



Career adaptability in Lithuania: A test of psychometric properties and a theoretical model

Ieva Urbanaviciute*, Antanas Kairys, Birute Pociute, Audrone Liniauskaite

Vilnius University, Department of General Psychology, Lithuania

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 2 July 2014

Available online 28 September 2014

Keywords:

Career adaptabilities

Career construction

Psychometric properties

ABSTRACT

The Career Adapt-Abilities Scale-Lithuanian Form consists of four six-item subscales measuring concern, control, curiosity, and confidence. These are thought to be the main dimensions of career adaptability reflecting individual psychosocial resources to cope with occupational transitions, developmental tasks, and work traumas. Two studies were administered in a sample ($N = 767$) of Lithuanian high school students. The results showed factor structure to be identical to that of the CAAS-International Form. Moreover, good to excellent scale internal consistency coefficients were obtained. With a slight exception, MIMIC model analysis revealed no major effects of demographic variables upon the CAAS factor or factor indicator scores. Concurrent validity analysis showed career adaptability, as measured by the CAAS-Lithuanian Form, to be significantly related to career aspirations, to the frequency of career exploration behaviors and to career decidedness. Finally, as hypothesized by the career construction model of adaptation, career exploration behaviors mediated the link between career adaptability and decidedness.

© 2014 Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

The modern world of work raises many challenges for those who are just about to enter the labor market. An image of a successful individual, well ingrained in the Western societies, relates to such attributes as personal and professional achievements, high societal status, self-identification, and self-actualization. However, today there is no single and clearly defined way of achieving personal and career goals and of becoming a full-fledged member of society. There are many paths offering numerous opportunities and risks at the same time. Arguably, recent social economic changes have considerably increased the uncertainty and complexity of career choice. Thus, as noted by Guichard, Pouyaud, de Calan, and Dumora (2012), in the complex modern societies, instead of analyzing the 'career choice', it is more relevant to talk about life designing issues and the search for self-identity.

The search for investing the self in professional domains probably is best reflected in the constructivist perspective (Peavy, 1995; Savickas et al., 2009), which highlights self-reflection and the so-called life construction, revealing both individual uniqueness and an ability to integrate one's goals with societal demands. From the constructivist perspective, career development would be seen as a rather creative, life-long process (for details see Savickas, 1997; Guichard & Lenz, 2005), which encompasses a number of decisions based on continuous assessment of the self and the context. This approach draws particular attention to the inner resources enabling a person to adapt and to adequately construct one's own life, taking charge of his or her career path. These inner resources are well reflected by the *adaptability* construct which is proposed in the theory of career construction (Savickas, 1997, 2013).

* Corresponding author at: Vilnius University, Department of General Psychology, Universiteto 9/1, LT-01513 Vilnius, Lithuania. Fax: +370 5 266 7600.
E-mail addresses: ieva.urbanaviciute@fsf.vu.lt (I. Urbanaviciute), antanas.kairys@fsf.vu.lt (A. Kairys), birute.pociute@fsf.vu.lt (B. Pociute), audrone.liniauskaite@gmail.com (A. Liniauskaite).

2. The concept of career adaptability

Adaptability is 'the quality of being able to change, without great difficulty, to fit new or changed circumstances' (Savickas, 1997, p. 254). It can be explored in various forms depending upon the domain. In the career development domain, *career adaptability* is of particular relevance. It denotes a psychosocial construct which reflects individuals' resources to cope with various challenges, such as developmental tasks and occupational transitions, that constitute an inevitable part of life (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). To date, several career adaptabilities have been distinguished in the framework of career construction, such as concern, control, curiosity, confidence, and commitment (Savickas et al., 2009). In theory, each of them serves as a basis for the development of individual strategies that facilitate coping with various occupational tasks or acting in a flexible way.

The emphasis on the psychosocial dimension distinguishes career adaptability from stable (i.e. dispositional) individual characteristics. As argued in Savickas and Porfeli (2012), adaptability (contrary to adaptivity) should be seen as a self-regulation capacity rather than a core personality trait. Looking from the theoretical point of view, career adaptability could be placed among the constructs that reflect personal agency or the perceived ability to achieve one's life goals. Traditionally, this category of construct has included such attitudinal constructs as career decision self-efficacy (Betz & Hackett, 2006), which refers to the perceived ability to successfully undertake career planning tasks, and (vocational) hope (Snyder et al., 1991, 1996), which is defined by *agency* (belief in one's capacity to initiate and sustain actions) and *pathways* (belief in one's capacity to generate routes) to successfully implement actions necessary to achieve one's goals.

Similarly, career adaptability also includes a considerable notion of personal agency, however, being psychosocial it offers a different perspective for looking at personal capacities and should be particularly relevant in understanding career construction and management. First of all, it refers to under-researched aspects of career development that are only partially reflected by other similar constructs. Second, its components are quite well integrated in terms of temporal focus which is an important issue in career choice. Third, it emphasizes personal initiative and taking responsibility for one's career construction, which fits well to the reality of modern world, as well as to current theoretical approaches to career development. And finally, being derived from the concept of career maturity, it provides a more up-to-date approach towards career development skills.

Studies of different age groups have shown career adaptability to have a variety of positive outcomes. For instance, it is reported to predict adolescent career aspirations (Hirschi, 2010), relate to technical school students' increased employability skills (De Guzman & Choi, 2013) and fewer career concerns among young adults (Creed, Fallon, & Hood, 2009), and affect employee organizational commitment and other job retention variables (Ferreira, Coetzee, & Masenge, 2013; Ito & Brotheridge, 2005). Moreover, it is thought to play a positive role in mid-career changes (Brown, Bimrose, Barnes, & Hughes, 2012). All these findings suggest that career adaptability has become a crucial career construct of the modern times, affecting career choice and management across various domains.

3. Career adaptability in the intercultural context

The most popular and best validated instrument to measure career adaptability is the Career Adapt-Abilities Scale (CAAS). Its international version (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012) is composed of 24 items aimed to measure career adaptability in four domains: concern, control, curiosity, and confidence. The scale has been extensively tested internationally providing substantial evidence for its applicability in different cultural contexts. However, international data (Johnston et al., 2013; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012; Teixeira, Bardagi, Lassance, Magalhães, & Duarte, 2012; Vilhjálmsdóttir, Kjartansdóttir, Smáradóttir, & Einarsdóttir, 2012, etc.) have also revealed a number of cross-cultural differences suggesting the importance of cultural and/or linguistic factors that might affect scale validity and reliability.

The present study is aimed, in part, to complement the international initiative to validate the CAAS-International Form in a wider cultural and linguistic context by testing the validity and reliability of the scale in the Lithuanian high school student sample. The rationale of the study is based on the following:

- a. Despite the fact that the CAAS has been tested in a variety of countries, there is little data coming from the Central and Eastern European region, which has a rather specific social-economic, cultural, and societal context. Testing scale structure based on Lithuanian data will provide additional evidence on the dimensionality of career adaptability construct and its cross-cultural applicability.
- b. The concept of career adaptability as a psychosocial construct implies that certain developmental and social-demographic factors (e.g. age or gender) might play a role in its formation. Therefore, besides testing scale structure, this study also attempts to explore the properties of scale items/factors across different sub-groups referring to age, gender and respondents' place of residence.
- c. To distinguish career adaptability from other related constructs, this study aims to examine how career adaptability and its separate components correlate with other subjective and objective career variables.

Testing scale concurrent validity is of the utmost importance in this case as it provides an empirical basis to place career adaptability among other career constructs. Different studies have approached this procedure in a variety of ways. Some, for example, take into account the individual difference approach and attempt to explore the relationship between career adaptability and a number of 'global' constructs such as personality (Rossier, Zecca, Stauffer, Maggiori, & Dauwalder, 2012; Teixeira et al., 2012; Van Vianen, Klehe, Koen, & Dries, 2012) or motivation (Pouyaud, Vignoli, Dosnon, & Lallemand, 2012). Alternatively, other studies have related career adaptability to specific career variables which are abundant in the field of career psychology. For instance, it has been associated

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/886856>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/886856>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)