tell me more about him/her. | His accounting teacher and top achievers at his school. |
| Stage | Are there any magazines or television shows that you follow consistently? If so, which ones and why do you enjoy them? | <i>Skeem Saam</i> |
| Script | What is your favourite book/movie? | <i>Animal Farm</i> |
| Self-advice | Tell me your favourite saying or motto? | “A clever person is the one who fears God” |

| | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Key life themes | What is your earliest recollection? | -Innocent youth devastated by false rape accusation -Courageous youth's heroic act rescues family livestock -Transforming the consequences of inappropriate attempt to fit in into positive growth |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|

A. *Participant Reflections on the CCI*

Several themes that emerged from the CCI are similar to the ones that have been reported in part 4 of the CIP as well as the earliest recollections session. Hope's self-reflections on this session enabled him to make a link between his unconscious motivations (things he was not consciously aware of) and his conscious thoughts, emotions, and cognitions. This bridged the gap between his past, present, and future, promoting greater self-awareness and reflectivity (Maree, 2020).

When Hope was asked to reflect on the person who he admired since he was young, he responded as follows:

One thing about me, I do not have one role model. I have many role models for different roles. I do not have anyone who I started admiring from a young age. For example, when I am at school, I get inspired by the teachers who are good at their job and students who are the top achievers (6;107;2847). [...] When I am at church, I get inspired by people who can preach well. That is one thing I want to be good at (7;108;2060). [...] I sometimes feel like admiring your role model too much can make you lose your focus. You can end up losing your identity trying to be like someone else. Because after all, in your mind you will always have that thing that you want to be exactly like them (7;108;2869). [...] I do not want to be another person. One thing I want to do is to upgrade my life and remain the same person. But I do not want to be another person. I am okay the way I am. I do not want to skip the process to the next levels. I want to enjoy the journey (7;107;2830).

The concept of changing role models depending on one's life stage and roles is a well-documented phenomenon in the literature (Brotts & Myers, 2019). Individuals often have diverse role models who evolve over time, reflecting their shifting needs, goals, and circumstances (Brotts & Myers, 2019). A study by Kearney and Levine (2020) found that individuals tend to adopt different role models in various domains of their lives, such as career,

family, or personal development. These role models can range from family members and mentors to public figures or peers (Kearney & Levine, 2020). In a similar vein, an early publication by Erik Erikson (1968) in his psychosocial theory, reported that people seek role models who can guide them through the specific psychosocial crises they face at each stage of life. This adaptability in choosing role models is a manifestation of the dynamic and context-dependent nature of human development (Erikson, 1968). The study's observations are consistent with the literature: Hope reported to have changing role models depending on the life circumstances and roles. Furthermore, his desire to be nobody else but himself reflects a high degree of self-acceptance.

When he was asked about his favourite book, he responded that it is *Animal Farm*. Hope mentioned that this book is not part of his school content, however, he found out about them on his favourite soap, *Skeem Saam*. Then he took the initiative to research and find the book in the community library. When asked about what he likes the most about *Animal Farm*, he reflected that, “*Animal Farm* has many motivations that is why I like it” (6; 77; 193). Hope demonstrates a commendable self-initiative, curiosity, and a proactive approach to learning. Hope's proactive search for literature outside the school curriculum illustrates a strong intrinsic motivation for personal growth and education. This aligns with self-determination theory, emphasising the role of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in fostering motivation and well-being (Gagné et al., 2022). Hope's active engagement with his education and his drive to explore beyond prescribed materials suggest that he embodies the qualities of a self-determined and self-motivated learner. He further revealed that he goes to his English teacher to ask for topics that he can write essays about to help him improve his English.

B. Reflections on the Collage

The collage was intended to portray who he is and who he aspires to become. Hope described himself as an intelligent, unique child with dreams that differ from most of the children in his village. He mentioned his strong interest in staying informed about global events and disapproved of people who are complacent about their lack of awareness regarding world affairs. He displayed a high level of uncertainty when asked about his desire to start a family someday.

For his future goals, he expressed his wish to establish his own scientific laboratory, where he can conduct experiments and generate ideas to help his country address its ongoing electricity crisis. He is also keen on engaging in debates and staying updated on the latest

developments by prominent scientists worldwide. He mentioned that currently, the world's leading scientists are in a competition to become the first to relocate to Mars. In his words,

The scientist have been striving to establish a presence there, however, they encountered various challenges. There is a weaker force of gravity compared to Earth, so trees do not naturally grow. The Martian soil is not fertile, and there is a lack of water and oxygen. Personally, I think a feasible approach would be to transport soil from Earth to Mars and start planting trees. This way, we could generate oxygen through the process (6;82;2091).

When it comes to his future prospects, Hope pinpointed three crucial factors that he believes could propel him toward changing his current situation. He started by discussing his goal of finding a soccer team to coach, sharing his perspective:

I would advise players that they must not represent themselves, but they must represent the team. I would encourage the players to embrace innovation on the field, urging them not to fixate on outdated tactics. The key to avoiding obsolescence is a willingness to explore new avenues and a commitment to continuous improvement. Some individuals resist change and cling to what they were told led to their success. If people can adapt and welcome fresh ideas, they can endure and thrive in the long run (7;89;2292).

This, he believes, will help him secure a livelihood. Secondly, he emphasised the importance of acquiring capital. He plans to utilise his National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) stipend to initiate a business venture that will enable his mother to leave her domestic work job and return home. Lastly, he mentioned the need to find someone who can recognise his talents and provide support and empowerment to help him achieve his goals.

Concerning his identity, Hope reflected that he used to struggle a lot and question who he was and this used to stress him but he is feeling fine now. He reflected as follows:

I am okay now since I have gone back to church. At church we are not allowed to date or talk about things that involves sexuality (6;115;3130). [...] I used to feel different from other boys. I felt like there was something wrong with me. I was not even confident enough to approach girls. I only approached girls during traditional ceremonies (6;115;3132). [...] I think girls liked me. But I did not have much interest in them (6;115;3134) [...] My voice was soft. Even at school, people laughed at the way I walked. I had difficulties when it comes to making friends (6;116;3171). [...] You see,

it was a lot. I ended up not trusting myself because I was always looking for things that were wrong with me (6;116;3172).

Hope's experience of struggling with his identity and feeling out of place in his community due to societal expectations and his personal feelings about his sexuality is a complex and emotional journey. His mention of finding solace in the church, where discussions related to sexuality are often discouraged, suggests a coping mechanism he used to deal with the confusion and pressure he felt (Silverman & Doorn, 2023). Hope's journey resonates with research findings in career psychology, particularly in the context of identity development and career decision-making (Jacobs & Collair, 2017). Research has shown that one's self-identity, including factors related to gender and sexuality, can significantly influence career choices and self-esteem (Jacobs & Collair, 2017). Individuals who face identity-related challenges, like Hope, may go through a process of self-discovery and identity formation that can impact their career decisions, self-confidence, and interpersonal relationships (Wong, 2021).

Savickas (2015) emphasised the crucial connection between identity, self-acceptance, and career development, highlighting the need for comprehensive approaches to career counselling. These approaches should extend beyond assessing skills and interests to encompass an individual's self-concept and emotional well-being (Savickas, 2015). The life design counselling approach used in this intervention exemplifies such a holistic approach advocated by Savickas (2015). Additionally, Wong (2021) put forth that career counsellors have a pivotal role to play in assisting individuals as they struggle with identity-related challenges, guiding them in aligning their career choices with their evolving sense of self and identity. For individuals who share the same experience as Hope, it is essential to know that to understand that they are not alone in their experiences and that there is professional help available to guide them through the process of identity development and its connection to career decisions (Wong, 2021), much like the support provided during Hope's intervention.

c. ***Reflection on His Selected Subject Choices and Futures Career Aspirations***

There has been a noticeable confusion and misalignment between Hope's chosen academic subjects and his personal interests. Hope expressed a stronger fascination with science, finding it engaging because it talks to the workings of the world we inhabit, "such as explaining the why the Earth rotates and why it does not fall" (6;81;2043). However, societal discouragement led him to select the commerce stream, as mentioned earlier. He also disclosed

that his decision to pursue accounting was influenced by the business activities of his mother and brother – his mother's clothing resale business and his brother's takeaway sales at a hostel. During our discussion, Hope demonstrated a good grasp of business concepts. For example, as someone who wants to have a business, he explained that if he were to establish it in his rural area, he would begin by creating a questionnaire and also interview people to determine their most pressing needs, ensuring that he does not introduce a product where it is least needed. He also recognised the effectiveness of the questionnaire, especially in reaching a wide audience. Regarding his future plans, Hope reflected on the following:

My plan is to study and finish high school. After finishing high school, I want to work just to have money to afford a living (6;127;1654). [...] But honestly speaking I do regret sometimes. As we proceed with these sessions, I am coming to realise that I am passionate about science (6;127; 1657). [...] But I am comforting myself because when my friends who do science speak about science, I do not get lost. I always have an opinion. For example, my cousin is doing it, whenever she talks about things that they learn at school. I also intervene (6; 127;1660).

Moreover, Hope expressed a desire to switch to the science stream if given the opportunity. Yet, he believes that it may be too late for such a change, particularly since he repeated Grade 10 twice and is performing well academically. Additionally, he anticipates resistance from his mother regarding this potential shift.

Hope's situation reflects a common challenge in career development known as career indecision (Maree, 2020). Research in the field of career development suggests that aligning one's academic and career choices with their interests and passions can lead to greater motivation, satisfaction, and success. Wong (2021) states that when individuals feel a strong inclination towards a particular field, but are pressured into a different academic trajectory, it can lead to feelings of regret and a sense of missed opportunities. This finding resonates with Hope, as he expressed regrets and confusion.

Furthermore, Hope's feeling that it is too late and the perceived barriers, such as repeating a grade and concerns about familial expectations, aligns with Super's (1980) lifespan theory of career development, which acknowledges that individuals face various developmental tasks and challenges as they navigate their career paths behaviour (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2021). Hope's reflections echo the importance of recognising and addressing these obstacles to enable individuals to make informed and fulfilling career decisions.

4.3.7 Session 7: Consolidation Session

The themes and sub-themes presented in Table 4.10 were discerned during session 7.

Table 4.10

Themes Emerging from Session 7

| Themes | Sub-Themes |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Vocational Personality | |
| Self-Construction | Self-efficacy Self as an expert |
| Life Themes | Future aspirations |
| Resilience | Faith Personal agency |
| Rural Disadvantages | Lack of positive role models Lack of resources |

This session marks the end of the intervention with Hope. Hope was anticipated to provide responses to the semi-structured questions. When he was asked if there was anything he learned about himself during the intervention, his response was as follows: “I learned a lot about myself throughout these sessions. Even though I got disappointed as I realised that sometimes I did not believe on myself enough. I allowed people to influence my decisions” (7; 124 ;3346). Hope additionally expressed that he now holds a more positive outlook for the future and believes that things will not remain this way indefinitely.

During this session, Hope successfully defined the concept of self-efficacy and expressed his intention to dedicate time to further explore it through reading. He also contemplated that his self-efficacy may have been hindered by the absence of individuals who recognise his uniqueness and the lack of opportunities to acquire knowledge from others. In a previous session, he acknowledged that he was typically the one seeking information and introducing new ideas to his peers, but he now recognises that his self-acquired knowledge might not be sufficient. Additionally, Hope reflected on the positive transformation in his self-efficacy and affirmed his commitment to not allow any circumstance to hinder his development of self-efficacy.

Hope's restated reflections align positively with the perspective put forth by Super (1980). Super (1980) posited that prior successful and affirmative encounters, which contributed to the augmentation of career self-efficacy, have the potential to elevate one's performance within that sphere, thereby fostering the development of heightened expectations and bolstering self-assurance. In Hope's case, these reflections highlight not only a strengthened sense of personal and career identity but also a newfound ability to transform his pain into hope (Maree, 2018).

When asked about potential improvements to the intervention in the future, Hope shared his insight, suggesting that he would prefer to conduct it with a group, involving his classmates. He pointed out that it might be challenging if the researcher were to engage a quiet, introverted participant in the process. Hope's reflection aligns positively with the argument presented by Nwoye (2015). Nwoye (2015) contended that South Africans tend to emphasise the importance of the group over individuality, along with storytelling and the concept of *ubuntu*. This observation implies that group-based career counselling might be a culturally relevant and cost-effective approach to make career counselling services more accessible to more youth before they complete their high school education (Nwoye, 2015).

The efficacy of group-based narrative counselling for young adults facing disadvantages in their respective contexts has been investigated by Maree et al. (2019). The research findings indicated that group-based career interventions offered a promising solution for addressing the challenges faced in the South African context (Maree et al., 2019), particularly where many adolescents had not received any exposure to career counselling during their time in school, forcing them to navigate their career paths without the benefit of formal career education (Maree et al., 2019).

In the previous session, Hope acknowledged that he had distinct dreams and future prospects compared to the other children in his village. When asked about potential interventions to help his peers envision their future differently, he found it challenging due to the diversity of goals within the group. Some aspired to be traditional healers, some aimed for careers in football, while others were committed to following traditional African customs, which were characterised by their inflexible beliefs. Hope recognised the difficulty in providing a uniform solution because of this diversity, contrasting his own aspiration to complete high school and attend university with those who simply wanted to work in the mines in Johannesburg. It is worth noting that the life design counselling adopted in this intervention has been proven to be applicable to everyone regardless of the age, creed, and the stage of their career (Le Grange & Maree, 2013).

Regarding whether the absence of role models influenced his aspirations, Hope pondered that the main barrier to achieving high levels of success was the reluctance to engage in critical thinking. He argued that merely aspiring to become a traditional African man because of someone from a hostel was insufficient. Instead, he emphasised the need for the younger generation to adopt a different mindset and take on the responsibility of becoming the role models they sought when they were younger. This highlights the significance of instilling critical thinking and self-empowerment rather than solely relying on external role models to shape one's future.

The issue of the absence of role models in rural disadvantaged areas is a well-established and frequently discussed topic in the existing body of literature (Albien & Naidoo, 2017). In these areas, young people often find themselves searching for inspiration among individuals who may not serve as positive influences, including figures involved in activities like being hitmen, alcoholism, and drug dealing (Albien & Naidoo, 2017). Regrettably, these individuals sometimes become the subjects of admiration and are even perceived as heroes within their respective communities.

Siya Kolisi, the esteemed captain of the South African Rugby team, shared in his life story that he grew up in an environment where individuals involved in drug dealing and violence were the ones most admired (Nyebe, 2023). Notably, his background and upbringing are strikingly similar to that of Hope, indicating shared life experiences. Matshabane (2016) conducted research that revealed the absence of accessible and positive role models in disadvantaged communities can lead to the emergence of alternative role models who engage in detrimental activities. In such environments, where opportunities and positive examples are scarce, young people may find themselves more susceptible to seeking role models among individuals who do not promote healthy and constructive aspirations (Matshabane, 2016). These findings parallel the results of this study, which indicate that the youth in Hope's community tend to draw inspiration from role models who do not necessarily promote positive ideals.

4.4 Summary of Themes and Sub-Themes

Table 4.9 presents a summary of the themes and sub-themes based on the research findings.

Table 4.9

Summary of Pre- and Post-Intervention Themes and Sub-Themes

| Theme: Vocational Personality | |
|--|--|
| Pre-intervention status | Post-intervention status |
| Hope had conflicting ideas regarding the career he wants to pursue. His subject choices are not in line with the career he is truly interested in. | A confirmation of his career choice and confidence in his ability to pursue his choice despite the disadvantages that he currently faces. |
| Sub-theme: Career-related interests | |
| Interested in many different careers and wanted to pursue all of them at once. For example, studying accounting and science at tertiary level, at the same time while having a business on the side. | Hope had a clear plan in terms of which career he is going to pursue first, and what he needs to do in order to fulfil his desires related to the other careers. |
| Sub-theme: Career-related abilities | |
| Hope received negative feedback that made him doubt his abilities to be successful with the career that he is interested in the most. | Hope gained confidence in his abilities to be successful in his chosen career, despite the discouragement and negative feedback that he previously received. |
| Career Adaptability | |
| Hope has always been willing to adapt despite disadvantages, but the negative feedback and childhood trauma that he survived made adapting difficult for him. This made him doubt his capabilities. | He gained an awareness into his ability to adapt as well as better coping skills, which enhanced his career adaptability. |
| Sub-theme: Belief in the pursuit of goals | |
| Hope always shows concern about the future. He mentioned that if there is something that he wants to know about his career, he would research or ask his teachers. | Hope gained an assurance that his ability to seek information and thinking outside the box will make him adaptable to the unpredictable changes. |
| Theme: Perceived Self-Efficacy | |

| | |
|---|--|
| Hope demonstrated an inadequate perceived self-efficacy in his abilities including academic success, problem solving, public speaking, and his ability to fix things. | After the intervention, Hope demonstrated an enhanced self-efficacy. He reflected that he has gained new insights into abilities, therefore he would not let anything stand in his way of achieving his great success. |
| Theme: Self-Construction Sub-theme: Self-efficacy | |
| Hope doubted his ability to successfully accomplish given tasks. | Hope gained insights into his abilities, he reflected that he now believes in himself more and would not let anything or anyone stand in his way. |
| Sub-theme: Self-awareness | |
| Hope did not seem to be aware of the impact of his innate strength. | He gained insight into his strength and he reflected that the intervention helped learn many things he did not know about himself. |
| Sub-theme: Self-identity | |
| He was not sure about his own identity. The question of who he was used to bother him a lot. | Improved sense of self and identity: he reflected that he is happy with who he is and does not want to be anybody else. |
| Sub-theme: Self as an expert | |
| Hope demonstrated a limited control in his ability to make decisions as well as having insights in terms of what is good for him. | He showed an enhanced ability to take control over his life and decisions. Reflected that he will read more on self-efficacy and how he can enhance his future. |
| Theme: Life Themes Sub-theme: Present experiences | |
| Hope demonstrated an awareness of his current circumstances and how they impact his future aspirations. However, he demonstrated inadequate coping strategies. | As a coping strategy, he planned to use faith and prayer to motivate him that things might change and challenges do not last forever. |

| | |
|--|--|
| Sub-theme: Past memories | |
| He lacked insights into how his past memories shaped his career choices. | Better insight and was able to connect the past memories with the present. |
| Theme: Resilience | |
| The participant demonstrated an innate resilience despite the disadvantages that he is living under. | A realisation of his innate resilience and what he was able to endure. A realisation of his risk factors and protective factors and resources. |
| Rural Disadvantages | |
| The participant was aware of the disadvantages that he currently lives under. | A realisation of how the trauma and disadvantages shaped his vocational behaviour. |
| Lived Adolescence Stage Experiences | |
| He was well aware of the risky behaviours he was exposed to. | A realisation of how his early experiences shaped his vocational personality. |

4.5 Summary

This chapter provided an in-depth presentation of the findings of the study as well as their interpretation. I systematically discussed the results obtained during each session of the interventions, drawing connections to the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. Furthermore, the findings were discussed in accordance with the various themes and sub-themes that I have identified in the literature.

In the following chapter, the research questions will be reviewed in light of the findings that have surfaced during this study. Additionally, Chapter 5 will also encompass recommendations for future research and a discussion of the limitations inherent in the present research.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter serves as the concluding section of the present investigation. It includes a brief summary of the study report and a discussion of the findings pertaining to both the primary and secondary research questions. Additionally, this final chapter highlights potential limitations and offers recommendations for further research.

5.2 Overview of the Chapters

5.2.1 *Chapter 1: Introduction and Orientation*

In the first chapter, the general overview of the study was presented. I began with an exploration of literature encompassing trends and strategies in the field of career counselling interventions. Within this context, specific attention was dedicated to learners from contexts challenged by disadvantages and their unique circumstances. The chapter further examined existing literature concerning the self-efficacy of these learners in their unique circumstances. Progressing from the literature review, the purpose of the study was elucidated—investigating the effect of the administration of CCC on a learner with inadequate self-efficacy from a disadvantaged rural environment. Subsequently, the chapter discussed the primary research question and its accompanying sub-questions. A subsequent section provided clarification of key concepts, paving the way for a brief discussion of the research and methodological designs, seamlessly transitioning into considerations surrounding ethical matters.

5.2.2 *Chapter 2: Literature Review*

Chapter 2 presented a comprehensive exploration of the literature relating to important aspects of the study. I meticulously examined successive industrial revolutions and their impact on career development. The discussion proceeded to the exploration of major career theories, beginning with the exploration of traditional approaches followed by the arguments advocating for the need to adopt postmodern career approaches. The focus then shifted to pivotal concepts such as self-efficacy, life design goals and interventions, and the nuanced contextual factors shaping the experiences of adolescents in rural disadvantaged environments. The chapter meticulously examined the specific needs of these adolescents, drawing on research conducted in South Africa to contextualise the study. Within this expansive review, gaps in the existing literature emerged, guiding the identification of areas where previous studies on career

construction and constructivist/interpretive counselling fall short. The culmination of Chapter 2 was founded in the presentation of a well-defined conceptual framework, laying the groundwork for the subsequent phases of the research study.

5.2.3 Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology

Chapter 3 discussed the research design and methodology adopted in the study. The interpretive/constructivist paradigm, serving as the paradigmatic perspective of this study, was thoroughly addressed. The narrative seamlessly transitioned to present the qualitative research design, offering insights into the criteria meticulously applied for the selection of the research participant in the single case study.

Within this methodological framework, I elucidated the rationale behind the selection of the research site, providing clarity on the methods and techniques employed for the generation, analysis, and interpretation of data. A pivotal segment of the chapter centred on the quality criteria essential for establishing the trustworthiness of the research findings. The chapter concluded with a comprehensive summary of the ethical considerations pertinent to the investigations in the study.

5.2.4 Chapter 4: Results and Discussion of Findings

The results of the study and a discussion of the findings were discussed in Chapter 4. This process was done by first reviewing the data analyses that were used to identify emerging themes and sub-themes from the data set. Following that, all seven sessions and activities that took place were thoroughly discussed and linked to the existing literature.

5.3 Answering the Research Questions

The study aimed to explore the impact of CCC on the self-efficacy of a rural disadvantaged learner who is ready to embark on a career. To address the research questions, a constructivist/interpretive paradigm was adopted, since I acknowledged the significance of direct experiences and social interactions in the process of meaning-making. The study incorporated various postmodern qualitative data generation techniques to generate the data that answered the research questions. I initially addressed the four secondary research questions before revisiting the main or primary research question to derive a comprehensive and clear answer.

5.3.1 *Secondary Research Questions*

5.3.1.1 **Descriptive Questions**

- a) *How can career construction counselling inform intervention and influence a learner with inadequate self-efficacy growing up in a disadvantaged rural area?*

The CCC informed the intervention in this present study. Through a concise and informal interview, the CCC method was employed to establish rapport with the participant. This initial interaction aimed to explore the participant's personal background, providing insights into the unique contextual factors, challenges, and opportunities shaping his current situation. This approach not only facilitated a more profound understanding of the participant but also ensured that his beliefs were respected throughout the intervention. The CCC proved instrumental during the intervention, allowing both myself and the participant to identify his strengths, skills, and interests. By emphasising the identification of activities, the participant excelled at and enjoyed, the counselling sessions effectively reinforced his confidence and self-efficacy. This finding on his progress is consistent with the findings of Maree (2018) on the power of CCC to effect change in the lives of young people.

Moreover, the CCC approach facilitated an exploration of the participant's past events, recognising their influence on his present circumstances and future aspirations. The retrospective examination was essential in uncovering formative experiences and understanding how they shaped his self-efficacy. The counselling sessions also prompted reflections on the influential figures in the participant's life, contributing to a holistic understanding of his support system and potential sources of encouragement or discouragement.

Furthermore, the CCC method empowered the participant to reflect and explore specific careers of interest. This step was crucial in aligning his aspirations with a viable and fulfilling career trajectory. In essence, by guiding the participant through the process of constructing a coherent life story that integrated past experiences and future aspirations, the CCC method allowed for the identification and pursuit of a meaningful career trajectory. Through this approach, the career counsellor played a vital role in empowering the participant to navigate and construct a trajectory that resonated with his unique strengths and aspirations, while enhancing his self-efficacy.

b) *What factors can cause a learner growing up in a disadvantaged rural area to develop inadequate self-efficacy?*

The participant identified several factors that he believed contributed to the development of his inadequate self-efficacy. Firstly, he expressed interest in pursuing the science stream upon entering high school. However, he received discouraging feedback from important people in his life, who argued that he would not succeed based on the failures they knew of in similar pursuits. The negative feedback resulted in self-doubt, ultimately influencing his decision to avoid the science stream. This highlights the significant impact of external feedback on individuals' career choices (Del Corso & Reh fuss, 2011), a theme discussed in the chapter.

Second, the participant highlighted the absence of positive role models in his life. According to Hope, the individuals recognised as heroes in his community predominantly consisted of traditional healers, traditional African men, hitmen, and alcoholics. He observed that learners in his locality tended to aspire to emulate these figures, viewing them as role models. However, Hope expressed concern about this mindset, characterising it as narrow-minded. He argued that aspiring to become a hitman, for instance, without considering the associated risks, reflects a limited perspective on one's potential aspirations and the broader spectrum of life choices. This reflection supports the findings by Hendricks et al. (2015), as discussed in the previous chapter where they highlighted the importance of social support and role models in shaping career self-efficacy. In rural settings with limited access to diverse role models and mentors, learners may struggle to identify with successful individuals who share similar backgrounds, further undermining their belief in their own potential (Henricks et al., 2015).

Third, the participant highlighted the challenge of limited financial resources. Despite his keen interest in starting a business and his evident proficiency in business knowledge showcased during the intervention, he lamented the inability to do so due to financial constraints. He expressed plans to utilise the stipend expected from the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) for this purpose. Reflecting on his situation, he remarked that had he been situated in a more well-resourced area, he is confident that, by now, he would have secured support from sponsors and pitched his entrepreneurial ideas.

Lastly, the participant emphasised the impact of inadequate service delivery, specifically citing the absence of essential infrastructure like bridges. He recounted a situation where this deficiency nearly endangered his life, requiring him to navigate a full river after

heavy rain. This reflection aligns with his career aspirations, as he expressed a preference for a profession that does not compromise his safety. As highlighted in Chapter 4, the unsafe conditions resulting from this infrastructure gap not only pose immediate risks but are also linked to increased rates of high school dropouts among disadvantaged learners (Mokoena & Van Breda, 2021). These findings resonate with the participant's location, which is observably struggling with heightened levels of high school dropout.

5.3.1.2 Exploratory Questions

- a) *What were the main differences between the pre- and post-intervention themes that emerged from the narrative data?*

In the participant's words,

I learned a lot about myself throughout these sessions. Even though I was disappointed I learned that sometimes I did not believe in myself enough. I allowed people to influence my decisions... Now I feel hopeful that things might change... From today going forward, I will never allow anything or anyone to stand in my way.

The participant's statement reflects a significant transformation in their self-perception and attitude towards self-efficacy over the course of the intervention. At the outset, the participant may have harboured self-doubt and lacked confidence, as indicated by their admission that they “did not believe in [themselves] enough.” This reluctance to acknowledge their own potential aligns with findings in the literature on self-efficacy and CCC. Individuals with low self-efficacy may be hesitant to recognise and admit their lack of belief in their abilities, often attributing setbacks to external factors rather than acknowledging their own internal struggles (Maree & Che, 2020).

CCC, which is designed to help individuals explore and construct meaningful career paths, often involves addressing and challenging such negative self-perceptions (Savickas, 2005). The participant's realisation that they allowed external influences to impact their decisions suggests a shift in awareness and a newfound understanding of the need for self-empowerment. The previously stated remarks aligns with the goals of career counselling, where individuals learn to take control of their career narratives and overcome obstacles, fostering a more proactive and positive approach to their professional lives (Hartung & Vess, 2013). The participant expressed hope for change and the commitment to not let anything or anyone hinder progress signals a positive shift in the participant's self-efficacy and a readiness to embrace personal agency in line with the objectives of CCC (Savickas, 2005).

b) *What aspects of the intervention in particular improved the participant's self-efficacy?*

The participant expressed a committed determination to overcome any obstacles on the path to achieving great success, as stated earlier. Notably, the aspect of the intervention that had the most influence on the participant's self-efficacy was the process of reflecting on and connecting themes derived from the CIP as well as his earliest recollections. This introspective journey heightened the participant's self-awareness, revealing previously unrecognised self-doubts.

Through collaborating and examining his earliest recollections, the participant became aware of the underlying factors influencing his career decisions. This reflective process facilitated a connection between his unconscious beliefs and conscious awareness (Maree, 2020). It became evident that early memories, far from occurring randomly, resurfaced as significant themes and inclinations throughout his life (Dalene, 2023).

Furthermore, the participant reflected that he will use faith and prayer to help him achieve his goals. Faith is amongst the resilience-enabling factors identified by Masten (2014). In recognising the role of faith as a key element, the participant demonstrated a holistic approach to bolstering resilience on the journey toward his career goals.

5.3.2 *Primary Research Question: How Effective is Career Intervention Based on Career Construction Counselling for a Rural Disadvantaged Learner to Enhance His Self-Efficacy?*

The findings from this research study confirmed that CCC was effective in enhancing the self-efficacy of the study participant. The narrative and reflective elements embedded in the framework of CCC served as potent tools, empowering the participant to embark on a comprehensive exploration of his interests, values, and strengths (Maree & Jude, 2020). This process not only facilitated self-discovery but also fostered a profound understanding of the participant's identity within the distinctive backdrop of his rural and disadvantaged context. I found it noteworthy that the participant not only acknowledged the benefits derived from the intervention but also actively advocated for a group intervention involving his peers and classmates. This recommendation signals not only the participant's personal endorsement of the intervention's efficacy but also his desire to extend these positive outcomes to others. It reflects a sense of communal benefit, suggesting that the participant perceives the potential for collective growth and empowerment through a group-based approach. This proactive stance underscores the participant's genuine belief in the value of the intervention and his willingness to share its advantages for the collective benefit of his peers.

Moreover, I consistently observed a noticeable evolution in the participant's demeanour throughout the intervention, witnessing a gradual shift towards increased focus and self-directedness. As per Savickas (2010), life design counselling serves as a catalyst for clients to engage in reflective processes and take essential actions to bring to life the envisioned image of their future selves. The participant evidently placed significant value on the acquired skills from the intervention, particularly emphasising the capacity for reflection, an avoidance of denial concerning personal interests, and a genuine acknowledgment of personal weaknesses. This transformation underscores the effectiveness of life design counselling in cultivating self-awareness and empowering individuals to actively shape their own paths (Savickas, 2010).

5.4 Limitations of the Study

Since the study adopted an intrinsic single case study design, it is essential to clarify that the findings of this research were not intended for broad generalisation to the entire South African population. The inherent nature of an intrinsic single case study emphasises the specificity and uniqueness of the investigated individual, rendering caution in extending findings to a broader context (Yin, 2012). The participant selection process involved my judgment, focusing on pre-selected significant features representative of the phenomenon under investigation, potentially introducing self-selection bias and limiting the transferability of the findings.

Furthermore, the study faced limitations related to follow-up interviews due to constraints in time and financial resources, hindering the assessment of long-term effects of the intervention. Another noteworthy limitation pertains to the language aspect, as the majority of the data was collected in Zulu and subsequently translated. This translation process introduces the risk of losing nuances and subtleties in meaning.

Despite concerted efforts to enhance the research's trustworthiness through various measures, there remains a possibility that some individuals could perceive the subjective interpretation as a limitation.

5.5 Ethical Aspects

Throughout the duration of this research project, the ethical guidelines outlined in Chapter 3 were diligently adhered to by me. The participant received comprehensive information about the purpose of the study, the procedures involved, and the rights pertaining to his participation. Emphasis was placed on the voluntary nature of participation, with the participant being clearly informed of his right to withdraw from the project at any stage without

facing any adverse consequences. To ensure ethical practices, written informed assent was obtained from the participant as well as the consent from his legal guardian. Confidentiality was rigorously maintained by using a pseudonym in the report, safeguarding the participant's identity and preventing any potential connection of data to the individual. This meticulous adherence to ethical considerations underscores the commitment to upholding the rights and well-being of the research participant throughout the study.

5.6 Recommendations

In light of the findings from this intervention programme and the corresponding literature review, several recommendations are proposed. To enhance the efficacy of career counselling practices, it is recommended that life design intervention programmes be introduced in schools as early as Grade 9 so as to assist learners in aligning their subject choices with their career interests, providing valuable education about diverse career paths, and better preparing them for the future. Given the participant's preference for verbal expression over written expression, it is recommended that future researchers be prepared to engage participants in more discussion-based activities to elicit comprehensive information regarding life design experiences. Ideally, these discussions should take place in the participant's native language. Alternatively, the assistance of an interpreter fluent in their native language should be enlisted. Additionally, incorporating follow-up interviews is recommended to monitor and discuss participants' ongoing progress and development. To further expand the scope of research, evaluations should be conducted to assess the effectiveness of life design counselling specifically for learners in disadvantaged environments within a group context. These recommendations collectively strive to optimise the impact and applicability of life design interventions in diverse educational settings.

5.7 Personal Reflection

As I reflect on my journey, I feel overwhelmed by several emotions. Getting to this point, especially at this time of the year, feels like a significant achievement. My journey to KwaZulu-Natal and connecting with the participant was like revisiting my own past. I found myself resonating with the participant's experiences, as I, too, faced uncertainties during high school. Back then, I leaned towards agricultural sciences not out of genuine interest but because it aligned with the subjects I was studying. Despite secretly desiring a career in nursing or medicine, I was discouraged due to low math scores. When I started at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, the excitement of being in varsity was overshadowed by the dissatisfaction

with my chosen career—geography and environmental sciences. I could not picture myself in that field. Seeking career advice, I switched to psychology and, fortunately, it was not too late for the change. When people asked about my career decisions, I struggled to answer, especially when they inquired about how I learned about psychology since I studied in a disadvantaged high school.

Upon returning home for the first time since transitioning to a new career, I was met with overwhelming excitement from my aunt. Her joy was so profound that it brought her to tears. She recounted a moment from my childhood when, at the tender age of 9, I had expressed to her my aspiration to pursue a course in university that would somehow alleviate her struggles. My aunt has been struggling with stress-related issues and alcoholism. This event served as a revelation, prompting me to be assured that indeed our earliest memories are not arbitrary occurrences; rather, they often foreshadow and shape significant themes in our lives.

During the data generation I enjoyed every moment of the process. I felt so confident because I was collecting the data in a language that I am confident in. However, I encountered several challenges when I was transcribing and translating. It took so much time and effort. I was very frustrated. The pseudonym “Hope” that I used to conceal the identity of my participant came randomly. When I started reporting, I was very tired and demotivated, hoping that things would be better was the only thing I could ever hold onto.

The sentiment I am left with after this project aligns with Savickas's perspective, as articulated in Maree (2013b) as: actively master what you have passively suffered. The participant's challenges and struggles in this study closely parallel those I faced during my youth. It appears that undertaking this journey with the participant was a revisiting of my past, a necessary step before venturing into the next phase of my career.

5.8 Conclusion

There are present and upcoming challenges in coming up with career counselling intervention approaches that are suitable for learners from diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. The findings of the study suggested that the self-efficacy of the participant was significantly enhanced through the intervention, meaning that the working assumptions and research questions have been successfully answered. The participant appreciated the skills that he learned from the intervention and recommended it for other people in his peer groups. The findings of this study therefore seem to confirm Savickas's (2018) assertion that exploring clients' life stories reveals the themes that they use to make meaningful choices and adjust to work.

As I guided the study participant through the process of reflecting on his career-life story, he became aware of the challenges he was facing. Significantly, this process not only increased his awareness but also instilled a newfound willingness to take actions aimed at transforming his sense of hopelessness into a sense of hope (Maree & Jude, 2020). The readiness to take proactive steps to transform his situation indicates an enhanced sense of agency and the capacity to mobilise the necessary resources needed for building his resilience (Masten, 2014).

Lastly, as indicated earlier, based on the outcomes of this study, the provision of CCC significantly boosted the self-efficacy of the participant – a disadvantaged rural learner grappling with insufficient self-confidence. This enhancement not only increased his prospects of securing a 'suitable job' but, more importantly, cultivated a work environment conducive to help him experience a profound sense of meaning and purpose in his career trajectory. I firmly believe this empowerment will set the stage for meaningful social contributions within his professional sphere.

Regrettably, it is disheartening to acknowledge that people like the participant (hailing from environments characterised by profound structural oppression, compounded by alarming resource scarcity), rarely have the privilege of accessing career counselling – let alone the avant-garde style and kind of counselling delineated in this study. It is a poignant reality that underscores the systemic disparities in resource allocation and support.

In my commitment to honour the enduring legacy of my cherished parents, I am driven to seize every opportunity within my professional journey to actualise my aspiration of delivering transformative career counselling akin to the innovative approach demonstrated here. My ultimate goal is to contribute meaningfully to the lives of people like Hope, bridging the gap for those who, due to circumstances beyond their control, almost inevitably miss out on such crucial support.

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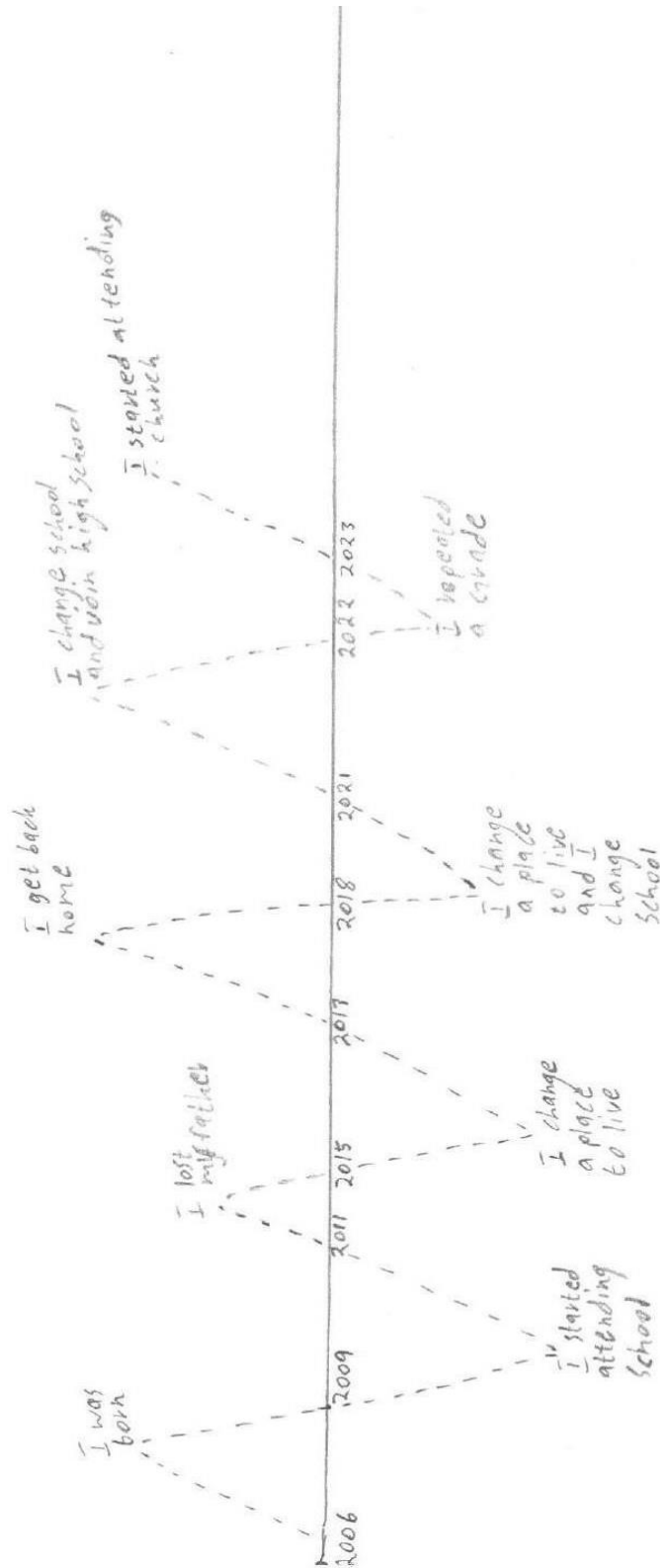
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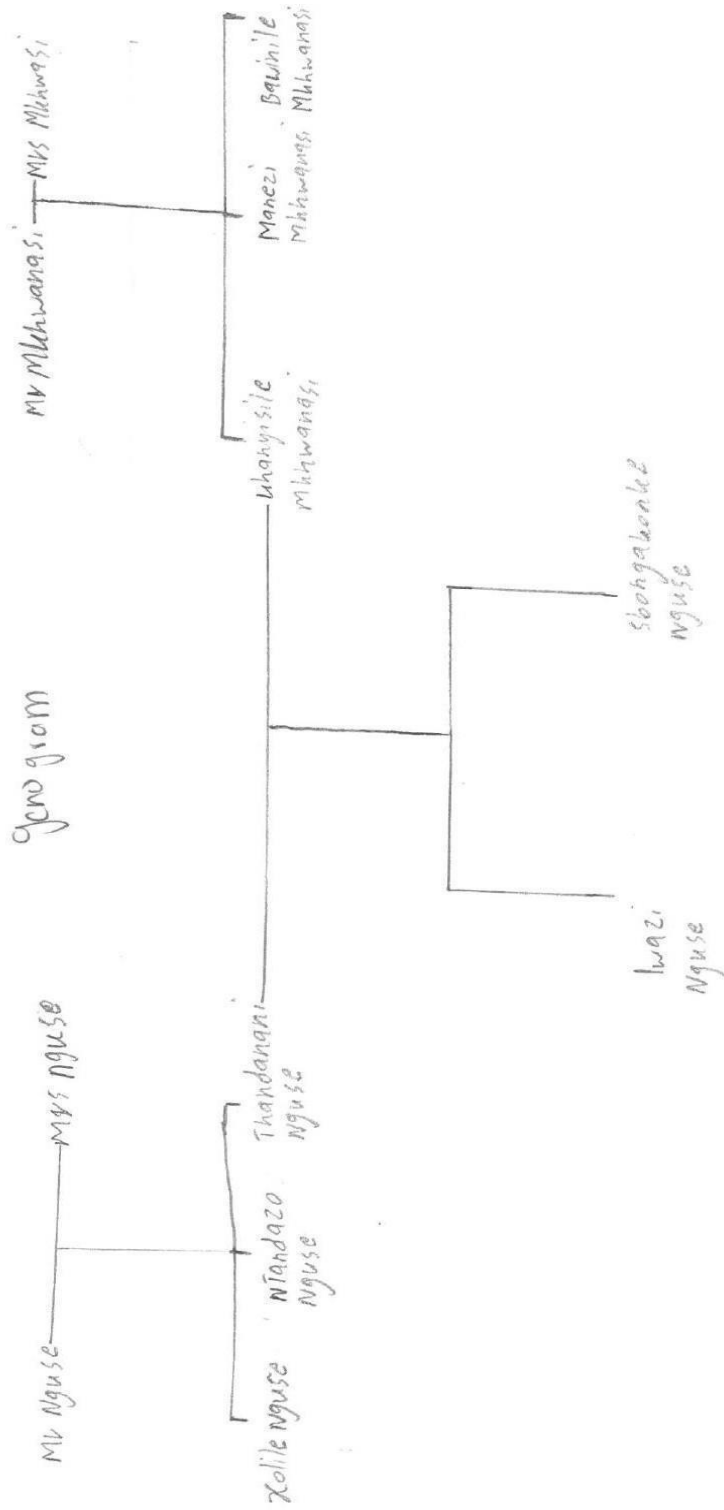
APPENDICES

Appendix A: Lifeline

Life line



Appendix B: Genogram



Appendix C: Collage



Appendix D: Poem

Veleh sekonakele

Akusithina sodwa esisenkingeni
yokulahlekelwa abangani nezihlobo kepha
yizwe lonke 😭
Ukufa komuntu sekuya ngokuba yinjwayeloh
ngobah ukuqhuma kwesbhamu kusenza
sibuze ukuthi sekudlule banifuthi 💔😭
Abanemali basenkingeni ngoba baziwa
ngokuthi bathwela nabamsulwa kanjalo 🤝💔

Make kwathuleka iskhathi esingangeviki
kungaqhumanga isbhamu siyakhululeka
kodwa kuyefana ngobah abanye badlule ne
CORONA 😭
Kahle kahle lomhlaba usuyintsalela
yokukhohlakala nokungabikho kwezintliziyo 😭
Kazi izukulwane sona siyophila kanjn ngoba
veleh sekonakele 😭

It is too late (Translation)

In this world of troubles vast,
The pandemic's shadow, unsurpassed.
Nationwide, we face its bitter sting,
Losing loved ones, the toll it brings.
Familiar now, this pandemic's woe,
Accepting loss as we learn and grow.
No more the terror of loud guns' roar,
But jealousy festers, at our core.

Assumptions made, when wealth we've won,
They think we sacrificed, someone dear, someone gone.
We seek a week of peace, devoid of gunshots' blare,
Yet, the virus lingers, a burden we bear.
In this cruel world, we navigate each day,
Living conditions harsh, where children play.
I wonder, with concern, about the generation to come,
May they find a brighter path, under the same sun.

Appendix E: Informed Assent



REQUEST FOR INFORMED ASSENT

Dear Participant

I am Anathi Mazongolo (21475378). I am a Masters candidate studying at the University of Pretoria, Groan Kloof Campus. Thank you very much for your willingness to participate in this research project. This research will be conducted as part of the completion of a Master's degree in Educational Psychology at the University of Pretoria. The title of the study is: **How can an interventionbased on career construction counselling enhance the self-efficacy of a rural disadvantage learner?**

In order for you to make an informed decision before we embark on this journey together, I wish to inform you of the requirements expected from you during this process. You will be asked to commit to 9 contact sessions of between 45-60 minutes per session. The sessions will be scheduled with you at appropriate times to suit your program. Attendance and participation at these sessions promise to provide you with rich knowledge and insight of yourself and promise to assist and guide your future career in a meaningful way.

The following ethical principles apply to this study:

- Your participation is voluntary
- You may withdraw from the project at any stage should you wish to do so
- Information you provide will be treated as confidential and anonymous
- The intent of this study is to cause you no harm or risk of any kind
- In the report following this study no reference will be made to information that could convey personal or identifiable information.
- You have the right to gain access to any information that was collected during the research process at any time.
- You have the right to withdraw any data and information you wish not to be released for publication
- The information that you provide will be used for scholarly research only.

The findings of this study may be published in an accredited journal, but confidentiality and anonymity will be honored.

You will be requested to take part in the following postmodern techniques:

- Collage
- Genogram
- Earliest Recollections
- Life story
- Career construction interview
- Life line
- Career Interest Profile (CIP)
- Informal interviews and reflective feedback and notes

The planned sessions will be audio recorded for research purposes. The results of these sessions will be submitted to the University of Pretoria in the form of a dissertation for me to fulfil requirement for the Master's degree in Educational Psychology.

By signing this letter of informed consent, you are giving permission for the following sources of data to be released (kindly indicate your agreement to each statement by ticking in front of the appropriate statement, e.g. X

 The verbatim transcription of the content as recorded during sessions.

 The analysis, interpretation and reporting of the content discussed during sessions.

 Notes and reflections made by the researcher and participant throughout the research process.

If you have any queries before or during the study or maybe after its completion, you are welcome to contact my supervisor, Prof Kobus Maree (012 420 2130) or me (074 503 7901).

Yours sincerely,

Participant

Ms. Mazongolo

Prof J.G. Maree

Standard Clause

We would like to request your permission to use your data, confidentially and anonymously for further research purposes as the data sets are the intellectual property of the University of Pretoria and, where relevant, project funders. Further research may include secondary data analysis and using the data for teaching purposes. The confidentiality and privacy applicable to this study will be binding on future research studies.

Appendix F: Informed Consent



REQUEST FOR PARTICIPATION AND INFORMED CONSENT PARENT(S)/GUADIAN(S)

Dear Parent/Guardian

You are friendly requested to grant permission to Miss Anathi Mazongolo, who is conducting research at the school where your son/daughter is attending, under the supervision of Prof. Dr. J.G. (Kobus) Maree from the University of Pretoria.

In order for the research to be conducted, your son/daughter will be requested to partake in interviews and complete questionnaires as part of the data collection instruments. You are required to provide a written consent that will include your full name and initials, signature and date to verify that you understand and agree to the conditions.

We will provide you with the necessary information to assist you to understand the study and explain what would be expected. Please feel free to ask the researcher to clarify anything that is not clear to you. You have the right to query concerns regarding the study at any time. Immediately report any new problems during the study, to the researcher. Contact details of the researcher are provided. Please feel free to make contact at any given time.

Furthermore, although your son/daughter 's identity will at all times remain confidential, the results of the research study will be presented in a dissertation publication. Importantly, no names of learners will be divulged.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please complete the form below. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Yours sincerely

Miss Anathi Mazongolo (Researcher)

anatiimazongolo@gmail.com

Dr. Prof. J.G. (Kobus) Maree (Supervisor)

kobus.maree@up.ac.za



INFORMED CONSENT PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN(S)

Title of research project: **How can an intervention based on career construction counselling enhance the self-efficacy of a rural disadvantage learner?**

I, _____ the undersigned, as the parent(s)/guardian(s) of _____ (Name of learner) hereby agree to participate in the above-mentioned research. I understand that my contribution will be treated as confidential and anonymous, and that I may withdraw from the study at any time, if I wish to do so.

I have read the Project Information Statement explaining the purpose of the research project and understand that:

- Participation is voluntary.
- I may decide to withdraw my consent at any time without penalty.
- All information obtained will be treated in strictest confidence.
- The learners 'names will not be used and individual learners will not be identifiable in any written reports about the study.
- A report of the findings will be made available to the parent.
- I may seek further information on the project at any given time or stage from Miss Anathi Mazongolo.

I freely and voluntarily give my consent for the interviewing of my son/daughter as part of the research project.

Signed at _____ on _____ 2023.

Researcher _____ Parent/Guardian _____

Appendix G: Approval from the Provincial department of Education



KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE

EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

OFFICE OF THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Private Bag X9137, PIETERMARITZBURG, 3200
Anton Lembede Building, 247 Burger Street, Pietermaritzburg, 3201
Tel: 033 392 1051

Email: Phindile.duma@kzndoe.gov.za

Enquiries: Mrs B.T. Ntuli

Ref.:2/4/8/7407

Miss Anathi Mazongolo
P.O. Box 573
UMZIMKHULU
3297

Dear Miss Mazongolo

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: “**ADMINISTERING CAREER CONSTRUCTION COUNCELLING TO A RURAL DISADVANTAGE LEARNER WITH INADEQUATE.**”, in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the Intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from **02 March 2023 to 31st December 2025**.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Mrs Buyi Ntuli at the contact numbers above.
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report/dissertation/thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Office of the HOD, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.

Mr GN Ngcobo
Head of Department: Education
Date: 02nd March 2023

GROWING KWAZULU-NATAL TOGETHER

Appendix H: Turnitin report

| Test 2 | | Prof. J.G. Maree | |
|--------------------|--|------------------|----------------|
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