



THE CAREER CONSTRUCTION OF PERFORMING ARTISTS

by

Ronel Kleynhans

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PHILOSOPHIAE DOCTOR

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Department of Industrial Psychology

Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences

at the

UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE

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Co-supervisor: Prof. J. G. Maree

November 2022

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

Full names of student: Ronel Kleynhans

Student number: 1993239373

I, Ronel Kleynhans, declare that this dissertation: “**THE CAREER CONSTRUCTION OF PERFORMING ARTISTS**”, is submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of Philosophiae Doctor at the University of the Free State. I declare that this dissertation is my independent work and that I have not previously submitted it to another institution of higher education. All sources cited or quoted in this research paper are indicated and acknowledged in a comprehensive list of references.

Ronel Kleynhans (Student)

Prof. P. Nel (Supervisor)

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PhD LETTER OF 2018



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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: Confirmation of admission to the PhD (Industrial Psychology)

During 2017, Ronel Kleynhans (1993239373) successfully presented her PhD proposal to both the Department and the EMS Research Committee. Her title was also registered towards the end of 2017.

This letter thereby confirms that she has been admitted to the PhD program specializing, in Industrial Psychology.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions.

Kind regards,

Petrus Nel, PhD
Chairperson: Department of Industrial Psychology



ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER



Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences

22-Nov-2018

Dear Mrs Ronel Kleynhans

Ethics Clearance: **THE CAREER CONSTRUCTION OF THE PERFORMING ARTIST**

Principal Investigator: Mrs Ronel Kleynhans

Department: Industrial Psychology Department (Bloemfontein Campus)

APPLICATION APPROVED

With reference to your application for ethical clearance with the Faculty of Economic & Management Sciences, I am pleased to inform you on behalf of the Ethics Committee of the faculty that you have been granted ethical clearance for your research.

Your ethical clearance number, to be used in all correspondence is: **UFS-HSD2018/1182**

This ethical clearance number is valid from **22-Nov-2018** to **21-Nov-2023**. Should you require more time to complete this research, please apply for an extension.

We request that any changes that may take place during the course of your research project be submitted to the ethics office to ensure we are kept up to date with your progress and any ethical implications that may arise.

Thank you for submitting this proposal for ethical clearance and we wish you every success with your research.

Yours Sincerely

Dr. Petrus Nel

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APPROVAL OF TITLE CHANGE LETTER

3 October 2022

Mrs R Kleynhans (1993239373)
Department of Industrial Psychology

Dear Mrs Kleynhans,

This letter confirms that you presented your PhD proposal on 6 September 2017 to the Research Committee of the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences, proposing a PhD in Industrial Psychology.

Permission has been granted by the Committee for you to continue with your proposed PhD.

A change in title were approved on 5 May 2022 at the Research Committee and served at the EMS Faculty Board.

Title approved: **The career construction of performing artists**
Date served at the EMS Faculty Board: 3 August 2022

Our best wishes accompany you during the research process.

Yours faithfully



Mrs Igna du Plooy
EMS Research Co-ordinator

ETHICS STATEMENT

Full names of student: Ronel Kleynhans

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1. I understand what plagiarism is and am aware of the University's policy in this regard.
2. I declare that this thesis is my own original work. Where other people's work has been used (either from a printed source, internet or any other source), this has been properly acknowledged and referenced in accordance with University requirements.
3. I have not used work previously produced by another student or any other person to hand in as my own.
4. I have not allowed, and will not allow, anyone to copy my work with the intention of passing it off as his/her own work.

Ronel Kleynhans (Student)

Prof. P. Nel (Supervisor)

Prof. J.G. Maree (Co-supervisor)

DECLARATION FROM EXTERNAL CODER



25 January 2022

External coder's confirmation of research findings

I hereby confirmed to have acted as external coder for the thesis of Mrs Ronel Kleynhans. I received and verified her data analysis and concur with the findings. The identified themes and subthemes identified by Mrs Kleynhans were reported accurately.

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DECLARATION FROM LANGUAGE EDITOR

Accept herewith my declaration that I language edited the PhD thesis authored by Ronel Kleynhans with the title:

“THE CAREER CONSTRUCTION OF PERFORMING ARTISTS”.

Jennifer Lake

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lake', written in a cursive style.

Accredited Professional Text Editor, SATI (APEd)

Membership no: 1002099

M. St. Linguistics (OXON)

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ABSTRACT

Performing artists continuously face challenges of non-traditional, flexible, and protean career trajectories. Applying Career Construction Theory and Life Design Intervention to Performing Artists can shed light on their experiences, perceptions, and sense-making processes as they navigate their life and career stages, especially against the unique backdrop of the challenging South African artistic environment. The novel perspective can be applied to various protean career trajectories and the training of Performing Artists.

To this end, a qualitative, exploratory, descriptive case study design was adopted. Convenience sampling was used to select 19 performing artists to participate in the study. Data-gathering instruments included various narrative data-gathering techniques, and Thematic Analysis was utilised to analyse the data.

The findings revealed that being a performing artist emerged as a core value that advances their self- and career identity. Furthermore, performing artists experience rejection on intrapersonal, micro-, and macro-societal levels and employ different strategies, such as adaptability, spirituality, and creativity, to deal with hardships throughout their lives. Additionally, participants' experiences and interactions with external influences shaped their decision to choose a performing arts career. Importantly, participants reported receiving support and encouragement from at least one significant person in their life to follow their dream, irrespective of the career field. Creativity permeates every aspect of their being and is drawn on to convert their pain into purpose and enable them to make social contributions within and outside the artistic sphere. Further research is needed on how performing artists' creativity can be harnessed to bolster their participation in entrepreneurial endeavours.

Key terms: Career construction; life-design counselling; life- and career stages; protean career; performing artists.

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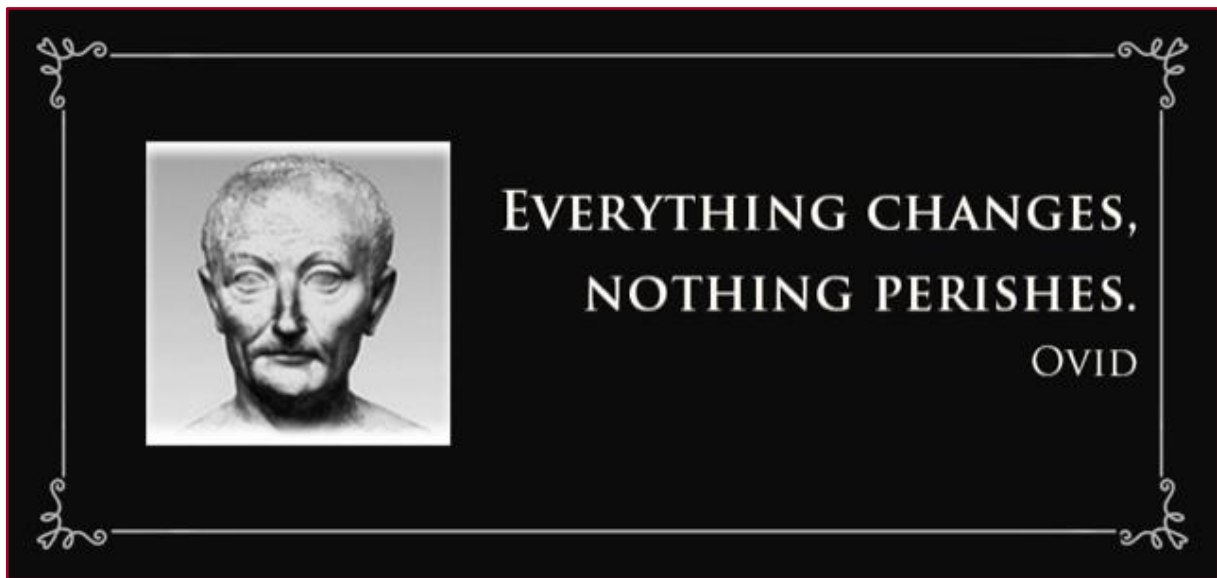
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CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION



(Ovid, 43 BCE - 17 CE, *Metamorphoses*,
book XV, line 165, in Rabenu, 2021)

1.1 INTRODUCTION

"The future is here already, and the unpredictable world of work is changing continually, rapidly, and fundamentally" (Maree, 2020a, p. 22). The words of Maree (2020a) have never rung more true given the changes the world has experienced over the last few decades and that at an accelerating pace during the previous few years. The 21st century is characterised by an unpredictable, challenging work environment with economic,¹ global,² political,³ technological,⁴ and cultural challenges bringing dramatic changes in the world of work (Abodunrin et al., 2020; Behnassi & Haiba, 2022; Greenhaus et al., 2019; Maree, 2013a, 2020a; Rabenu, 2021; Savickas, 2011a; Savickas et al., 2009).

¹ For example, the 2007-2009 recession in America caused financial crises and harmful impacts on employment on a global scale (Greenhaus et al., 2019).

² For example, the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the economic and global environment (Abodunrin et al., 2020).

³ The current Russia-Ukraine war and the impact on global food security (Behnassi & Haiba, 2022).

⁴ Including the information society and digital revolution, including Work 4.0 (Maree, 2020a).

Changes in the world of work pose significant challenges to workers, influencing how work is structured and experienced, employment relationships and people's career trajectories (Chudzikowski, 2012; Maree, 2018c; Savickas, 2019). Within the evolving landscape, a career is not experienced as a stable entity but is characterised by flexibility, leading to discontinuous and fragmented careers with very little job security becoming the 'new normal' (Chudzikowski, 2012; Greenhaus et al., 2019; Maree, 2017b; Savickas, 2011a). There is also a decline in career progression within a single organisation (Inglis & Cray, 2012; Greenhaus et al., 2019) while concentrating more on selling skills and services to a host of employers who need projects completed (Savickas, 2011a). These changes in the world of work imply that individuals need to take responsibility for their own careers and not depend as much on external bodies to regulate them as they used to (Inglis & Cray, 2012). They need to ensure that they remain employable as they manage their careers by drawing on intentionality, adaptability, lifelong learning and autobiographical reasoning (Maree, 2017b; Savickas, 2011b).

Hall (1996) first coined the term *protean career* when alluding to the above tendency to describe adaptable, flexible, and independent workers who can reinvent themselves to meet changing circumstances and address these changing needs. According to Bridgstock (2005), a protean career consists of high mobility and low job security, multiple occupational roles, various sources of income, subjective measures of success, personal responsibility for career development and professional networking (Bridgstock, 2005). The term protean also refers to people's ability to remain resilient and deal with the effect of new technologies and new concepts of work (Baruch, 2004; Hall, 1996).

In the contemporary world of work, career research should assist employees in becoming better prepared to adapt to the conditions of the ever-changing information society and inform them about what they need to successfully construct their careers in a potentially jobless world of work (Maree, 2017e; Schreuder & Coetzee, 2012). Career research should provide a dynamic response to the work-

related developments and challenges experienced by 21st-century people while focusing on the effect of individual development constructs on workers' careers (Maree, 2013a, 2017b, 2020a; Maurer & Chapman, 2013; Schreuder & Coetzee, 2012). Savickas (2011b) stresses that career research should bring innovative, relevant solutions that can be applied to the benefit of career development issues that individuals battle within their everyday lives. Innovative career development theories and practices that assist individuals in developing the required career adaptability skills to reconceptualise their careers in the 21st century and redesign their working lives are thus required (Maree, 2020a; Maurer & Chapman, 2013; Schreuder & Coetzee, 2012).

Internationally, research in career development keeps pushing the boundaries and implements innovation to ensure that the career development discipline continues to grow and to be prepared to address the challenges of career paradigm shifts in a changing world of work (Patton & McIlveen, 2009; Savickas, 2012). The three main paradigms that emerged are the formist paradigm of modernity's vocational guidance for the actor, the organismic paradigm of high modernity career education for the agent and the contextualised paradigm of post modernity's life-designing for the author (Savickas, 2013b). The first two paradigms are based on a positivistic, scientific conception of objects and subjects and addresses the needs of the "old" or "traditional" career (Savickas, 2013b). In contrast, the third paradigm addresses the needs of contemporary careers while advocating for the social construction of projects. Work-life is viewed as a series of projects which include the life-designing needs of workers in societies that have de-standardised the life course and de-jobbed employment (Savickas, 2012) within a fluid environment (Savickas, 2011b), which has led to a transformation from jobs to a jobless world (Savickas, 2011a). The third paradigm's epistemological position is that of contextualism and views individuals as continually changing amid ongoing events in a dynamic world. It attempts to answer the question, "How does it happen?", while the truth criterion revolves around pragmatic effectiveness and uniqueness (Savickas, 2013b). Two core theories within this paradigm are the systems theory framework (STF) of career development and

Savickas' career construction and life-design theory. The focus of the current study will be on the latter,⁵ as this theory explains the processes through which "individuals construct themselves, impose direction on their vocational behaviour, and make meaning of their careers" (Savickas, 2013a, p. 1). Three key aspects incorporated into the career construction theory are identity, career adaptability and life themes (Savickas et al., 2009).

According to Hall (2013), the contemporary world of work is characterised by continuous learning and identity changes throughout a lifespan. The lifespan, which covers a career life cycle, can be divided into the early, middle and late adulthood career, each associated with chronological ageing and specific psychobiological developmental tasks and challenges (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2016). Some of the core psychological tasks of early adulthood (17 to 45 years) focus on crystallising the self-concept, developing independence, responsibility toward the self, self-reliance and autonomy. Individuals in this career phase need to establish and construct an identity narrative (career identity). Individuals in this life stage also need to develop career competency, career self-efficacy and adaptability. The middle adulthood life stage is from age 40/45 to 60 years. One of the crucial psychological life tasks in this phase is capitalising on midlife's psychological benefits, such as experience and wisdom. Other tasks include dealing with ageing-related physical changes and maintaining health and emotional well-being by drawing on emotional-social intelligence. Individuals also need to refine and re-evaluate their career identity, crystallising the self-concept and revising/adjusting the identity narrative. Enhancing occupational satisfaction through creative self-expression is a priority, finding sustainable employability, career adaptability and dealing with career plateaus. In the late adulthood life stage (60+ years), individuals need to deal with socio-emotional losses, establish satisfactory physical living arrangements, prepare for retirement and find alternative ways of creative self-expression while remaining productive citizens (Coetzee et al., 2016). It is also

⁵ Although the impact of the STF will not be ignored.

critical for individuals in this stage to refine their identity, revise and adjust the identity narrative and become a mentor and consultant while maintaining health and emotional well-being (Coetzee et al., 2016).

In the 21st-century world of work, people will often have multiple career trajectories with different developmental career stages within their particular adulthood life stage (the early, middle and late adulthood stages). These developmental career stages (also seen as mini learning cycles, hereafter referred to as mini-cycles) demonstrate the cyclic nature of people's psychological (subjective) career experiences, growth and learning as they proactively adapt to and manage their careers, experimenting with various career possibilities in the implementation of their evolving self-concept and revision of their narrative identity (career identity) (Coetzee et al., 2016). As both the nature of work and individuals' self-concept have some fluidity, career development involves a continual process of adjustment or change throughout the lifespan (Coetzee et al., 2016; Schreuder & Coetzee, 2016).

1.2 THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT OF PERFORMING ARTISTS IN SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa presents a unique counselling scenario as the country accommodates many different socioeconomic contexts and strata, depicting both socioeconomic characteristics from the Global South (predominantly developing) and Global North (predominantly developed) country contexts. Within such a context, it is paramount to consider the role of individualism versus collectivism, the narrative tradition, and the interrelatedness and interdependence of people in their contexts (Maree, 2020a). Understanding the importance of context is particularly important in collectivist, Global South (third world) countries where large numbers of people have been subjugated and colonised for centuries and in which a post-apartheid context adds unique career-related challenges for the country's citizens (Maree, 2020a; Schreuder & Coetzee, 2012). Stead and Watson (2017) have specifically argued that the latter, concerning CCT in a developing world

context, reflects the clients' experiences of their own national and cultural contexts. Additionally, South Africa did not respond sufficiently and proactively to our national and cultural context, including the post-apartheid period causing South Africa to lag in terms of international research trends in career psychology (Hobololo, 2020; Schreuder & Coetzee, 2012). Watson (2006, as mentioned in McMahon & Patton, 2006) underscores that we must deconstruct existing career theories and counselling approaches to reconstruct them within the South African context in order to address the current need.

The sentiments mentioned earlier ring curiously true in the case of performing artists as their career development and how they navigate the quest toward a performing arts career within a transformed industry is a relatively underrepresented area of empirical research in the literature, with traditional career theories providing limited insights (Carey, 2015; Everts et al., 2021; Middleton & Middleton, 2017; Zwaan & Ter Bogt, 2009). Even more critical is that research within the arts is primarily quantitative, survey-tracking-based work that provides high-level generalisable findings in the creative sphere (Carey, 2015). Research has mainly been done through economic lenses, e.g. the development of the Whoop Curve (Wacholtz & Wilgus, 2011), focusing on creative entrepreneurship (Bridgstock, 2011; Preece, 2011), creative entrepreneurship in higher education (Bridgstock, 2013) or the specific attributes (e.g. personality, cognition, memory, mobility and personality factors) of artists (Kogan, 2002).

Savickas et al. (2009) lobby for more contemporary career development theories embedded in a constructionist⁶ perspective, which should shed more light on the career development process. From a constructionist viewpoint, *career* symbolises a movement that establishes personal meaning by revisiting past memories, present experiences, and future aspirations by patterning them into a

⁶ Career construction theory (Savickas, 2019) draws on social constructionism as a metatheory regarding how people construct knowledge. The underlying assumption is that people use language as a means to make (as opposed to 'find') a sense of meaning, hope, and purpose in their career lives (Hartung, 2018; Savickas, 2019).

life theme (Savickas et al., 2009). Inkson (2002) refers to various metaphors in explaining the movement in an individual's career, e.g. climbing the ladder of success or moving along a particular career path. Movement also forms an integrated element of the choreographed world of performing artists, whether in moving across a stage in dance, movement of the physical keys on a piano, or movement in a piece of music, to mention a few examples (Roncaglia, 2008).

As previously stated, there is a need to research artists and their lived experiences as they emerge into a highly competitive industry without clear vocational opportunities (Carey, 2015). Usually, artists must develop and manage their careers (Jones & Walsh, 1997) within a very uncertain field and seldom have the possibility of a planned career (Inglis & Cray, 2012). The uncertainties of funding, the need for flexibility in working conditions and the need to develop their careers by building an artistic reputation all apply to artists (Inglis & Cray, 2012). These factors, together with artists seeking self-employment and pursuing multiple positions in a complex environment, lead to artists having a protean career (Bridgstock, 2005). Performing artists in South Africa within the post-apartheid context experience additional challenges that other individuals in the country do not necessarily experience, e.g. dependence on public perceptions, which may influence ticket sales or performance attendance. Other challenges include stakeholder relations, infrastructure and funding, to mention but a few (Department of Arts and Culture, 2011).

Two relevant frameworks for interpreting and providing meaning to individuals' subjective work-life experiences are the adulthood life stage and the developmental career stage frameworks (Coetzee et al., 2016). Zacher et al. (2019) highlight that researchers seem to focus on early-career artists within the contemporary arts industry (Everts et al., 2021), thus neglecting the middle and late career and life stages. One of the core psychological life tasks in the middle adulthood life stage is to capitalise on psychological benefits, such as experience and wisdom, while an essential aspect of the late adulthood life stage is to act as a mentor and consultant (Coetzee et al., 2016). Much can therefore be learnt from performing artists in their middle and late life and career stages, utilising

their wisdom, experiences and sense-making process in choosing a career in the performing arts as well as maintaining this career throughout the core psychological tasks associated with each of the life and career stages they have already lived through. However, the psychological tasks in the early life and career stages should not be ignored, as individuals in the 21st-century world of work will have multiple career journeys with different career stages within their particular career-life stages (Coetzee et al., 2016).

Lastly, the arts have a considerable impact on a country (Kogan, 2002), as it leads to job creation, human development, social inclusion, cultural diversity (Patel, 2010; United Nations, 2008) and economic growth (Patel, 2010). The arts sector also provides a platform for developing economies to generate intellectual capital and, at the same time, promote social inclusion and human development (United Nations, 2008). Thus, it is paramount that more attention is devoted to artists who are active in the arts sector (Kogan, 2002).

In summary, the new world of work sets new demands and challenges for 21st-century workers who repeatedly have to navigate work-related transitions in their career lives. Other challenges include employment instability, career transitions, and remaining employable (Maree, 2017b, 2020a; Schreuder & Coetzee, 2012). The scenario is even more applicable to the non-traditional career setting of performing artists facing a non-traditional protean career path (Chopp & Kerr, 2008, as cited in Kerr & McKay, 2013; Hall & Mirvis, 1996). Within this new context, more contemporary career theories like that of career constructivism (Savickas, 2011b) can shed much light on the experiences and sense-making processes of performing artists as they progress through their various life and career stages (Carey, 2015) within the unique and challenging South African context (Maree, 2017b).

1.3 RATIONALE

From a young age, I⁷ have been drawn to the performing arts. At three, I made my 'debut performance', singing a solo at the nursery school's annual year-end function. My second 'grand role' was in Grade 1 when I was cast in a leading role. I clearly remember an audience member coming to me after the show and telling me how surprised she was that a girl of six had such a strong voice filling the hall. That was a defining moment in my life, and I have been involved in the performing arts ever since.

However, I never considered a performing arts career. If I had to choose between being cast in a musical that would take up a lot of my time and staying up to date with my academics, the latter always won. There were various reasons for this, some including the typical fears surrounding a career in the arts, like the fact that this type of career would not provide a stable income or security, that I would have to travel a lot, and my anxieties each time I had to perform. Other reasons included my parents⁸ telling me that I first needed to study something that I could fall back on in the 'real' world and my fears and insecurities of not being good enough in this competitive environment. Despite these opposing factors, I still love the stage and performing, and I integrate this love into my daily activities, as I give motivational talks, singing performances and livestream presentations, recording songs, and releasing them on CD or iTunes.

For my Master's dissertation (Kleynhans, 2008), I purposefully integrated my passion for the arts with my love for academia by proposing to change managers' attitudes towards people with physical disabilities in the workplace by utilising interactive drama. For the Master's study, I wrote three interactive dramas, wrote a song in collaboration with another artist to accompany the study, and recorded a music video to accompany the song. The study was successful and brought about a

⁷ Please note that various stakeholders, such as the university and my study leaders, gave me the choice of whether I wanted to employ the first or third person. I preferred using the first person in the study.

⁸ Especially my dad.

change in the attitudes of employers participating in my research towards people with disabilities in the workplace. Furthermore, I collaborated with my supervisor⁹ to publish two articles (Kleynhans & Kotze, 2010, 2014) from my Master's dissertation.

Even though that study addressed some of my creative needs, I still had a fundamental question lingering at my core: "Why am I so hesitant to enter the realm of the performing arts full-time, whereas there are many performing artists in various career stages choosing such a journey?" I cannot help but wonder: How do performing artists perceive, experience and construct their careers within the fast-paced and changing world of work? Despite various internal and external factors influencing them, these performing artists have embarked on viable career journeys in the performing arts. In contrast, other performing artists with perhaps even better skills do not opt for a career in the performing arts; their unique talents and skills are lost to the community. I also struggled to understand why the various career counsellors I had approached never acknowledged this internal conflict I experienced when providing career counselling, leading me to question traditional career counselling methods.

Patton and McIlveen (2009), as well as Savickas (2013b), acknowledge the changing world of work and the need for a new career paradigm when counselling in this new fluid environment (Savickas, 2011b). Savickas' career construction and life-design theories (Savickas, 2013b) provide such a paradigm and focus on the uniqueness of each individual's context. These theories are about making meaning of careers (Savickas, 2013a) as they focus on individuals' identity, career adaptability and life themes (Savickas et al., 2009). Inglis and Cray (2012) underscore that contemporary theories, like Savickas' theory of career construction, resonate most clearly with the arts and can be utilised as a framework to shed light on the individual and lived experiences of artists in a competitive and uncertain environment (Carey, 2015; Inglis & Cray, 2012).

⁹ Prof T. Kotzé

The tag *uncertain environment* is even more applicable in the case of contemporary post-modern, post-apartheid South Africa's multicultural work context (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2009; Schreuder & Coetzee, 2012). Within this context, individuals have to deal with issues such as employment instability, affirmative action and employment equity policies, which provide more opportunities to black people and women in particular. The unemployed South African youth also remains an issue of significant concern (Department of Higher Education and Training [DHET], 2015), with the relationship between career development and socioeconomic and educational background, race or ethnicity and gender being neglected (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2012). The situation is aggravated even more in the performing arts sector, which deals with significant financial pressures, increasing competition between performing artists, decreased government funding and an apathetic audience, which has led to a shrinking performing arts market in South Africa (Mishan & Prangle, 2014).

From the perspective of Schreuder and Coetzee (2012), it thus seems that a need exists to focus on new career development and counselling models for South Africa in the post-apartheid period. Such models could be based on contemporary theories, such as Savickas' CCT (Savickas, 2013b), from the perspective of performing artists in the South African context (Mishan & Prangle, 2014). The current research thus addresses Maree's (2017b) plea for more research on CCT in diverse settings and investigating the construction of careers in the performing arts while acknowledging performing artists' unique challenges; all of which may add to the creation of knowledge in this non-traditional context.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In this section, the main research questions, as well as the secondary research questions, will be clarified.

1.4.1 Primary research question

What life-career¹⁰ experiences of performing artists, as a protean career type, including musicians, singers and actors in their early, middle and late life-career stages can be identified within the framework of career construction?

1.4.2 Descriptive research questions

The descriptive research questions of the study include:

- ❖ What life-career experiences influence the career trajectory of performing artists, including musicians, singers and actors in their early, middle and late life-career stages in South Africa?
- ❖ How does the identity construction (the what) of performing artists in the South African context occur?
- ❖ How does the career adaptability (the how) of performing artists in the South African context occur?
- ❖ What are some of the life themes (the why) related to performing artists within the South African context?

1.4.3 Exploratory research questions

The exploratory research questions of the study include:

- ❖ How does knowledge of performing artists' life-career experiences (relevant to the current study, such as their identity construction, career adaptability and life themes) assist in understanding the career construction of performing artists' life-career stages within the South African context as a protean career type?

¹⁰ I use the term life-career to refer to both dimensions, life and careers, in the lives of performing artists viewing the two constructs as interconnected. Furthermore, life (including the intra, micro- and macro-societal experiences) directly affects an individual's career choices and career trajectory. My viewpoint corresponds to that of Hartung et al.'s (2008) usage of the term, whereas Maree (2020a) prefers the term career-life. Importantly, the usage of my preferred term "life-career" and Maree's (2020a) term "career-life" refers to the same concept.

1.5 WORKING ASSUMPTIONS

I hold the following working assumptions concerning this study:

- i. Performing artists in their early, middle and late life-career stages¹¹ will have specific, unique experiences and sense-making processes that relate to the performing arts world that impacted them in constructing their career path.
- ii. Performing artists' identity ("what" they are) will revolve around the role of performing artists.
- iii. Performing artists will be highly adaptable (the how) in the ever-changing world of work.
- iv. Lastly, performing artists' life themes ("why" they do what they do) will be linked to their role as performing artists, which could be a means to another goal or the goal itself.

1.6 CONCEPT CLARIFICATION

For clarification and consistency, the next section will outline some of the terms and key concepts used in this study.

1.6.1 Career

The word *career* is derived from the Latin word *carraria*, meaning a carriage road (Colliers Dictionary, 1977, as cited in Joubert & Crous, 2005) and thus refers to carrying a passenger towards a predetermined destiny (Joubert & Crous, 2005). Hall (2002) defines career as a lifelong process of work-related activities, while Schreuder and Coetzee (2016, p. 93) add to the definition by defining career as "an evolving sequence of employment-related experiences over time (objective career success) and the personal meaning people attach to these experiences (subjective career success) in the broader context of their lives". Objective career success thus refers to the external perspective of a person's career success (like pay or promotion). In contrast, subjective career success relates to

¹¹ See section 1.6.2 (Career Development) on page 16 for an outline of the early, middle and late life-career stages. I applied the differentiation between the three stages to my study.

individuals' experiences and interpretations of their careers across specific dimensions that are important to that individual (Van Maanen, 1977, as cited in Arthur et al., 2005).

In summary, it is essential to note that a career is not a static entity but a dynamic, coherent, interconnected journey from one vocational experience to the next. It is a developmental process of movement, progression and growth across the lifespan in sociocultural contexts through the integration of life and occupational roles, settings and events, which provides meaning to people's lives (Coetzee et al., 2016; Inkson, 2002). A person can thus "control", negotiate, plan, organise and manage their career so that it develops into a unique journey of continuous learning and growth, in which new roles build on previous experiences.

1.6.2 Career development

Career development results in the synthesis of physical, psychological, sociological, educational, economic, and chance factors which influence the nature and significance of work in the total lifespan of any given individual (Coetzee et al., 2016). It is a continuous series of stages, each outlined by unique concerns, themes and tasks (Greenhaus et al., 2000). In the contemporary world of work, the focus is thus on individuals' unique and subjective experiences of their career development (Coetzee et al., 2016), as well as continuous learning and identity changes across their lifespan (Hall, 2013).

The lifespan is divided into the early, middle and late adulthood career, each linked to approximate chronological age and specific psychobiological developmental tasks and challenges (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2016). The core psychological tasks of *early adulthood* (approximately 17 to 45 years) are to focus on crystallising the self-concept, developing independence, responsibility toward the self, self-reliance and autonomy. In this phase, individuals focus on establishing and constructing their career identity as well as the development of their career competency, career self-efficacy and career adaptability. The *middle adulthood* life stage ranges from age 40/45 to age 60.

One of the core psychological tasks in this phase is capitalising on the psychological benefits, referring to experience and wisdom, gained in the early career phase. Other tasks in this life stage include dealing with ageing-related physical changes and maintaining health and emotional well-being by drawing on emotional-social intelligence. Individuals also need to refine and re-evaluate their career identities, crystallising the self-concept and revising/adjusting their career identity. Enhancing occupational satisfaction through creative self-expression is a priority, finding sustainable employability, career adaptability and dealing with career plateaus. In the *late adulthood* life stage (60+ years), individuals need to deal with socio-emotional losses, establish satisfactory physical living arrangements, prepare for retirement and find alternative ways of creative self-expression while remaining productive citizens (Coetzee et al., 2016). Individuals in this stage also need to revise, refine and adjust their career identity and become mentors and consultants while maintaining health and emotional well-being (Coetzee et al., 2016). People often have multiple career paths with different developmental career stages within their particular adulthood life stage.¹² These developmental career stages (also seen as mini-cycles) demonstrate the cyclic nature of people's psychological (subjective) career experiences, growth and learning, as they proactively adapt to and manage their careers and experiment with various career possibilities in the implementation of their evolving self-concept and the revision of their career identity (Coetzee et al., 2016).

1.6.3 Understanding the self

The self-concept relates to the psychological self, which constitutes the organisation (construction) of ideas about qualities, characteristics, values and capabilities that individuals attribute to themselves. The self-concept emerges from various life experiences and social interactions, particularly sociocultural realities (Coetzee et al., 2016). Initially, the self was viewed

¹² Referring to the early, middle and late adulthood stages.

as a unique set of traits a person possesses that remains relatively stable and that can be objectively studied (Collin & Guichard, 2011). From this traditional approach, the person is thus seen as having a self, whereas the more modern approach is about the individual constructing the self (Collin & Guichard, 2011; Savickas, 2013a).

1.6.4 Identity

The identity develops as an individual faces society's expectations¹³ and creates a blend between self and societal norms, expectations and cultural representations (Savickas, 2012), determining how central work is to a person's life (Savickas, 2013a). Pizzorno et al. (2014) confirm this view when stating that identity consists of the unique individual characteristics (self-identity) and the attitudes, values, behaviour and characteristics that are shared by all members of a particular social category.¹⁴

1.6.5 Narrative identity

From a constructivist perspective, personal identity is explained as an internalised and evolving life story (identity narrative). The narrative identity is a continuous process of self-constructed stories that a person starts to construct in late adolescence (Pizzorno et al., 2014). Narrative about identity provides self-understanding in the form of an interpretation of self that orients one to a social world (Savickas, 2012) and consists of the individual's ideas and aspirations of what they might become, would like to become and fear becoming (Nazar & Van der Heijden, 2012). Narratives shape and construct the narrators' personalities and realities and are valuable to a better understanding of the evolving nature of career identity (Nazar & Van der Heijden, 2012). In summary, the narrative identity will be constructed around people's experiences and interpretations of those experiences (Savickas, 2012).

¹³ Referring to various social roles a person has to fulfil.

¹⁴ This includes, for example, social identity, ethnic identity, gender identity, occupational group identity, professional group identity, generational group identity or life stage identity.

1.6.6 Career identity

Career identity¹⁵ is an essential subcategory of the overall identity. It refers to the sense of self, derived from the individual's development of an occupational career (Stringer et al., 2011). According to Gupta et al. (2015), career identity is a relatively stable construct tapping into a person's global awareness regarding career goals and interests. The career story is one of the primary sources of career identity as it helps a person define who he or she is and how to act within a career context (Pizzorno et al., 2014).

From the contemporary viewpoint of career theory, career identity is described as a collection of self-representations that people ascribe to themselves at work and a process of continuous construction of the self through narrative (story) (Nazar & Van der Heijden, 2012). Nazar and Van der Heijden (2012) emphasise that career identity can be viewed as a construct consisting of three levels of self-representation that embody the identity. The first level is the individual self, which refers to the traits people ascribe to themselves as part of their self-definition (e.g. "I am an optimist"). The second level refers to the relational self, in which dyadic relationships are integrated into the person's identity (e.g. "I am a team leader or band member"). The third level refers to the collective level that points to an extended sense of self (e.g. "I am a psychologist/performing artist").

1.6.7 Work identity

The work identity shapes the roles that the individual will adopt and the corresponding way they behave when performing their work in the context of their jobs and careers, as these are experienced in the specific employment context (Bothma et al., 2015; Schreuder & Coetzee, 2016). The work identity must be differentiated from the career identity and develops within the integration of an individual's characteristics and the characteristics of the person's job. The work identity of a white female from an upper-class neighbourhood in Cape Town who attended a private school of

¹⁵ Also referred to as Vocational Identity.

arts and music may thus look very different from that of a black male from the local township who attended a public school.

1.6.8 Identity construction

From an early age, children transition through a spectrum of roles and participate in various behaviours and interactions that systematically enable them to pursue purpose and meaning in their lives. This process leads to self-understanding and clarifies their sense of identity (Ibarra, 1999; Maree, 2017c). Identity achievement occurs in late adolescence once the young adult has engaged in career and work exploration, developed work and life experiences, and has achieved an enhanced self-awareness about their characteristics, goals, interests and capabilities that is formed into a more crystallised self-concept (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2016). Thus, identity achievement is a crucial psychological task that must be achieved during the early career phase (Simosi et al., 2015).

Meaning-making has been proposed as one of the major processes by which identity and career identity are constructed (Nazar & Van der Heijden, 2012; Symington, 2015) and will thus form a central part in the construction of individuals' perception of their subjective career success. It should be stated that identity construction is a lifelong process that involves the ability to make meaning of experiences concerning the individual's present and future (Nota et al., 2015) in which an individual develops integrated biographical narratives of the self (Czarniawska, 1997; McLean & Mansfield, 2012). Hartung and Taber (2015) highlight the fact that a person's identity proves central in self-construction (Guichard, 2009) and career construction (Savickas, 2012). It is thus essential to narrate answers to fundamental identity questions, such as "Who am I?", "Who am I becoming?" and "What is important to me?" (Baumeister, 1999).

1.6.9 Career construction

Career construction theory "views career as a story that individuals tell about their working life, not progress down a path or up a ladder" (Savickas, 2013b, p. 6). The focus is thus on the

individual's interpretation of their subjective career success rather than utilising objective factors for determining the typical objective career success in constructing an individual's career. This theory underlies life-design and relies on the premise that people construct their career paths by attaching meaning to their career experiences. This meaning is central in various themes that join together to form a recognisable plot that creates the basis of a life story about a person's career identity (Savickas, 2011a; Symington, 2015). These life themes refer to the *why* of vocational behaviour (Savickas et al., 2009). Three key aspects that are incorporated into the career construction theory are identity, career adaptability and life themes (Savickas et al., 2009), while the theory also adds that a career consists of four psychosocial dimensions (the four Cs of Career Adaptability), namely career concerns, control, curiosity, and confidence¹⁶ (Savickas, 2013b).

1.6.10 Adaptability

The Latin root of the word *adapt* means to fit (Savickas, 2008, p. 1), which suggests that an organism can become accustomed to its environment by initiating behaviours that lead to adaptation. Adaptation is, thus, an outcome of adapting (Savickas, 2008). Symington (2015, p. 11) makes a viable comment when she states, "an individual is immersed within a career context and factors within the individual or context will inevitably change". Therefore, career adaptability is necessary as it describes the way workers deal with repeated career-related changes in their career lives (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). The construct of adaptability answers the age-old functionalist questions of career theory: "What do people do? They adapt to situations. And why do people do it? They adapt to implement their self-concepts in their situations better" (Savickas, 1997a, p. 253). Career adaptability thus refers to an individual's readiness and resources to cope with present and pending career development tasks, occupational transitions and personal traumas (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). As individuals develop career adaptability, they become more career resilient and mature. This

¹⁶ Each of the four Cs is discussed in detail in Chapter 2, section 2.2.4.3.3, under the heading, "Core pillars in the construction of a career".

process occurs as they gain identity capital, career capital, career competency and career self-efficacy (Coetzee, 2006; Duberley & Cohen, 2010).

The term *career adaptability* refers to the *how* of career construction (Savickas et al., 2009) and includes the coping mechanisms that individuals use to manage career-related developmental tasks, role transitions, work traumas and strategies to deal with traumas and transitions. Individuals use mechanisms to operate through community connections and thus enable them to construct their careers in a turbulent working environment (Maree, 2017b; Savickas et al., 2009; Savickas, 2012). Adaptation is thus a psychosocial process that refers to people's readiness to manage transitions and changes and to construct themselves accordingly (Savickas, 2008). Individuals with high levels of career adaptability are cognitively and emotionally more prepared to cope with unpredictable changes in the work environment (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012).

In summary, career adaptability, which refers to individuals' ability to anticipate changes and to see their future in an ever-changing context, has become a critical career development attribute in today's more turbulent and uncertain employment context (Di Fabio & Maree, 2013b; Savickas, 2013a). According to Savickas (2008), career adaptability is synonymous with a protean career.

1.6.11 Life-design theory

Life-design counselling is premised on the concepts of identity (self), narratability of identity (story) and intentionality (meaningful action) (Lent, 2012). The focus of life-design is on how an individual can construct and co-construct their identity and life through their work within the context that forms part of the society in which they live (Di Fabio & Maree, 2012; Savickas et al., 2009; Symington, 2015). Life-design theory combines a constructionist philosophy and narrative psychology and thus focuses on individuals' stories (Savickas, 2013b). The self is conceptualised in a social and relational form (Coetzee et al., 2016). Life-design interventions first examine how an individual has constructed a career through small stories, then deconstructs and reconstructs these

stories into an identity narrative and finally co-constructs intentions that lead to action in the real world (Savickas, 2013b). The core elements of life-designing are reflexive consciousness, self-making, the client's capacity to tell his/her life story (narratability), and adaptability and intentionality (Hartung, 2013a).

1.6.12 Protean career

Hall (1976) metaphorically compared the continuous change within a career cycle to the Greek god Proteus who was able to transform himself whenever he chose to. The protean career consists of individuals' experiences in education, training, technologies, work in several organisations, and changes in occupational fields (Baruch, 2004; Hall, 1996). The protean career theory (Hall, 1996, 2013; Hall & Mirvis, 1996) suggests that with the increasing diversity of work settings people have to deal with, identity development may become less influenced by the specifics of different social contexts and will be driven more by people's values and interests (self-concept). Hall (1996) and Hall and Mirvis (1995) state that the protean career describes adaptable, flexible, independent individuals who can reinvent themselves to meet the changing needs and circumstances of society. Individuals in such a career accept greater responsibility for their career definition and development (Eby et al., 2003; Savickas, 2011a) and take centre stage in setting personal and career goals, making career choices, and planning and managing their career paths (Hall & Mirvis, 2013; Savickas, 2011a).

Individuals continually adjust, revise and renew their career identities to achieve greater congruence between their capabilities, qualities and interests (self-concept) and those offered by the marketplace (Coetzee et al., 2016). The process occurs as the person's vocational sub-identity gets larger in relation to other sub-identities (Grote & Hall, 2013). Lastly, these individuals develop social capital to manage the protean career (Hall, 1996), suggesting that as the career (and, by implication, the self-concept) evolves, personal identity becomes more robust than social identity.

1.6.13 Performing artists

Bridgstock (2005) positions arts careers as protean, pointing to performing artists' self-employment and the multiplicity of positions they often pursue simultaneously. Joseph Roberts (as cited in Beckman, 2007, p. 88) echoes this sentiment when he suggests, "There are no jobs in the arts; there are only opportunities." Kerr and McKay (2013) describe these creative individuals as people in design, arts, music and entertainment who interact in creative communities.

Hume et al. (2007) distinguish between the performing arts and the fine arts, with fine arts being durable, possession-orientated and tangible. A visitor can also return numerous times and view the same painting. On the other hand, the performing arts are people-orientated, intangible, perishable, and take place in real-time. Both these art forms do, however, involve an experiential component and are emotionally stimulating.

According to Butler (2000), the most commonly used term is *performing arts*, but this refers to a range of terms that include theatrical, musical and dance performances, with musicians, singers, dancers and actors participating in these fields (Kogan, 2002). Preece (2011) supports this categorisation by stating that, traditionally, the performing arts included dance, theatre, music and opera (in various combinations). Kogan (2002) also includes finer distinctions within each category, such as musicians that can be divided into pianists, string, brass or woodwind instrumentalists. Singers can further be subdivided according to their focus on either opera or lieder, to mention but two options. The most significant distinction in the dance field is between classical ballet and modern dance, whereas actors tend to specialise in dramatic or musical roles.

Kogan (2002) makes a further crucial distinction between creators (like playwrights, composers, and choreographers) that create the works (the products) and performers (like musicians, actors and dancers) that interpret and afterwards perform the created work, even though a person may at times be both a creator and a performer (Kogan, 2002). The performing arts creator has a variety of attributes, e.g. imagination and originality. The creations are usually produced privately,

and the creator need not be present when the work is performed. The performer, on the other hand, performs publicly. Even though the performer may sometimes perform solo, it is usually a team effort, with members dependent on one another for compelling performances.¹⁷ Both the creator and the performer, however, are subject to evaluation. Playwrights, for example, undergo various evaluations by drama critics who judge product creativity. Actors are evaluated when they strive for various awards, e.g. the Tony and the Oscar awards. These awards can be seen as an indicator of objective career success.¹⁸ Such awards are presented for the powerful interpretation of a particular role within the public eye as performers undergo evaluation by mentors, critics, audiences, and the performer's peers in the field. "The performer's goal is concrete and action-oriented: to have the kind of impact that makes for a solid, possibly inspired performance" (Kogan, 2002, p. 4). Creative Skills Europe (2016) released a report that sheds light on the European audiovisual and live performance sectors. This report supports Kogan's (2002) division within the live performance sector¹⁹ by differentiating between the creation fields²⁰ on the one hand and performers on the other (Creative Skills Europe, 2016).

In a study conducted by Brooks and Daniluk (1998) that focused on "women artists", an "artist" was defined as any manifestly creative individual who identified herself as an artist (e.g. as a writer, poet, painter, actor or musician); considered the pursuit and practice of her art to be a significant value and primary life activity; considered herself currently active in her chosen artistic field; and lastly, considered her role as an artist to be her primary career. Authors like Brooks and Daniluk (1998), Butler (2000), Kogan (2002), Hume et al. (2007), Preece (2011), and Kerr and McKay (2013) make use of different categories of distinction between the various art forms as well as within art forms like the performing arts. Thus, there is no clear, uniform definition for the term "performing

¹⁷ This can either be part of music ensembles, dance companies, theatrical repertory groups or a cast of actors selected for a particular play.

¹⁸ As previously discussed.

¹⁹ Referring to the performing arts.

²⁰ Includes producers and directors.

artists". Furthermore, the boundaries between these categories are not always clear, with some skills (e.g. creativity) overlapping (Kogan, 2002).

In an attempt to provide a pragmatic, all-encompassing description of performing artists within the South African context, I integrated the descriptions and categorisations of the previous authors, describing performing artists as individuals, irrespective of gender or culture, who adhere to the following criteria:

- (a) identified themselves as performing artists (focusing on actors, musicians and singers in any genre);
- (b) considered the pursuit and practice of their art to be of significant value and a primary life activity;
- (c) currently consider themselves active in their chosen artistic field;
- (d) consider their role as performing artists to be their primary career;
- (e) regularly perform in front of an audience (even though they may or may not be the creator of the content of the performance); and
- (f) have relevant experience in their chosen performing arts field.

The concepts highlighted in the previous sections will provide a tentative conceptual framework for this study, as illustrated and discussed at the end of the literature review.²¹

1.7 THE PARADIGMATIC PERSPECTIVE OF THE RESEARCHER

A paradigmatic perspective represents how a person understands and views the world (Cohen et al., 2007). It is, therefore, crucial to clarify the lenses through which I will be sharing my perspective and approaching this research venture.

As previously discussed, my experiences have led to a hunger for understanding the experiences and sense-making processes of individuals' career choices and journeys in the

²¹ Refer to Chapter 2 for the literature review.

performing arts. To step onto such a journey requires a dedicated interpretivist involved in the undertaking of understanding human behaviour. In the true nature of this paradigm, the research practice is approached from a constructivist perspective. The paradigmatic perspective that will direct my approach is rooted in an interpretivist epistemology. The study will also employ a nominalist ontological assumption, which implies that reality can be understood merely through words and names created by the mind and within levels of individual consciousness, and, therefore, from performing artists themselves (Cohen et al., 2001, as cited in Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2009).

In conclusion, the predominant investigation model will be qualitative, requiring an inductive mode, allowing creative reasoning to contribute to the current scientific knowledge base (Symington, 2015). The research design and methodology of the study are explained comprehensively in Chapter Three.

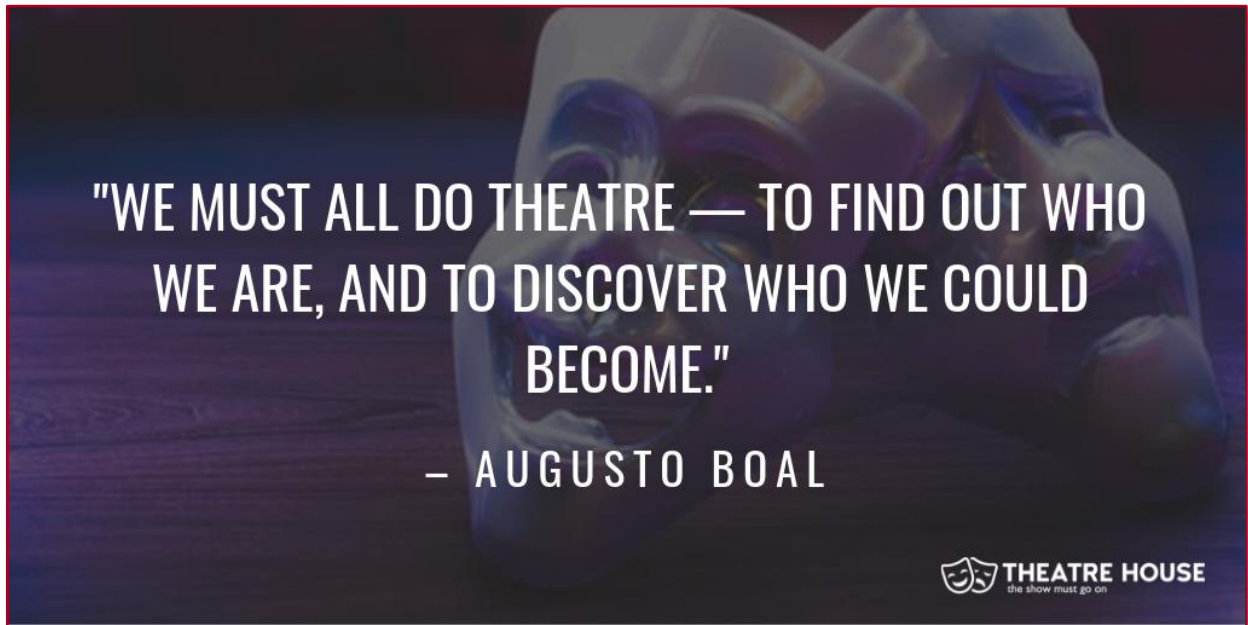
1.8 THE STUDY'S VALUE

I trust that the study's primary value lies therein and will allow for greater awareness and understanding of the career construction of performing artists as a protean career type within the South African context. It contributes to a theoretical and practical level. On a theoretical level, the current career construction theory is applied, confirmed and adapted to performing artists. The study also assists in understanding some of the central theoretical constructs of career construction and life-design counselling. The study also leads to an increased understanding of the development of the protean career type. Lastly, the findings may be useful for informing the career counselling process when working with performing artists as a protean career type.

1.9 CONCLUSION

Chapter One served as an introductory chapter to the study and, in doing so, highlighted the context in which the study is embedded, referring to the career development of performing artists as a protean career in South Africa. I also provided the study's rationale, the research questions, research assumptions, core concepts relevant to the study and my paradigmatic perspective. In Chapter Two, the metaphorical stage will be set by putting the spotlight on various theoretical frameworks related to the study of career construction for performing artists. In Chapter Three, I explain the research design and methodology applied in the study while presenting the research results in Chapter Four. In Chapter Five, I combine the findings with existing literature. For the curtain call, Chapter Six, I will attempt to answer the research questions by relating the various identified themes with the research questions and provide conclusions and recommendations for future studies.

CHAPTER 2: CONSTRUCTING A CONCEPTUAL CAREER FRAMEWORK FOR PERFORMING ARTISTS



(Theatre House, 2019)

2.1 INTRODUCTION

When individuals think about their careers, they often use the metaphor of a journey to make sense of their experiences (Inkson, 2002). They think about their careers as having movement, as getting them from place to place. It is through the movement that career routes are conceptualised and explained (Pryor & Bright, 2011). According to Savickas (1997b), it is precisely the movement or action which is the defining quality of the human condition and distinguishes humans from inanimate objects. It is precisely in the movement that the “magic” happens (Savickas, 2011c).

Inkson (2002) also applies the metaphor of actors playing different roles on the stage of life.²² The role transitions on the stage prompt individuals to reflect on where they have been in order for them to consider where they wish to go (Savickas, 2008). The role- and other metaphors²³ are clearly

²² Including the ‘career’ stage.

²³ See section 2.2.4.3.3 for a brief outline of the use of metaphors as part of life themes.

illustrated in the popular Arcadian comedy “As you like it,” written by William Shakespeare (Rolfe, 1905).

All the world's a stage;
And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances,
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages. At first the infant,
Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms:
Then the whining schoolboy, with his satchel
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school: and then the lover,
Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad
Made to his mistress' eyebrow: Then a soldier,
Full of strange oaths and bearded like the pard,
Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel,
Seeking the bubble reputation
Even in the cannon's mouth: and then the justice,
In fair round belly with good capon lin'd,
With eyes severe and beard of formal cut,
Full of wise saws and modern instances;
And so he plays his part: the sixth age shifts
Into the lean and slipper'd pantaloon,
With spectacles on nose and pouch on side,
His youthful hose well sav'd, a world too wide
For his shrunk shank, and his big manly voice,

Turning again toward childish treble, pipes
And whistles in his sound: last scene of all,
That ends this strange eventful history,
Is second childishness and mere oblivion,
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans every thing.
(Rolfe, 1905, p. 64 - Act II, Scene VII)

Throughout the poem, as recited in the character of Jacques, specific themes, concepts and life- and career issues are explained using metaphors (Farrar, 2014). The themes, concepts, and issues faced by Jacques may still be relevant in the 20th century, if not more so (Gervinus, translated by Bunnett, 1892; Inkson & Elkin, 2008). The themes that Shakespeare himself (as a creator of arts) may or may not have had trouble with, which are explicitly portrayed in the poem, include but are not limited to the following aspects. Firstly, the actors (individuals in life) are observers (Jacques and his character demonstrate this assertion excellently) and are only travelling through this life, thereby applying Inkson's (2002) metaphor of travellers on a career path, living out various scripts or parts preordained by a higher order (Hennessey, 1977). The roles are interchangeable as individuals (actors) appear in front of multiple audiences or social settings, e.g. work- or home settings. The roles are linked to the issue of identity and portray a disguised or undisguised identity in various settings (illustrated by Rosalind in the play) (Weidhorn, 2004; Zamir, 2012).

Also evident in the poem are the stages people journey through as they travel through life (Stătescu, 2014). In the early life phase of the infant, there is a dependency on others and their input into the infant's life, which has an apparent effect on later life. The early career phase (depicted as a soldier in the poem) is about responsibility as the individual takes oaths and wants to live up to other people's expectations (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2016). The poem also highlights the fact that people seek justice and have more wisdom in the mid-to-late life phase. In this phase, the idea of an older,

more gracious way of life is usually upheld (Hennessy, 1977). In the last phase, individuals often return to that of a child being dependent on others (Gervinus, translated by Bunnett, 1892; Schreuder & Coetzee, 2016).

Another theme that Shakespeare attends to is people's ability to continuously adapt physically, emotionally, politically, and spiritually in a changing personal, social and political environment. Shakespeare suggests that people's ability to change is their strength and choice in life, relating this to the adaptability highlighted by Savickas (2011b) (Farrar, 2014; Schreuder & Coetzee, 2016; Bernaud & Guédon, 2018). The change happens, however, from a subjective state of the individual as reflected in their own perceived reality and stories and not from an objective truth (Farrar, 2014; Maree, 2018a). The poem also reflects movement on a micro-level (within actors), a meso-level (the actors' immediate environment) as well as on a macro-level (between actors on the bigger stage of life). Thus, the political or economic stories of the country, for example, and immediate family members' stories (stories of divorce, abuse or love) may impact individuals and their life stories (Farrar, 2014; Maree, 2017b; Patton & McMahon, 1999, 2006).

Lastly, the movement is portrayed by the well-known metaphor of individuals travelling through the changing landscape on an ever-changing road (Inkson, 2002), keeping central the conceptualisation of movement as part of a journey (Lakoff, 1987 in McIlveen & Creed, 2018). At last, the stage is set for the journey to commence through the ever-changing career landscape and the accompanying paradigms that emerge in response.

2.2 MOVEMENT IN THE WORLD OF CAREER, CREATING PARADIGMS

During the past 100 years, societies have functioned as ever-changing entities experiencing different challenges (Simosi et al., 2015). People's career landscapes and the accompanying career journey have changed due to various challenges. Initially, the change was slow and steady but accelerated to continuous sudden and intense movements (Inkson & Elkin, 2008). Challenges

experienced in America and Europe in the 1800s included, for example, the civil war, economic depression and women's struggle for basic human rights. Labour unions also started emerging as a vital political force (Shen-Miller et al., 2012), while the global financial crisis experienced in 2008 resulted in increased levels of unemployment (Simosi et al., 2015).

Naidoo et al. (2017) elaborate that South Africa was certainly not untouched by the international wave of change as the Industrial Revolution imported many European immigrants into the country. The European colonisation of Southern Africa, together with technological innovations, resulted in a transformation of the heart of the social, economic, and political systems of indigenous people, consequently changing traditional African societies from self-sustaining, agrarian economies to non-indigenous industrial economies in which the majority of people were forced to participate to earn a living. The discovery of diamonds and rich gold deposits in the late 19th century provided further impetus for the country's industrial growth and led to urbanisation. Lastly, the aftermath of the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) left many white Afrikaner communities devastated and impoverished and caused an exodus of whites from the rural settlements into urban towns with people struggling to adjust to the new environment. In response to severe shortages of skilled labour during the Second World War, the government at the time allowed black workers to progress to more skilled jobs, blurring the sharp division between white skilled and black unskilled workers. Under pressure from white interests, the National Party developed labour discrimination policies and apartheid legislation which, among other things, limited black workers' entry into education, training, and career opportunities (Bantjes et al., 2016; Herr, 2008; Leach et al., 2003; Naidoo et al., 2017). After the 1994 election, the ANC was the new governing party and amended and implemented both the employment equity and the skills development acts with new vigour, which increased the access of individuals from the designated groups to formal employment in organisations. Lastly, the global economic meltdown in 2008 impacted South Africa negatively and further destabilised the already unstable economic and political structures and high unemployment rates (Maree, 2015a, 2017c).

Globally, the successive waves in the economy, politics, psychology and counselling, from the first to the fourth industrial revolution, all had an impact on the world of work (Maree, 2013a, 2015a). Various career paradigms unfolded in response to the challenges and accompanying career needs experienced by employees and prospective employees (Grote & Hall, 2013; Savickas, 2013b). Savickas (2013b) highlighted three specific career counselling paradigms: the formist paradigm, the organismic paradigm and the contextualised paradigm. Savickas (2013b) applied the root metaphor theory of Stephen C. Pepper's (1942 in Lyddon, 1989) philosophical systems to provide the epistemological position of his primary career and life paradigms. He then integrated career theories and techniques into Pepper's systems to develop his three main career paradigms. The first two paradigms both focus on the old or traditional career, while the third paradigm focuses on the needs of the new or contemporary career (Savickas, 2013b).

Frank Parsons, the first pioneer in the vocational guidance movement (Savickas, 2002) and the trait-and-factor theory,²⁴ mainly focused on categorising individuals according to particular traits or factors and then matching them to the environment (Maree, 2013a; Swanson, 2013). Other theories viewed as traditional theories include Holland's theory of vocational personalities and work environment, the Minnesota theory of work adjustment (TWA), the self-concept theory of career development formulated by Super, Gottfredson's theory of circumscription and compromise, and the social cognitive career theory (Van Esbroeck & Athanasou, 2008). Two theories that are addressed within the third paradigm include Patton and McMahon's (1999) systems theory framework of career development as well as Savickas' career construction (Savickas, 2012a) and life-design theory (Patton & McMahon, 2006; Savickas et al., 2009). The above three paradigms, each with their most popular theories, will provide the general framework for the next section of the chapter.

²⁴ As part of Differential Psychology.

Furthermore, the continuously changing work landscape also gave rise to new working arrangements and concepts outside the traditional, hierarchical organisation. The emergence of the protean career, as coined by Hall and colleagues (1996; Hall, 2004), is one of the concepts that developed in response to the challenges faced explicitly by employees in the 21st century. The chapter will also highlight the protean career within the contextualised paradigm.

Lastly, performing artists have a long history of following a protean career, and these individuals always had to manage their career within a protean environment (Bridgstock, 2005). The career construction of performing artists will thus provide a unique perspective in dealing with the construction of a protean career within the contemporary world of work. The author trusts that the rationale for the chosen paradigms and theories that led to the construction of the career framework of performing artists as a protean career will be clear after reading this chapter.

2.2.1 The formist paradigm of modern vocational guidance for the actor

Savickas (2013b) classifies the first paradigm as the formist paradigm of modern vocational guidance for the actor. Following Pepper's philosophical system (1942 in Lyddon, 1989), the root metaphor of formism is that of resemblance, congruence or relatedness. The truth criterion is "sameness", which means that this paradigm aims at answering the question: "What is it like?" or "What does it resemble?" or "To what does it relate?". Objects in the world (Lyddon, 1989), traits and stable characteristics (when applied to the context of vocational guidance) are categorised and classified according to their sameness (Savickas, 2013b, 2020).

The formist paradigm follows an analytical, objective and positivist approach, in contrast to the narrative and more contemporary approaches to career counselling (Lyddon, 1989; Maree, 2013b). According to Patton (2008), it is essential to acknowledge that this traditional approach to careers needs to be understood in the context of an era in the world of work when vocational guidance was applied to decisions about jobs for life, usually at school-leaving age. Therefore, career counselling

was primarily seen as an objective cognitive problem-solving process where matching knowledge about self and knowledge about the world of work was thought to result in a sound career choice. The practitioner functions within the role of the expert on multiple dimensions (e.g. identifying possible assessments, administering assessments, and interpreting assessments) (Niles & Karajic, 2008), while the client is the actor that applies the expert advice (Maree, 2020a; Savickas, 2013b). The career practitioner provides the client with career guidance by recognising the resemblance to people and occupations and then advising them on exploring and choosing these occupational fields in which similar people work (Savickas, 2013b).

As already stated, Frank Parsons was the pioneer in this paradigm (Savickas, 2002) and the father of vocational guidance (Inkson & Elkin, 2008; Rossier, 2015). Parsons mainly advocated that people should (a) understand themselves, (b) understand the requirements and other conditions of different “lines of work,” and (c) use “true reasoning” to find a match between the two (Inkson et al., 2015). Parson’s tripartite emphasis on self-understanding, occupational knowledge, and “true reasoning” or decision-making guides the efforts of both theoreticians and practitioners internationally (Niles & Karajic, 2008). Parsons (1909 in Arthur, 2008) left a legacy of trait and factor approaches to understanding people’s career development. According to Hartung and Cadaret (2017), the theory of work adjustment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984) and the theory of vocational personalities and work environments (Holland, 1997) stand as examples of the P-E fit paradigm, each of which will be discussed in the following section.

2.2.1.1 Holland’s theory of person-environment fit

Holland developed his code of vocational choice over 30 years (between 1950 and 1980) (Furnham, 2001), and with the development thereof, he has transformed the psychology of individual differences (Savickas, 2008). In that period, it is probably true to say that his theory has attracted more research than any other vocational guidance measure, with hundreds of international research studies

continuously being published and which examine the theory's propositions and the validity of interest instruments based on his theory (Furnham, 2001; Leung, 2008; Athanasou & Van Esbroeck, 2008; Rossier, 2015).

John Holland's career theory assumes that people's (the actors') career choice is an expression and extension of their personality. Individuals with similar personalities are drawn to the same work environment, leading to typical work environments (Holland, 1997). According to Holland, good fit predicts mental and physical well-being, which leads to job satisfaction and productivity. A misfit, on the other hand, causes strain and low job satisfaction with unproductivity. Holland (1997) indicates six career personality types, namely Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional. Each personality type comprises a syndrome of related interests, values, self-concept, abilities and work environments that distinguishes them from each other (Holland, 1997; Savickas, 2008, 2020).

For example, the artistic types are usually complex, emotional, disorderly, imaginative, intuitive and original. They attach importance to the aesthetic and find aversions in explicit, systematic, ordered activities. Their personal preferences would typically include ambiguous, free, unsystematic activities that involve manipulating human, physical and verbal material so that they can create art forms or products. Their dispositions would naturally lead them to skills in music, entertainment, public relations and architecture, and their typical occupational environment would include being a singer, musician, actor or artist. In light of the current study, they would fall under the typical type of performing artists (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2016). Holland also identified four more career counselling-related constructs: congruence, differentiation, consistency, and lastly, identity (Holland, 1997). Each construct is seen as helpful in predicting vocational outcomes (Holland, 1997).

The theory continues to influence contemporary career theories²⁵ (Savickas, 2013a). One reason for the theory's popularity is that it offers a simple and easy-to-understand typology framework on career interests and environments that are easy to apply in different contexts and interventions (Leung, 2008; Savickas, 2008). Individuals and environments can be assessed as to how closely they resemble each type, easing the matching process between vocational personality and work environment by having both coded in the identical RIASEC²⁶ language (Savickas, 2008).

Even though Holland's theory has been extensively researched, endorsed and drawn on by a large number of career counselling researchers, theorists, and practitioners (Furnham, 2001), it is essential to note that the theory is not 'perfect', and many critics have pointed out its weaknesses. According to Coetzee and Schreuder (2021), one of the first weaknesses is the theory's inherent simplicity of application which could lead to a misuse of results. Furnham (2001) also highlights that individuals and the environment in which they function are dynamic and change over a lifetime, which is unaccounted for in the theory. The theory also assumes that people have free choice to choose their vocational environment without any internal or external constraints, which is not valid. Constraints on career choice can include demographic factors, like gender, age, social class and physiology. Other factors impacting career choice are a given country's history and current economic state, geography, personal influences and general health, to mention but a few (Coetzee & Schreuder, 2021; Furnham, 2001; Watson & Stead, 2002). Even though individuals may have all the appropriate skills and traits, they still may be unable to obtain their desired vocations (Furnham, 2001), a fact highly relevant in South Africa with its exclusionary history (Watson & Stead, 2002). Implementing employment equity and skills development acts increased the access of individuals from designated groups to formal employment in organisations. The socio-political and economic consequences of apartheid are also evident in South Africa's high unemployment and crime rates, political corruption and limited

²⁵ See sections 2.2.3 and 2.2.4 for an outline of the contemporary theories.

²⁶ Each letter of the code refers to a specific type, with (R) referring to Realistic, (I) referring to Investigative, (A) referring to Artistic, (S) referring to Social, (E) referring to Enterprising, and lastly, (C) referring to Conventional.

national financial resources. The above information all seems to point to the fact that making a free choice of career or job is not as voluntary as Holland's theory implies (Leach et al., 2003; Maree, 2017c).

Watson and Stead (2002) further underscore that the 'goodness of fit' structure²⁷ is a poor fit when applied to black South Africans and may thus be invalid. Thus, the theory does not demonstrate structural equivalence across cultures, and therefore, the theory's cross-cultural adaptability may be questioned (Van Esbroeck & Athanasou, 2008; Furnham, 2001; Inkson et al., 2015).

According to Holland (1997), the structure of personality and vocational interests is supposed to be equivalent, where personality is rooted in personal interests. Holland, himself, was not always consistent concerning the causal relationship underlying the development of vocational interests and personality, as is evident in his following words (Holland, 1966 in Rossier, 2015, p. 328):

“In a theoretical sense, the proposed schemes are based on the assumption that vocational choice is an expression of personality. Put another way, if we classify together people having similar vocational choices, we are also classifying similar personalities together.”

The theory also does not account for incredibly varied careers, i.e. the exact nature of the daily tasks of one performing artist may vary from those of other performing artists. Variances in daily tasks may be performing on stage, creating works of art or training others in various forms of the performing arts (Furnham, 2001; Inkson et al., 2015). Career measures, like the *Occupational Finder* and the *Self-Directed Search (SDS)*, may not adequately consider the career actor's values as opposed to their interests (Inkson et al., 2015). Lastly, Furnham (2001) highlights that a good fit is only one factor determining individual satisfaction and productivity. Macro- and microeconomic factors in society, corporate culture, job security and a range of controllable and uncontrollable factors can and

²⁷ Referring to the fitting of individuals to work environments.

do powerfully influence personal satisfaction, which the theory does not make room for (Furnham, 2001).

Despite all the criticism, there is no disputing that Holland's (1997) theory transformed the psychology of individual differences focused on traits to one focused on types (Savickas, 2008). Holland's ideas have provided an excellent starting point for researchers to create and refine their ideas (Furnham, 2001).

The next person-environment fit theory discussed is the Minnesota theory of work adjustment (TWA). There is substantial congruence between the TWA and Holland's theory, with the only significant difference being the focus of Holland's work on career choice and the TWA on work adjustment (Dawis, 2005).

2.2.1.2 Theory of work adjustment (TWA)

The theory of work adjustment (TWA) is, like Holland's theory, anchored in the individual difference tradition of vocational behaviour called person-environment correspondence (Dawis, 2002, 2005; Dawis & Lofquist, 1984). According to Eggerth (2008), the theory is one of the most rigorous and best-validated theories in vocational psychology developed over five decades of research (Dawis, 2005).

The TWA was conceptualised as a career theory integrating related concepts from different psychological areas, including ability, reinforcement, satisfaction, and person-environment correspondence (Patton, 2008). The TWA outlines work as an interactive process of adapting between individuals (actors) and the work environment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984). Individuals thus seek work environments that match their "requirements" in terms of their needs. The environment, in turn, looks for individuals who have the capabilities to meet the "requirements" of the organisation (Leung, 2008). The term *satisfaction* is used to specify the degree to which individuals are satisfied with the environment, whereas *environment satisfactoriness* is used to specify the degree to which they are

satisfied. The degree of individuals' satisfaction and organisations' satisfactoriness would jointly predict individuals' tenure in that work environment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984; Leung, 2008). Career choice and development is thus conceptualised as a continual process of work adjustment initiated by dissatisfaction and dis-satisfactoriness (Leung, 2008).

According to Hesketh and Griffin (2005), the TWA integrates various essential principles that make it a particularly valuable theory of career choice, development and adjustment. Firstly, even though the theory seems simplistic and useful for employers and clients, it is pretty sophisticated on a deeper level in predicting relationships in the TWA. Secondly, the TWA can be applied in various settings, from career choice to selection, ergonomics and other organisational interventions. Thirdly, the theory provides a structural basis for assessing fit or "correspondence" at any time while outlining the basis for measuring and predicting change in people and in work environments. A further advantage of the theory is that associated measures can be substituted for TWA constructs, enabling the theory to be applied more broadly than only for career development and choice. One of the most significant advantages of the TWA is its link to fundamental learning principles, which underlies the TWA concept of psychological needs. According to Dawis (2005) and Hesketh and Griffin (2005), another significant strength of the TWA is that various measures have been developed to measure the various variables associated with the theory, such as satisfaction, needs and values, satisfactoriness, and indices of correspondence. The TWA also offers career guidance professionals a template by which to locate entry points to assist individuals with career choice and adjustment concerns (Leung, 2008). Lastly, the theory has been recognised for its attempt to operationalise its concepts through the development of instruments (Watson & Stead, 2017).

Despite its strengths, some people have raised reservations about the TWA. The first may come as somewhat of a surprise: It is alleged that the concept of adaptability is not well understood, and the existing research lacks a sound theoretical base (Hesketh & Griffin, 2008). Another critique against the theory is that even though the TWA does not directly address change contexts, there are clear

theoretical implications, i.e. that organisations (by their very nature) change, and it is therefore likely that there could be a mismatch between environments and the people working in them. The skills, knowledge and abilities of a person that initially “fit” the work requirements may no longer correspond to the new requirements of the constantly changing workplace (Hesketh & Griffin, 2005; Watson & Stead, 2017). Lastly, applying the TWA through career counselling focuses on specific times of choice, such as choosing an academic major, which gives the idea that it is a once-off decision that an individual makes early in life (Swanson & Fouad, 2015). Despite the criticism mentioned above, the TWA remains a leading, well-respected theory that creates a solid foundation for other theories (Eggerth, 2008).

In summary, the formist paradigm of modern vocational guidance has a positivist epistemology that provides an objective view of individuals as actors on occupational stages. These actors have “individual differences (scores on traits), which may be observed, discovered and quantified through psychometric assessment” (Swanson, 2013, p. 59). The measurement of traits is evident in both Holland’s theory and the TWA, where a person may be guided through vocational guidance by matching them to occupations that employ people who display the same characteristics (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984; Holland, 1997; Maree, 2013a; Savickas, 2013b; Swanson, 2013). Job success and satisfaction are the primary outcomes of a congruent match between the actor’s abilities and interests and a position’s requirements and rewards (Savickas, 2002). Matching the individual’s traits with the requirements for specific jobs is the premise for most person-environment fit approaches utilised in career counselling (Zunker, 2016).

Traditional career counselling theories assume that the landscape of the world of work is predictable, stable, and precise and that any change happens slowly. Such an assumption may never have been valid, but even more so in the contemporary world of work (Swanson & Fouad, 2015). Therefore, the biggest drawback of the person-environment fit theories is the assumption that focuses on the stability of personal characteristics and secure jobs in bounded organisations and that it does

not take into account the accelerating rate of change in many areas of human life and experience (Pryor & Bright, 2011; Savickas et al., 2009). Continuous changes and external factors are especially true in the lives and careers of performing artists. Examples of the changes and factors include uncertainty of funding and infrastructure, stakeholder relations, public perception, the need for flexibility in working conditions, as well as the need to develop their careers by building an artistic reputation, thus rendering the performing arts career landscape very unpredictable (Inglis & Cray, 2012; Department of Arts and Culture, 2011). Thus, an alternative paradigm is needed to contextualise the career landscape of performing artists.

2.2.2 The organismic paradigm of high modernity's career education for the (motivated) agent

As with the previous paradigm, the organismic paradigm of high modernity's career education for the motivated agent emerged in response to the changing needs of society (Savickas, 2013b). Savickas (2008) highlights the fact that after the Second World War, there was a movement in the United States of America (USA), from the agricultural to the industrial economies (as was the case in South Africa), which gave rise to middle-class individuals living in suburban areas and uptake of employment offered by hierarchical bureaucracies situated in huge buildings. From this period of high modernity, the organismic paradigm emerged (Savickas, 2008, 2011b; Naidoo et al., 2017). Following Pepper's framework (as previously highlighted), the root metaphor of this paradigm is that of an organism that develops through progressive stages (Savickas, 2013b). The main question this paradigm attempts to answer is, "How does it develop?" and development is thus the central construct in the second paradigm (Savickas, 2013b). Accordingly, the organismic paradigm views individuals as subjective and active agents who manage their careers, with the role of career counsellors providing career education (Maree, 2020a; Savickas, 2013b).

Donald Super (1957) was the pioneer in career development theories (Swanson, 2013). In the following section, the researcher will engage critically with Super's life-span, life-space theory as it

is one of the most prominent and influential career development theories and also forms the foundation on which Savickas' theory, which forms part of the conceptual framework for this study, is based (Super et al., 1996; Savickas, 2008). In addition to Super's life-span, life-space theory, which was later adapted by Savickas,²⁸ Gottfredson's theory of circumscription and compromise and the social-cognitive career theory (SCCT) also form part of the most prominent career development theories. Together with Holland's theory of personality fit and the TWA,²⁹ the five theories are considered the classic big five theoretical models relating to careers (Leung, 2008).

2.2.2.1 Super's life-span, life-space theory

In 1963, Donald Super formulated a self-concept theory in which career development is a process of active decision-making, which culminates in a career choice manifested in individuals' self-concept (Super et al., 1996; Savickas, 2008). Super focused on the subjective view of the way individuals' work-life unfolds over their lifespan (therefore being developmental), and in the "unfolding", individuals discover who they are (Savickas, 2002; Swanson, 2013; Savickas, 2013b; Watson & Stead, 2017). The theory considers both life roles and life stages (phases of career development) and introduces the concepts of career maturity and adaptability (Super et al., 1996). Super suggested that people take on multiple roles in their lifetime and that the importance of each role is different for each person at different stages (Super et al., 1996). Life space refers to various roles that people play in the theatres of life, e.g. home, work, and community. According to Super et al. (1996), there are nine primary roles (e.g. worker, partner, parent and citizen) that most people play throughout their lifetime. Different roles may be prominent at different points in a person's lifetime. When it is difficult for individuals to cope with the demands of multiple roles, they experience role conflicts, role interference, and role confusion (Super et al., 1996; Leung, 2008).

²⁸ See section 2.2.4.3 for a discussion on Savickas' career construction theory (CCT).

²⁹ Both these theories were discussed in section 2.2.1.

Super indicated five career development stages: growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, and disengagement. The stages are “maxi cycles” that occur over a lifetime, together with minicycles that occur when changes take place within a stage (Super et al., 1996; Watson & Stead, 2017). At each stage, specific vocational developmental tasks that are socially expected of persons in the given chronological age range, need to be mastered (Savickas, 2002; Super, 1957; Super et al., 1996). Table 2.1 provides a brief overview of the critical features of each career stage.

Table 2.1³⁰

Critical features of the career stages (Savickas, 2002; Super, 1957; Super et al., 1996)

AGE (in years)	STAGE	KEY FEATURES
0-14 <i>Adolescence</i>	Growth	In the growth stage, there is a development of concern regarding one’s future as a worker. Individuals develop ideas about how to make choices and gain the confidence to do so. Greater personal control over career activities is also present.
15-24 <i>Adolescence to early adulthood</i>	Exploration	In this stage, the focus is on learning what one might become, exploring the self (e.g. interests and abilities) and the world of work and occupations in-depth and making tentative matches. It also focuses on making occupational choices in line with one’s self-concept and actualising these choices in career behaviour, developing skills, experimenting with jobs and stabilising a job to make it secure. Thus, the three core tasks of the career exploration stage are crystallising, specifying and implementing a career choice.
25-44 <i>Early to middle adulthood</i>	Establishment	In this stage, the individual enters and settles into a career and work life. The main tasks are stabilising, consolidating and advancing in the chosen career. The individuals also focus on the ongoing implementation of the self-concept to bring about the integration of self and values in society. Stabilising one’s choice within organisational and occupational parameters, adjusting the self-concept if necessary and advancing or transferring to new or higher responsibility are also essential to the focus areas. Toward the end of the stage, individuals reflect on the past and the future of their careers.
45-64 <i>Middle adulthood to retirement</i>	Maintenance	Key features of this stage include reflecting on the career and deciding on continuation or change, recycling through the previous stages (minicycles), holding steady in a position, maintaining performance, conserving accomplishments, remaining interested, and renewing and innovating where possible. Maintaining the rewards accomplished at work is also a main feature of this stage. The main tasks are renewal, holding, updating and innovating.
65+ <i>During the retirement transition</i>	Disengagement	Key features of this stage are adjusting to declining energy, decelerating, delegating to others, withdrawing, retiring, and organising a new life structure in which paid work is not central. The individual retires or disengages from the workforce.

³⁰ I have used various colours in tables throughout for no other reason than to be aesthetically pleasing.

Super's theory remains attractive to international career professionals and researchers as it provides a comprehensive framework that explains the process of vocational development (Watson & Stead, 2017). Furthermore, the approach also presents a practical and useful outline of concepts such as vocational developmental tasks, self-concept, developmental stages, career maturity, adaptability and life roles that guide career interventions and research (Hartung & Cadaret, 2017; Rossier, 2015; Savickas, 2019; Watson & Stead, 2017).

However, several criticisms against Super's theory and adaptations have necessitated the contextualisation of theory in the South African context. One of the main focus areas is on the impact of cultural and contextual factors on the process of career development as it pertains to the local context (Watson & Stead, 2017). According to Inkson et al. (2015), the career stages may be defined too rigidly and also ignore the broader social context of the individual. This may primarily be a concern for performing artists as their identity and career path is greatly influenced by the feedback received and the hardships experienced in their social context (Blaine, 2012). The theory also seems to be more focused on what careers were like 60 years ago as opposed to what they are in contemporary society (Inkson et al., 2015). Savickas (2002) supports this idea by stating that the stages proposed by Super are changing and that in the 21st century of work, distinct and universal developmental stages or periods may no longer be applicable.

Super (Super et al., 1996) stated that career development is dynamic, and individuals can move through stages in a non-linear fashion. For performing artists, this may be highly relevant as the inherent characteristics of the artistic labour market create challenges, e.g. a flexible job market, short-term contractual labour, multiple job-holding and a combination of self-employment, underemployment and unemployment in which adaptability is much needed (Blaine, 2012). Super et al. (1992) support this notion by stating that with the rise in job instability, it is increasingly common for people to cycle through various stages as they cope with multiple job transitions. For artists who

move flexibly from job to job, cycling through the stages of exploration and establishment and disengagement is more common than moving into the maintenance stage (Blaine, 2012).

It is essential to note that positive evaluations of Super's theory far outweigh the criticisms against it. The theory has been consistently regarded as a systematic and organised formulation of career development even though some modifications of certain terms, like "career maturity", may be replaced by newer terms to make it more relevant in today's world of work as well as in the South African context (Watson & Stead, 2017).

From the discussion mentioned above, it is clear that the organismic paradigm of high modernity's career education has a subjective perspective and focuses on career education that concentrates on developing agency to manage one's career by assisting individuals in developing the attitudes, beliefs, and competencies that they need to make viable career choices and realistic work adjustments (Savickas, 2013b). Therefore, the agent produces its development from within. The view is apparent in Super's model, where careers unfold and individuals discover who they are (Savickas, 2013b). After a critical engagement with the previous two paradigms and their underlying theories, it should be clear that they each have certain shortcomings, especially concerning the ever-changing, dynamic 21st-century world of work. Furthermore, their applicability to performing artists in South Africa may be questionable, highlighting the genuine need for a new paradigm.

2.2.3 The need for a new paradigm

Reflecting on the first two paradigms (originating mainly from Europe and America), it is clear that both paradigms commenced from a positivistic worldview which assumes that the world operates in a 'mechanistic', pre-determined manner where parts operate independently in a particular way to accomplish an outcome based on a carefully balanced, interdependent model of linear cause and effect (Chen, 2013; Maree, 2020a; Pryor & Bright, 2011; Savickas, 2008; Swanson & Fouad, 2015). Furthermore, the theories within the paradigms perceive work as a contained part of people's lives,

which is separate from the other roles of an individual's life and assumes that individuals will make one career decision early in life that will be applicable for the rest of their life (Swanson & Fouad, 2015). Savickas et al. (2009) challenge the assumption that focuses on the stability of personal characteristics and secure jobs in bounded organisations and highlights the fact that these theories do not take the accelerating rate of change in many areas of human life and experience into account (Pryor & Bright, 2011). Given the fluidity of post-modern times (Muijen et al., 2019), together with the fact that the South African landscape is characterised by pre-industrial, industrial, and post-industrial features, the researcher argues in favour of an integrative, qualitative-quantitative approach to career counselling in (South) Africa in general to accommodate the unique context (Maree, 2020a, b).

In summary, the previous two paradigms and their accompanying theories rely heavily on assumptions that may not be as valid in a post-modern economy or the challenges provided by a uniquely South African context (Swanson & Fouad, 2015; Watson & Stead, 2017), and sole reliance on the traditional approaches can no longer be justified (Maree, 2020a; Savickas, 2008). Chen (2013) and Swanson (2013) assert that a more all-inclusive paradigm that challenges and builds on the conventional models is much needed. A contemporary paradigm that addresses the life-designing needs of workers in societies that have de-standardised the life course and de-jobbed employment must supplement the traditional paradigms of guiding and preparing the individual for a predictable world of work (Savickas, 2013b). The contextualised paradigm of post-modernity's life-designing for the author developed in response to such a need.

2.2.4 The contextualised paradigm of post-modernity's life-designing for the author

With the onset of the fourth economic wave and associated changes in the globally integrated economy, accompanied by radical changes, complexities and connections, the traditional career metaphor of climbing the corporate ladder has been replaced by the metaphor of career as riding the

waves (Maree, 2015b, 2020a; Pryor & Bright, 2011; Savickas, 2008, 2019a). The new metaphor suggests unpredictable, flexible, fluid and accelerated movement in the world of work, affecting an increasing number of individuals as they endeavour to chart their futures, shape their identities, and maintain relationships (Pryor & Bright, 2011; Savickas, 2019a). Savickas (2011a; 2019a) also notes that there is a decline in identifiable and predictable career routes and an increase in people feeling anxious and insecure in an unpredictable world of work. Maree (2015b) echoes the sentiment by stating that economic developments and social transformations have affected how individuals retain their sense of self, social identity, and feelings of self-worth. It is within the new world of work that individuals need to take responsibility and own their career by reflecting, adapting and acquiring the appropriate skills to become holding environments for themselves and others to enable them to deal with numerous transitions in the workplace (Hartung & Cadaret, 2017, Maree, 2015b, 2018a; Savickas, 2011a, 2019a).

The contextualised paradigm of post-modernity's life-designing for the author developed in response to the realities of the digital and global age that the previous two paradigms, the formist³¹ and organismic paradigms,³² did not necessarily address (Hartung & Cadaret, 2017). The third contextualised paradigm takes an epistemological position, coined by Pepper (1942), as contextualism in which the root metaphor is an act (doing or moving). Individuals are thus viewed as continually changing amid ongoing events in a dynamic world. The paradigm attempts to answer the question, "How does it happen?". Its truth criterion is pragmatic effectiveness or "successful working." In the first two paradigms discussed, validity came from resemblances and classifications, thus matching a personality type (e.g. artistic) with its environment (i.e. an artistic environment). In sharp contrast, the contextualised paradigm provides validity by specifics, distinctions, and the

³¹ Focusing on the person-environment fit theories.

³² Focusing on the life-span development theories.

uniqueness of each and their unique career paths through a story or narrative approach (Savickas, 2013b).

According to Mahoney (2003, in Patton & McMahon, 2014), McMahon (2008) and Swanson (2013), theories of constructivism present the following five assumptions: active agency, order, self, social-symbolic relatedness, and lifespan development. Active agency suggests that individuals actively engage and participate in constructing their lives in coherence with related systems of personally or socially held beliefs. The second assumption points to the ordering processes referring to the arrangement of individuals' experiences to create meaning. The third assumption is that the ordering of personal activity is mainly self-referent, thereby focusing on personal identity. According to the fourth assumption, the development of self is embedded in the social and symbolic systems or contexts within which the individual lives. The final core assumption is that the activities of the previous assumptions are integrated into an ongoing developmental process that emphasises meaningful action by developing the self, while working towards homeostasis.

Collin and Young (1986) call for career theories that would provide new frameworks for the post-industrial world and relate to the epistemological root metaphor of contextualism (Collin, 1997; Collin & Young, 1986; Lyddon, 1989). According to Patton and McMahon (2014) and Pryor and Bright (2011), several theoretical propositions have recently emerged in response to such a call and include the systems theory framework of career development (Patton & McMahon, 1999, 2006, 2015), the chaos theory of careers (Pryor & Bright, 2003, 2011) and the career construction theory (Savickas, 2005, 2011a, 2011b, 2013a, 2013b, 2019b), each of which will be discussed in the following sections.

2.2.4.1 The systems theory framework (STF) of career development

The systems theory framework (STF) evolved as part of McMahon's thesis under the supervision of Wendy Patton (Patton & McMahon, 2015). After completing the initial research,

Patton and McMahon conducted further literature searches in career and systems theory, had discussions with eminent researchers in the field (Collin & Young, 1986 in Patton & McMahon, 2015) and supervised further research on students in an attempt to develop and further refine their initial theory (Patton & McMahon, 2015).

The STF functions from a holistic, contextually embedded framework that provides a structure open to influences impacting career development and decision-making (McMahon, 2005; Patton & McMahon, 2006) through the application of systems thinking and systems mapping (McMahon & Patton, 2019). The framework also has a dynamic nature and emphasises the repeated interactions and relationships between subsystems of the system and the changes that develop in reaction to these interactions (McMahon & Patton, 2019; Patton & McMahon, 1999, 2015). What is noteworthy is that the STF was the first attempt to present a comprehensive, meta-theoretical framework constructed using different systems and views (Patton & McMahon, 1999, 2006; Van Esbroeck & Athanasou, 2008).

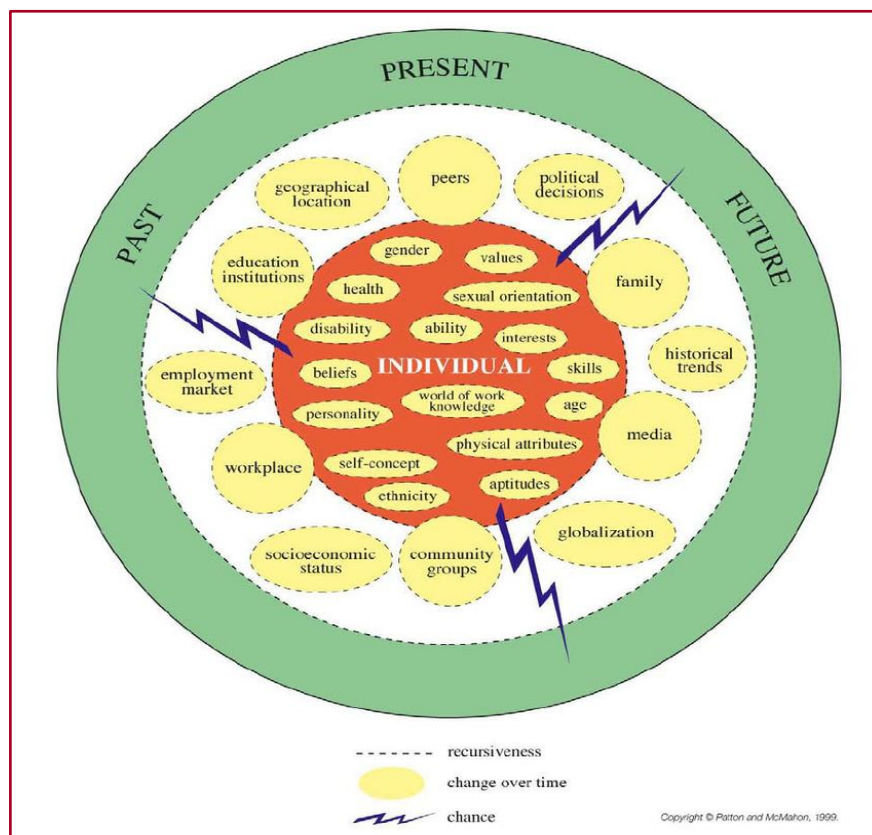


Figure 2.1: Systems theory framework (Patton & McMahon, 1999, p. 164)

From Figure 2.1, it is clear that *individuals* as a system are at the core of the STF. Individuals are a system and a subsystem, functioning within a more expanded social system and within a more extensive environmental-societal system (McMahon, 2005; Patton & McMahon, 1999, 2015). The *social system* refers to other people's systems with which individuals interact, e.g. family, educational institutions, and peers, all of which are subsystems. Lastly, the *environmental/societal system* and influences in the system include historical trends, political decisions, socio-economic status, globalisation, the employment market and geographical location (McMahon, 2002; Patton & McMahon, 2015; Pryor & Bright, 2003). Changes in the environmental and ecological system, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, can critically alter how the economy operates (Patton & McMahon, 2021; Chen, 2013). Likewise, a change in the economy has a direct impact on the economic expenditure that has a direct impact on expenditure in the entertainment arena, which will have a direct effect on the livelihoods of performing artists. For example, there are two bills, the Copyright Amendment and the Performers Protection Amendment Bills, which, if signed by South Africa's current president Mr Cyril Ramaphosa, will directly impact the rights and finances of many performing artists in South Africa (Devnarain & Daniels 2020). The reverse is also true, indicating that high growth in the performing arts will also positively affect jobs and a country's economic growth (Porlezza & Colapinto, 2012). Lastly, Jary (2002) notes the influence of performing artists is not only on an economic level but also benefits society on various levels, e.g. emotional, community or society at large, as they share their arts.

According to Patton and McMahon (2015), *influence* reflects content and process factors. *Content influences* include (a) intrapersonal variables, whereas (b) contextual variables consist of social and environmental/societal influences. Intrapersonal content influences in the individual system include, among others, self-concept, ability, personality, interests, values, physical attributes, beliefs, skills, the world of work, knowledge, gender and age (Patton & McMahon, 2021; Patton & McMahon, 2014, 2015). The *self-concept* of performing artists is a significant intrapersonal content

influence. Bridgstock (2013) highlights that artists often have to juggle or blend two identities: their identity as an artist, which provides them with work motivation and creative momentum, and their identity as an entrepreneur, which enables them to make a living. Performing artists must thus continually integrate the tension between artistic and commercial motivations into their self-concept and make accommodating adaptations (Bridgstock, 2013). Performing artists' *interests* are another variable that influences content factors. In terms of their interest, performing artists may ask whether they are more interested in creating art or performing it.

According to Brooks and Daniluk (1998), there are also differences in *gender* and artist careers, with female artists struggling to establish themselves and experiencing more significant disruption and breaks within their careers. *Age* also has a direct impact on performing artists' careers and precisely when they will retire. Dancers, for example, are the only performing artists who formally enter retirement (Middleton & Middleton, 2017). Roncaglia (2006) highlights that ballet dancers usually retire in their mid-thirties, whereas this is the exact period during which opera singers' voices flourish. Generally, most musicians retire relatively late, just after 70 years of age (Manturzewska, 1990), compared to ballet dancers who, as we have seen, retire around their mid-thirties (Roncaglia, 2006). Ibert and Schmidt (2014) point out that often it is tough for musical actors to stay physically healthy after the age of 45, and, as such, the market demand is lower for older musical actors as it becomes more challenging to meet the strenuous challenges of the highly demanding musical acting career. For actors, there is no temporal forecast of the retirement period, which is in stark contrast to other performing artists. While an actor may face physical restrictions as they age (like baldness) and can compensate for such occurrences, a singer or ballet dancer cannot so easily adjust if the physical instrument becomes injured (e.g. an injured leg or voice) (Middleton & Middleton, 2017).

The *process influences* include recursiveness (both within the individual and between the individual and the context), change over time, and chance (McMahon, 2005). The 'dashed lines' of each system's border refer to the open system and the impact that external influences can have on the

internal system influence's variables. The 'lightning' symbols indicate chance and any change's impact on the career development process (McMahon, 2005; Patton & McMahon, 2006; Patton & McMahon, 2021).

Lastly, McMahon (2005) and Patton and McMahon (2021) note that the STF views time as circular; therefore, individuals' career development is non-linear, impacted by past, present and future influences. Past influences could include the family or essential others in performing artists' career decision-making when they either encourage or discourage their choice of the performing arts as a career. Bridgstock (2013) indicated that social connections and those you know could create opportunities in the present. Lastly, future influences, which may be unexpected or chance events generated within the broader system but are not expected by an individual, may also have a severe influence on the individual's career development (Chen, 2013; McMahon, 2005; Patton & McMahon, 1999). Individuals, however, do not merely react to chance events but are active agents that organise and construct their careers, as suggested by constructivism. They achieve this by creating meaning in their life experiences by telling stories and interpreting them (McMahon, 2005; Patton & McMahon, 2015; Swanson, 2013; Zanti, 2015).

In summary, the STF accommodates career theories derived from the logical positivist worldview with their emphasis on objective data and logical, rational process, as well as the constructivist worldview with its emphasis on holism, personal meaning, subjectivity, and recursiveness between influences (Patton, 2008; Patton & McMahon, 2015). Pryor and Bright (2003) contend that a question that the STF struggles to answer is: 'Is the system that the individual describes a reflection of an objective reality, or do they reflect the individual's take on reality (p. 122)? The theories discussed in the following sections (the chaos theory of careers and the career construction theory) will shed some light on the particular challenge. Patton (2008) and Patton and McMahon (2015) state that the STF made a valuable contribution to career theory by assisting in integrating various career theories and providing a clear connection between theory and practice. According to

Pryor and Bright (2007), chaos theory³³ builds on the system's framework (Pryor & Bright, 2011; Van Esbroeck & Athanasou, 2008).

2.2.4.2 *The chaos theory of careers*

The chaos theory of careers (CTC) is introduced as a dynamic systems theory alternative and contemporary model of career development that emphasises the continual, uncertain and non-linear change in the complexity of influences and emergent fractal patterns in a career (Bright & Pryor, 2012; Pryor, 2016; Pryor & Bright, 2003, 2007). Savickas (2013a) has pointed out that new developments in the career development field are typically characterised by changes in the vocabulary used to describe and explain the new ideas of the theory. According to Pryor and Bright (2014), the CTC has introduced new terms to the field and has been able to integrate some recent concepts into both logical and meaningful theoretical frameworks (Bright & Pryor, 2012; Pryor & Bright, 2014).

Following is some of the terminology used by the CTC. *Complexity* refers to the number of different influences on people and their careers. As more influences are considered, the possible number of interactions and outcomes rises exponentially; therefore, it is impossible to make accurate predictions of individuals' career paths (Bright & Pryor, 2012). *Non-linearity* or the 'butterfly effect', as explained by Lorenz (1993, in Bright & Pryor, 2012), states that tiny changes in the original conditions of chaotic systems can result in extreme changes in the behaviour of the system over time (and vice versa). Therefore, individuals do not know what the original conditions of their systems were, and taking educated guesses will not help, given that sensitivity to tiny changes in original conditions can result in significant changes in the system. Chaotic and complex systems are thus characterised by *continuous change*, with unpredictable events likely to be experienced as *chance* events. One of the main findings in Bright et al.'s (2005, in Pryor, 2016) research was the primary influence of chance events on the careers of respondents arising from, for example, personal

³³ As part of constructivism.

relationships, work relationships, social or work experiences, and unintended exposure to types of work or other activities.

Emergence relates to the complex dynamic systems that display a form of emergent order over time; a distinct pattern that is self-similar while also continually changing. The seemingly paradoxical approach is conveyed in the concept of a '*fractal*' which is a graphical representation of the system's movement. The fractal patterns of most complex dynamic systems are best understood and interpreted by taking a longer-term perspective and looking at them as they emerge in all their complexity.

Attractors refer to the characteristics of the patterns of complex dynamic systems, especially individuals seeking to come to terms with career development and life more generally through either open or closed systems thinking (Pryor & Bright, 2007; 2014). Four types of attractors can be identified: the point attractor, pendulum attractor, torus attractor and the strange attractor (Pryor, 2016).

Phase shift refers to the process of radical transformation of the structure and functioning of complex dynamic systems either gradually (as in developing new skills through training, e.g. daily crafting of their skill to play a musical instrument) or as a result of sudden change (as in an injury resulting in the inability to perform) (Pryor & Bright, 2014). According to Pryor and Bright (2007), concepts such as spirituality, meaning, intention, values and ethics have become more prominent in career development. The CTC conceptualises *spirituality* in terms of the boundaries of complex dynamic systems, and the theory integrates such motives by referring to the concept of 'strange attractor' (Pryor & Bright, 2007). Lastly, career development is a continuous, iterative process in which the outcomes of actions cannot be guaranteed in advance. Therefore, gaining *feedback* regarding the progress and outcomes of actions is paramount. Complex dynamic systems function mainly in response to either positive or negative feedback. The importance of developing and utilising feedback systems, especially in developing adaptive responses to uncertainty, is thus crucial (Pryor & Bright, 2007, 2014).

The strength of the CTC consequently lies in its emphasis on reporting on the complexity of human behaviour regarding the various influences impacting career development; the adaptive function and unpredictability of change; how individuals use their inherent constructiveness to understand their experience of the world; and the influence of chance (Patton & McIlveen, 2009; Pryor, 2016). Furthermore, it recognises holistic influences emerging from the interconnections within systems, such as work/non-work integration and purpose. The CTC also incorporates change that is both linear and non-linear (including opportunity and accident) and takes chance and uncertainty with the corresponding limitations on human knowledge and control into account. Lastly, the CTC is a pragmatic theory which can be applied in counselling by following specific actions (Mesaros, 2019; Pryor, 2016; Pryor & Bright, 2014). Actions include reframing the “undecided” as relatively “open-minded”; secondly, preparation over planning and adaptation over deciding is highlighted; thirdly ‘fuzzy goals’ which are flexible and short-term take centre stage; and lastly, clients’ transferrable skills are focused on (Bright & Pryor, 2012; Pryor, 2016; Pryor & Bright, 2014).

In the overview of the CTC as a contemporary theory, it is evident that the CTC addresses various shortcomings of the traditional approaches. Firstly, the CTC addresses the incorporation of potential influences on people’s careers, e.g. parents’ or significant role models’ influence on choosing a career in the performing arts. Secondly, the CTC incorporates people’s tendency to construct meaningful experiences (Bright & Pryor, 2012; Pryor & Bright, 2003, 2011, 2014). Perhaps the CTC's most significant contribution is its emphasis on understanding how patterns and new forms of order emerge from environments in which there seems to be disorder and unpredictability (Amundson & Thrift, 2008 in Athanasou & Van Esbroeck, 2008; Pryor & Bright, 2003).

In light of the above, it seems that the CTC does not emphasise identity and identity formation, which is central to career and self-construction (Hartung & Taber, 2015). It also appears that the CTC advocates that individuals must manage through the myriad of change, chance and fluid environments (teaching the clients specific techniques), but with no certainty or central life themes emerging and

acting like a compass in the process. Lastly, it seems that even though the CTC takes past, present and future systems' influence on each other into account, it does not actively deal with the pain of achieving self-completion and thus underestimates the process and advantages of turning pain into hope while authoring one's career path (Maree, 2013b). The career construction theory aims to address these challenges.

2.2.4.3 Savickas' career construction theory (CCT)

The career construction theory (CCT) of Savickas is a metatheory grounded in the post-positivist epistemology of social constructionism (Savickas, 2005) as well as a narrative perspective with its roots in Super's life-span, life-space theory (Del Corso & Rehfuess, 2011; Savickas, 2013b, 2019a; Swanson, 2013). Social constructionism emphasises the “inherent relativism of knowledge, reality, and human experience” (Blustein et al., 2012, p. 245) and “articulates intentions regarding possible selves and life in the future” (Savickas et al., 2009, p. 246). As careers are viewed from constructionist and contextual perspectives, the focus automatically turns to self-construction (Savickas, 2013a, 2019a). Self-construction theory thus explains the “interpretive and interpersonal processes through which individuals construct themselves, impose direction on their vocational behaviour, and make meaning of their careers” (Savickas, 2013a, p. 147). Social- and personal constructivism are viewed as interactive processes influencing each other, with personal constructivism described as an intrapersonal process of individual knowledge construction. Accordingly, knowledge is not a self-sufficient entity but is individually constructed or discovered (Liu & Matthews, 2005).

Brott (2001) presents several assumptions underlying personal constructivism: (a) people cannot be understood when they are separated from their environment; (b) there are no absolutes; (c) human behaviour must be contextualised to understand it; and (d) only people themselves can define their environments. In a quest to discover how career construction plays out in the lives of performing

artists, the foundations of the CCT, together with its related concepts and processes, will take centre stage in the following sections of the chapter.

2.2.4.3.1 Constructing careers

From previous elaborations in the chapter, it should be clear that the career landscape has been transformed dramatically, and with it, the meaning of careers should be reconceptualised (Savickas, 2013a). Accordingly, the CCT views a career as a story (through narratives) that individuals tell about their working lives (Cardoso et al., 2021; Del Corso & Reh fuss, 2011; Savickas, 2013a). Individuals thus construct a subjective career with which to impose meaning and direction on their vocational behaviour (Savickas, 2005, 2013a, 2019a). Constructing a subjective career resembles the action-orientated perspective of making a self and emerges from thought or mental activity that constructs a story about one's working life (Cardoso et al., 2021; Maree, 2015a; Savickas, 2013a). It is important to note that individuals only construct their interpretations of reality and not reality itself; therefore, subjective career stories guide and carry individuals across transitions in the career (Maree, 2015a, 2018b; Savickas, 2013a). The CCT thus focuses on making a self, shaping an identity, constructing a career, and designing a life (Savickas, 2013b, 2019). In the current study, careers are thus conceptualised as a story in which performing artists reveal the various projects that occupy them and of which they are the actors, agents, and authors within the theatre of work (Maree, 2020b; Savickas, 2013a).

2.2.4.3.2 Constructing career stories: Actors, agents and authors

CCT provides a holistic framework as it employs narrative to capture an individual's subjective life experience as a story (Cardoso et al., 2021). As individuals engage in reflective co-construction, they become aware of the meta-narrative or personal metaphor that encapsulates and merge the totality of their identity. Through narrative, individuals share who they are and what matters to them and start recognising the integrated whole of the self as a story (the storied self) as a guide to their

past, present and future life (Del Corso & Reh fuss, 2011; Maree, 2015a, 2015c, 2018a, 2020b; McAdams, 1993). To establish a clear sense of self and a stable self-concept, individuals first need the ability to narrate their career-life story (Di Fabio & Maree, 2013b). Self-construction thus entails the construction of the self as a story and enhancing the self as an inner compass to deal with transitions (Maree, 2018a).

Psychological individuality is rooted in three developmental layers: social actorship, motivated agency, and autobiographical authorship (McAdams, 2013; McAdams & Olson, 2010; Savickas, 2011a; 2013b). The three developmental layers were also observed in the three paradigms discussed throughout the chapter. In the first paradigm, the formist paradigm of modernity, the role of individuals is that of *actors* acting out the role that the expert provided to them through vocational guidance. In the second paradigm, the organismic paradigm of high modernity, individuals act as *agents* by managing their careers in the process of career education. Finally, in the third paradigm, the contextualised paradigm of post-modernity, individuals need to become the authors of their lives through life-design. Savickas thus integrated the various paradigms and constructs into his theory or conceptual model of career construction (Savickas, 2013a, 2013b, 2019a) by concentrating on the self as a social actor (Holland, 1997), motivated agent (Super, 1980), and autobiographical author (Savickas, 1997b, 2019a). Figure 2.2 provides a visual representation of the three paradigms, each with their related concepts and the role of individuals within each paradigm.

Table 2.2

Comparison of career counselling methods (adapted from Savickas, 2019a, p. 11)

CAREER COUNSELLING		
GUIDING	DEVELOPING	CONSTRUCTING
Social Actor	Motivated Agent	Autobiographical Author
Traits	Stages	Stories
Resemblance	Tasks	Themes
Scores	Readiness	Reflexivity
Objects	Subject	Project

The processes of self-making and career construction differ during childhood, adolescence, and adulthood (Savickas, 2013a) as individuals start self-construction as *actors*, later become *agents* that direct the action, and then develop into *authors* who explain the action (McAdams & Olson, 2010; Savickas, 2019a). The self as *social actor* comprises various representations of traits, social roles, and other features that result in and from repeated performances on the social stage of life. The following layer is the self as *motivated agent*, specifying goals, motives, values, hopes and fears and other aspects that involve the critical decisions and choices a person makes regarding exploration and commitment to life projects. Layered over both the social actor and the motivated agent is the *autobiographical author*, the self as story-teller, who ultimately aims to assimilate and polish the information about the self into a coherent and integrative life story (Cardoso et al., 2021; McAdams, 2013; McAdams & Olson, 2010; Savickas, 2019a). According to Savickas, the CCT asserts that individuals, through their actions in the family, compose a social role as an actor, then adapt the role for use in the theatres of the school and community, and eventually author an autobiographical story that explains the continuity and coherence in occupational experiences (Savickas, 2013a, 2019a). In the following section, the focus will be on the three core pillars of the CCT framework: career identity, career adaptability and life themes (Savickas, 2005, 2009, 2019a).

2.2.4.3.3 Core pillars in the construction of a career

The following sections will clarify the three core pillars of the CCT, including career identity, career adaptability and life themes, from a narrative perspective. The narrative perspective entails viewing career identity as a storied self (narrative identity); career adaptability as the manner in which the protagonist addresses hardships within their life story; and life themes as a reflection of their spirit that activates the movement to become complete in one's life story (Del Corso & Reh fuss, 2011; Maree, 2015b, 2019a; Savickas, 2019a). In an attempt to make sense of some of the content, the researcher drew some connections between the different career paradigms and the core pillars of career construction. From the perspective of Career Identity, the first pillar focuses on social actorship and may be connected to the formist paradigm. The second pillar, Career Adaptability, focusing on the motivation of agency, and may be connected with the organismic paradigm. Lastly, Life Themes, focusing on autobiographical authorship, are connected with the contextualised paradigm. Each of the core pillars in the construction of an individual's career will be discussed.

❖ **Career Identity (the “what” of career construction)**

According to Hartung and Taber (2015), people's identity proves central in self-construction (Guichard, 2009) and career construction (Savickas, 2012b). Individuals must be able to express their identity with clarity and conviction by saying who they are, who they are becoming and what they find most important in their work and career (Hartung & Taber, 2015; Maree, 2019a). The identity focuses on the “what” of career construction and includes individuals' career-related abilities, needs, values and interests (Savickas et al., 2009, 2019a). While narratives of career identity are reasonably stable in social situations (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002), in dynamic situations (e.g. unstable economic situations, unemployment, transitions and traumas) the identity needs to evolve as individuals attempt to cope and make sense of their new place in the social world. Individuals thus construct certainty and stability in themselves (Hall & Mirvis, 2013; Hartung & Taber, 2015; Savickas, 2019a). According

to Hartung and Taber (2015), self-constructing and career construction view identity as a consequence of meaning-making processes that occur on individual (cognitive) and relational (interpersonal) levels.

Furthermore, people hold multiple identities because they play multiple roles (Taber & Hartung, 2015). Meta-narratives (i.e. where the individual self-narrative comes together to form a larger self-defining life story) extend over time and show thematic continuity in an individual's thoughts, actions, and behaviours. Thus, the self as a project is a lifelong storied project (Del Corso & Reh fuss, 2011; Savickas, 2019a).

To live with purpose and unity, individuals create a heroic narrative of the self that highlights essential truths about themselves (Maree, 2013b, 2015c; Savickas, 1997b). McAdams (1993) highlights the fact that individuals come to know themselves by creating a “heroic story of the self” (p. 12), known as the personal myth or the self-narrative. Self-narratives have a beginning, middle and end that correspond to the development of the character within the story. The story, however, is not created in isolation but is created within the context of individuals' cultural, familial and community stories, which provide inter- and intrapersonal dynamics which impact how individuals choose to construct their life plans concerning others (Maree, 2013b, 2015c; McAdams, 1993). According to Hartung (2019, in Maree, 2020a), human life consists of three domains, namely love,³⁴ work,³⁵ and friends.³⁶ The “life story” refers to the narrative about all three of these domains in general. Maree (2020a) prefers the integrated term “career-life story” to refer to the narrative about the three domains.

For performing artists, a clear identity narrative will provide them with the ability to say with clarity and conviction how the hero in their life story (the protagonist) attempts to address adverse conditions or challenges (the antagonist) (e.g. limited funding, opportunities, and fierce competition).

³⁴ Referred to as intimacy.

³⁵ Including career.

³⁶ Including community, vocational interests, and relationships.

The development of the identity will not only assist them in who they are (as the current hero of their story) but also in what they are becoming as they participate in various roles enacted across the primary human life domains of work, family and community (Hartung & Taber, 2015). They will be more likely to accept or find work that is congruent with their characteristics (the self-concept) and to find a congruent working environment (Holland, 1997). The career identity (self-narrative) thus acts as an internal cognitive compass that motivates performing artists to actively adapt in order to realise (or create) opportunities that match their aspirations (Ashforth & Fugate, 2001). However, the opposite may also be true: when performing artists experience their identity as fragmented, it may lead to an unclear environmental fit, such as performing artists choosing performance styles or genres incompatible with a clear identity narrative. Their “internal compass”, so to speak, is broken, and there is a spillover effect to the performance that suffers (Moyle, 2019).

Lastly, it is vital to distinguish the *self-concept* from the *career identity*. The *self-concept* pertains to the degree of self-awareness of one’s qualities, characteristics, values, motives, interests and capabilities and how these play out in the self-narrative or identity (Coetzee et al., 2016; Weng & McElroy, 2010). Individuals with a crystallised career self-concept and a clear sense of vocational or career identity, have a clear and relatively stable picture of themselves and an estimate of their career goals, interests, skills, and suitable occupations. They can manage and negotiate work roles supporting their self-concept (Holland, 1997). Savickas (2002, p. 155) states that career construction is primarily “the process of developing and implementing vocational self-concepts in work and other roles.”

❖ **Career Adaptability (the "how" of career construction)**

Super (1957, p. 213) defined career maturity as “the readiness to make appropriate choices when engaged in the planned exploration and possessing appropriate occupational knowledge, self-knowledge, and decision-making knowledge” (Ismail et al., 2018). Rottinghaus and Hauser (2013)

highlight that Super's (1957) term of career maturity can be explained as the readiness of individuals for planning their careers with the main focus on how well adolescents meet developmental tasks involved in educational and vocational decisions. According to Hartung (2013b), Super and colleagues (Super & Knasel, 1979 in Rottinghaus & Hauser, 2013) replaced the biological construct of career maturity with the psychosocial construct of *career adaptability* to incorporate the concerns of adult workers. They defined *career adaptability* as the “readiness to cope with changing work and working conditions” (Super & Knasel, 1981 in Rottinghaus & Hauser, 2013, p. 195).

Building on the work of Super and his colleagues (Super & Knasel, 1979 in Rottinghaus & Hauser, 2013), Savickas (2005) elaborated on the construct of career adaptability as a unifying construct that connects different segments of career development theory while avoiding the limitations of a developmental framework and integrating the main components of planful attitudes, self- and environmental exploration, and informed decision-making. Savickas (2005, p. 49) defines career adaptability as “a psycho-social construct that denotes an individual’s readiness and resources for coping with current and imminent vocational development tasks, occupational transitions, and personal traumas.” In essence, career adaptability refers to how career construction involves coping processes and resources individuals use to connect and construct their careers (Hartung & Cadaret, 2017; Savickas et al., 2009; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012).

According to Super et al. (1996), career stages may be viewed as maxi-cycles across individuals’ careers and mini-cycles that take place when individuals transition from one role to another, e.g. from school to work or from one job to the next job. Individuals may cycle through minicycles in the many transitions they experience across their lifespans. The mini-cycles thus represent a structural account of career adaptability (Savickas, 2005).

Career adaptability focuses on the implementation of individuals’ storied self into work roles, thus bringing their “inner needs and outer opportunities into harmony” (Savickas et al., 2009, p. 1) and refers to “people’s readiness to manage transitions and changes and to construct themselves”

(Maree, 2016b, p. 21). How people adapt to specific experiences depends upon their problem-solving resources and strategies, which can be identified as the ABCs of career adaptability. The ABC refers to coping attitudes, beliefs and competencies applied to career adaptability's four dimensions (career concern, control, curiosity and confidence). The four dimensions thus represent the resources and strategies available to individuals for the management of critical moments, periods, or events present throughout their lives and which influence individuals' coping behaviour used to deal with tasks, transitions and traumas as their ABCs plays out in the various dimensions (Hartung & Cadaret, 2017; Maree, 2018c; Savickas, 2005, 2012, 2013b, 2019a, 2020). The four dimensions will now briefly be highlighted.

- *Career concern* refers to a future orientation and being proactive in preparing, planning and becoming aware of the necessary planning for future career tasks and challenges (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012; Sharf, 2013). Thus, it makes the future feel real and outlines the subjective career, focusing on an idea (a reflection on the self) while being portrayed as either playfulness and optimism or apathy and pessimism (Savickas, 2005, 2013b). For performing artists, their career concerns will affect how they envision their future; a positive perception will give them hope and optimism, whereas a negative perception will lead to pessimism and missing opportunities because of their apathy, leading to hopelessness.
- *Career control* is a belief³⁷ and feeling³⁸ individuals are responsible for when constructing their careers. Furthermore, it incorporates the degree to which individuals take personal responsibility in shaping their career development and, in essence, their future by applying self-discipline, effort, self-regulation and determination to provide a sense of self-direction (Hartung, 2013b; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). Career control includes individuals' perceived

³⁷ Referring to the cognitive component.

³⁸ Referring to the affective component.

responsibility to create alternative solutions and ideas regarding themselves and their career-related decisions (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). In contrast, career indecision is characterised by confusion, procrastination, and impulsivity (Savickas, 2005, 2010). Performing artists experiencing low career control may experience confusion in how they live. They may often react on “the spur of the moment”, which could seriously affect their brand as a public figure, their networks and opportunities. On the other hand, high career control will lead performing artists to own their life-career decisions and construct the futures they envision.

- *Career curiosity* follows self-control, as people become curious about their interests and occupational alternatives (Savickas, 2013b), thereby exploring potential future selves and opportunities while also taking the influence of various work roles and environments into account (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). According to Savickas (2013a), individuals need to be curious, courageous and able to take risks to adjust to changes in the work environment while having an open attitude toward options, feedback and information (Savickas, 2005). A lack of curiosity leads to being unrealistic about self and the environment (Hartung & Cadaret, 2017). For performing artists, high career curiosity will provide them with ample options and opportunities to reconstruct their craft as they search for and refine their skills and alternatives in their particular field of performance.
- *Career confidence* refers to individuals' belief that they can transform their career goals into reality and successfully conquer obstacles (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). According to Del Corso (2013), career confidence is revealed in how individuals deal with the stressors they encounter throughout their career journey, e.g. unexpected workplace challenges, changes, or pressure to learn a new skill. Savickas (2005) also relates career confidence to self-efficacy as it reveals an individual's ability to successfully execute a course of action needed to make and implement suitable educational and vocational choices. Noteworthy is that career confidence is anchored

in an individual's sense of concern and control regarding the continuing career decision-making process (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). A lack of confidence may lead to career inhibition (Savickas, 2005). Career confidence is crucial for performing artists as it indirectly influences their performance. Thus, having the confidence, with the accompanying feelings of self-efficacy, will assist performing artists in executing the right course of action in terms of the content of the craft portrayed as well as building their network, solving problems and creating opportunities. On the other hand, career inhibition leads to inaction, which will influence how performing artists perceive themselves and their “un-” success.

According to Hartung (2015) and Savickas (2005, 2015a), each of the four processes elaborated on above can be related to specific questions, beliefs and attitudes. *Concern* links with the question, “Do I have a future?” and expresses an awareness of, involvement in, and active preparation for the individual’s future. *Control* is associated with the question, “Who owns my future?” and is seen in the way in which people connect with and exercise control over their future. *Curiosity* is associated with the question, “What do I want to do with my future?” and can be perceived in the way people obtain self-knowledge and career-related information to fit into the world of work. Lastly, *confidence* links with the crucial question, “Can I do it?” and can be seen in the extent to which people demonstrate the level of self-efficacy needed to deal with perceived and actual difficulties in achieving their career goals.

The four processes also build on each other as it seems significant to express concern before experiencing control, which would then, in turn, be vital for curiosity and confidence (Swanson, 2013). Savickas (2012) describes the four Cs of Career Adaptability as dimensions that may develop at different rates, and disequilibrium between the four dimensions could produce problems that could be labelled as indifference, indecision, unrealism, and inhibition. Individuals may develop each dimension at different rates and phases of their life, and disequilibrium amongst the four dimensions

may produce variations in development patterns. Hartung and Cadaret (2017) and Savickas (2005) conceptualised an “adaptive individual” as one who has mastered the four Cs.

Furthermore, the four Cs are based on four propositions that elaborate on previous career theories. At the first level, personality was viewed in the traditional sense as descriptors of individual differences around extraversion, neuroticism, openness to experience, conscientiousness, and agreeableness, which provide the framework for individual adaptation. It provides the individual with a sense of continuity, coherence, and coping processes to master developmental changes and adapt flexibly to changing circumstances (Del Corso & Rehfuss, 2011; Savickas, 2001; Patton, 2008). The second proposition of personal concerns draws on a range of personality constructs (e.g. coping styles, life tasks, and values), further differentiating individuals' uniqueness. A secondary system of self-regulation appears with personality self-organisation, and these self-regulatory mechanisms intervene in individuals' adaptation. The third proposition, the career narrative, is where the story of an individual resides. In the career narrative, an individual “seeks to specify the actual processes of continuity and change in career adaptation” (Savickas, 2001, p. 315). The fourth proposition accounts for action in the process of career development, the processes of learning, cognition, and decision-making (Savickas, 2001 in Patton, 2008).

Individual's career adaptabilities (attitudes, beliefs and competencies) are not only nestled in the individual but are developed through relationships with others. If a parent's attitude does not support a career in the performing arts, this may influence the child's career confidence, and the child may avoid that career path (Del Corso & Rehfuss, 2011).

From a narrative perspective, career adaptability can thus be viewed as the protagonist (the main character in a story) that must face obstacles and overcome them (McAdams, 1993). Individuals thus narrate their life story, which reveals how they have adapted, are adapting, and hope to adapt to the obstacles they face when making career-related decisions (Maree, 2018a; McAdams, 1993). Highlighting the words of Mark Savickas (1997b, p. 11), individuals “seek to actively master what

they have passively suffered”. In seeking and overcoming hardships, individuals strive toward completion and healing (Maree, 2020; Savickas, 2005).

❖ **Life Themes (the ‘why’ of career construction)**

A central premise of the CCT is that individuals create and construct their careers by doing what motivates them (Savickas, 2006). Motivation is a complex construct which involves needs like food, shelter, love and a longing to feel significant. Many times it is through work that people experience significance in their lives (Del Corso & Rehfuss, 2011). Therefore, the third pillar of the CCT refers to the motivational force or the “*why*” of vocational behaviour and is referred to as life themes (Savickas et al., 2009).

Super (1957) introduced the idea that life themes were central to the overall development of individuals’ understanding of their careers. Savickas (2005; 2019a) acknowledged and elaborated on the importance of the narrative, life theme, and career theme when individuals develop their stories and subjective career as they strive to turn their unconscious preoccupations into occupations. The repetitive nature of the continuous striving toward self-completion becomes obvious when individuals narrate their life stories. Repeated words and phrases in individuals’ narratives bring their stories to life and give meaning to their choices, which are referred to as life themes (Del Corso & Rehfuss, 2011; Maree, 2015b, 2019a; Savickas, 2019a). *Directly*, life themes suggest how individuals solve problems and move towards self-completion as they construct their careers. *Indirectly*, life themes express underlying pain or problems that individuals seek to overcome as the protagonist in their life stories (Del Corso & Rehfuss, 2011). In the words of Savickas (2001), stories provide a pathway by which individuals’ life and work roles can be a ‘theatre for self-development... as a context for actively mastering what she or he has passively experienced” (p. 11). It is important to note that even though individuals’ life stories assist them in creating meaning out of their many daily experiences,

the primary life themes individually and collectively bind the stories together and provide guideposts when dealing with problems and repeated transitions (Maree, 2015b).

❖ **Constructing life themes through metaphors**

Metaphors provide a powerful tool in assisting people when telling their stories. Most people refer to their careers in a figural sense as they narrate, compose, or analyse their stories in their minds and try to make sense of the past, make decisions for the present, and plan for the future (Inkson et al., 2015; Maree, 2015b). Metaphors depict deeper constructs in people's thinking as they guide them through their stories and assist individuals in transforming complex abstract experiences, making them more concrete and understandable in their minds (Inkson et al., 2015). Inkson (2004) and Inkson et al. (2015) mention nine archetypal metaphors. Many of them have already been addressed or will be addressed in this chapter and study.

The current chapter was introduced with the *journey metaphor* for one's career, following a particular path or journey and the movement evident in the journey. The particular metaphor was highlighted in the discussion of the organismic paradigm, specifically Super's developmental theory, which conceptualises human life and careers as cycles with highs and lows at different stages of the career cycle (Super et al., 1996; Savickas, 2008). Inkson (2004) and Inkson et al. (2015) also emphasise the cycle metaphor and state that cycles resemble stages through which people inevitably must progress. Therefore, the current study applies the metaphor to the middle to late career stage of performing artists as they reflect, maintain and cycle in their career paths, and portrays the movement of people's careers between stages and places, whether geographically, between jobs or between occupations.

As previously discussed, the formist paradigm views careers from a positivistic perspective, clearly addressing the *fit metaphor*, as in "square pegs fitting into square holes" (Inkson et al., 2015, p. 22), thus implying that there are specific career slots into which individuals have to fit. From the

contextualised paradigm, a career metaphor can also be seen as an *inheritance* (as seen in the systems theory) with predetermined outcomes passed on from our parents and backgrounds and impacting people's current choices (Inkson et al., 2015). Another metaphor in Inkson et al. (2015) is the *network metaphor*, which views careers as interactions and relationships. Within the career, various social and political incidents are identified. Social interactions are portrayed by constant interactions with others and sometimes the development of longer-term relationships, which is vital for the movement and direction of the career. They are also political as individuals attempt to employ these relationships to pursue their subjective career advantage. The network metaphor thus resembles some aspects of career control as depicted in the CCT (Savickas, 2010), when individuals take action in navigating their career and the relationships surrounding it. Another metaphor applicable to the CCT is the *craft metaphor*, where a career is viewed as a *construction*. The craft metaphor emphasises the role of individuals in creating their careers and the psychological and behavioural processes involved, as discussed in the previous sections (Inkson, 2004; Maree, 2015b). In a case study presented by Maree (2015b), he also employs the “craft” metaphor when elaborating on the career construction process of the client in “crafting” her self-portrait.

At the beginning of the chapter, a section of the poem “As you like it,” written by William Shakespeare, was recited. Various themes, concepts and life- and career issues, as evident in the poem, were also explained using metaphors, e.g. the movement metaphor, the cycle metaphor, the journey metaphor, and of course, the *Theatre Metaphor*, where the career is perceived as a role. The theatre has been effectively used as a metaphor for the career, as it lends itself to the use of such constructs as a theme, plot, costume, props, oratory, and symbolism so evident in the career (Mangham & Overington, 1987 in Inkson, 2004). Furthermore, careers can be constructed as performances, career self-management as performing arts, and career action as role behaviour.

Another metaphor playing a pivotal role throughout the current chapter is that of *movement*. From the opening paragraphs, careers have been described as having movement as individuals

navigate themselves through the accelerated, flexible, and fluid change of the world of work. Movement has also been utilised as metaphor progression through the different paradigms where highlighted. There is also movement within the individual, between individuals and also between individuals and the contextual system, as indicated in both the STF and the CCT. Lastly, from a CCT perspective, having moments of movement is where the magic happens, and this is the ultimate aim of counselling (Maree, 2015b; Savickas, 2011c).

As evident in the discussion on the CCT, the *narrative metaphor* is central to the CCT, where a career is viewed as a story (Maree, 2015b). Stories represent individuals' attempts to create meaning as they actively construct their lives in an ever-changing dynamic world while listening to their inner voice (Maree, 2013b, 2015c; Patton & McMahon, 1999; Savickas et al., 2009). Stories provide threads of continuity and cause the components of vocational personality and adaptability to be meaningful (Maree, 2020a; Patton, 2008). Engaging with narratives to capture the richness and subjectivity of people's careers and co-constructing meaning leads to a greater understanding of unique situations and the creation of future possibilities (Maree, 2020a; McMahon, 2005). Maree (2013b) highlights the fact that the metaphors of Inkson (2004) are not the only 'correct' metaphors. Individuals can create their own metaphors such as, "you are a beautiful song" (Maree, 2013b, p. 56). The application of metaphors through the narrative plays a role in the actions of individuals' career adaptation as people evaluate resources and limitations and implement their traits and abilities to work through tasks, transitions, and traumas (Maree, 2018a; McClean & Mansfield, 2012; Swanson, 2013). Career stories thus "tell how the self of yesterday became the self of today and will become the self of tomorrow" (Savickas, 2005, p. 58).

Extending metaphors to individuals' life stories may suggest drawbacks and opportunities (Inkson, 2004; Inkson et al., 2015). Firstly, people's tendency for a specific metaphor may interfere with their ability to see careers in terms of alternative, equally valid metaphors. Using particular metaphors may also convince people to see things that are not there. On the lighter side, metaphors

provide fascinating images that sum phenomena up in wonderful ways (Inkson et al., 2015) and provide opportunities for individuals to structure and voice their thinking to see circumstances and experiences from a unique perspective, which stimulates creativity (Inkson, 2004; Inkson et al., 2015). Lastly, it provides an excellent tool for advancing people to think about their careers (Inkson et al., 2015). Inkson et al. (2015) make an important statement when they state that each metaphor represents a truth about careers, but none provides the whole truth. Each metaphor represents a particular way of thinking about a career and should be seen as an integrated whole. Through narrative, individuals share who they are and what matters to them and “begin to recognise the integrated whole of the self as a story or the storied self, a guide to their life - past, present and future” (McAdams, 1993 in Del Corso & Reh fuss, 2011, p. 335). Maree (2018e; 2020b) notes the potential of the narrative approach internationally and in developing countries like South Africa.

Finally, Savickas (2005; 2009) highlights that even though it is theoretically possible to divide vocational personality, career adaptability, and life themes (the what, how and why of the CCT), in practice, they are intricately related through narrative. What individuals do is based in part on their life themes, i.e. the why, as well as their adaptabilities, i.e. the how (Savickas, 2005, 2009). Hartung and Taber (2015) acknowledge that life-design offers a contextualised model and lifelong, holistic, and preventive counselling intervention framework that increases individuals’ life-career adaptability, narratability, and intentionality (the three core aspects of the CCT). In the following section, life-design as a method of intervention (within the theoretical framework of the CCT) will be examined.

2.2.4.4 Life-design counselling

The life-design intervention developed from a meta-perspective integrating the constructionist philosophy with narrative psychology, focusing on individuals’ life narratives or stories (Savickas, 2012a). Savickas categorises life-design as part of the third major paradigm in career counselling,

following the vocational and career guidance or education paradigms³⁹ (Maree & Di Fabio, 2018). Life-design counselling (Savickas et al., 2009) emerged as one answer to the question regarding the individualisation of the life course (Savickas, 2013a), empowering clients as they create their narratives, assisting in reflecting on life themes, as well as providing possible insights and revisions with which to reconstruct their careers (Chen, 2013; Patton & McMahon, 2006; Savickas, 2012). According to Maree (2015c; 2018d; 2020a), the critical values of the life-design intervention are the notions of converting challenges into opportunities and turning pain into hope. Therefore, this kind of intervention potentially has the power to help present-day workers cope with significant change and successfully design their lives by mapping out their futures and making meaningful social contributions (Maree, 2019c, 2020a).

Life-design counselling endorses five presuppositions about people and their work lives, namely contextual possibilities (i.e. moving from traits and states), dynamic processes (not prescriptions), non-linear progression (from linear causality), multiple perspectives (from scientific facts to narrative realities), and personal patterns (from describing to modelling) (Savickas et al., 2009). Life-design counselling proposes that developing identity capital (collection of stories about the self-identity narrative, including one's sense of self-based on all facets of one's human, social and psychological capital) is an essential aspect of the post-modern career development intervention (Coetzee et al., 2016).

Throughout the process of self- and career construction, the importance of meaning-making in and through individuals' careers cannot be overstated (Maree, 2018a, 2020a). Core to the narrative is finding answers to fundamental identity questions of "Who am I, "Who am I becoming?" and "What is important to me?" (Baumeister, 1999). From the questions, it is clear that the purpose of the intervention is to assist clients in the crystallisation of their self-concept, adjustment of their career

³⁹ See sections 2.2.1 and 2.2.2 for a discussion of the first two paradigms.

identity (identity narrative), and to deal with the transitional issues they face when moving forward in their lives (Coetzee et al., 2016). Maree (2018a; 2020a) and Savickas et al. (2009) highlight that the life-design intervention aims to increase people's narratability, adaptability, intentionality, and activity as part of a dynamic, lifelong, holistic, contextual and preventative process, each of which will be briefly discussed.

➤ *Facilitating narratability*

People draw on autobiographical knowledge when they attempt to make changes in their lives (Maree, 2015b). The narratability of people's life stories assists them in telling others who they really are (Maree, 2010; Savickas, 2009) and thus assists clients in obtaining insight into their career-related choices (Maree, 2018a). The extent to which people can recount the meaning of their lives signifies how much of what they do will matter to other people (Maree, 2015b).

➤ *Encouraging (auto)biographicity*

Career-life stories, often characterised by twists and turns in the storyline and sub-storylines, are evoked and used to deal with repeated transitions (Maree, 2018a). Clients reinterpret and adapt their former stories so that they can draw on advice from within to help terminate career issues and pave the way for forward movement (Savickas, 2011a). Biographicity occurs when clients identify their central life themes and become able to use work to heal themselves, and in doing so, their stories act as holding environments when life brings them changes (Maree, 2015b, 2018a). The term biographicity is used by Savickas (2012, p. 14) to describe the process of bridging transitions in individuals' lives by using the individual's capacity to use their own stories as holding environments when changes happen in their lives. In doing so, individuals often discover an existing but dormant ability to exploit their career stories, which assists them in taking care of themselves if and when change happens and impacts their career-life story (Maree, 2018a). When biographicity occurs, clients are enabled to join micro-aspects of their lives into a "grand" story, thereby building a

“biographical bridge” across the divide between indecision and sound decision-making (Maree, 2018a), assisting individuals in managing numerous career-life transitions (Maree, 2020a).

➤ *Self-authoring of the career-life story*

Career construction counselling involves the search for a strategy to enable clients to author their career-life stories. Career construction counselling helps career counsellors achieve this outcome by first enabling clients to narrate their career-life stories and enact them purposefully and intentionally (Maree, 2018a, 2020a).

➤ *Creating a “sacred space”*

Clients need a safe or “sacred” space where they can feel “safe”⁴⁰ in the company of the career counsellor - a place where he or she can ask them about their earliest recollections of “deepest secrets” (Maree, 2018a).

➤ *Using the earliest recollections*

Maree (2015b) underscores that the earliest recollections act as people’s psychological DNA. The subconscious purposely chooses memories viewed as helpful by people at a particular point in time, and the memories will change with time. These seemingly simple memories or stories are profound and can assist counsellors in identifying people’s major life themes or preoccupations and thus assist them in “actively mastering what they have passively suffered.” Counsellors thus attempt to identify the major life themes in the stories, which tell of linear incidents (the plot) with underlying themes (the meaning) (Maree, 2015b). Counsellors gently and respectfully help clients recount and then reflect on and interpret these recollections themselves (Maree, 2018a). To get to the pain, problem or preoccupation underlying the need, individuals must narrate early memories, critical incidents, or significant moments where they felt incomplete. Critical incidents are essential as they

⁴⁰ Also referred to as a holding environment (Maree, 2020a, p. 55).

signify a change in the way individuals perceive themselves (Del Corso & Reh fuss, 2011). As a result, individuals share stories about their favourite role models, school subjects, hobbies, career experiences, or early memories they need to hear today to solve their current career concerns (Del Corso & Reh fuss, 2011).

❖ **The life-design intervention and career construction interview in practice**

According to Savickas (2011a), the career counselling interview has three parts: portions of a single interview or three separate interviews (see Table 2.3). The three parts can be compared to three three-act dramas. During the first act, the client and counsellor introduce themselves to each other, whereafter the career construction interview (CCI) is conducted. The second act depicts the heart of the drama as the career counselling process emerges. Within this process, the client and counsellor delve deep into the client’s reason for seeking counselling, the career story is elicited and the facilitation of novel insight into the presenting problem or conflict is presented. In the third and final act, the career counsellor counsels the client on the reasons for seeking counselling (Maree, 2015b). The process is summarised in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3

Threefold organisation of career construction counselling (Savickas, 2011, pp. 42-43, compiled by Maree, 2018a)

ELEMENTS OF A THREE-ACT DRAMA	THREE AIMS OF CAREER CONSTRUCTION COUNSELLING	ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN TO REALISE THE THREE AIMS	PART OF CAREER CONSTRUCTION REALISED	PHASES IN THE CRAFTING OF THE LIFE PORTRAIT
Act 1: Character introduced	Part 1: Elicitation of clients’ career stories	CCI and auxiliary instruments/strategies are administered to introduce clients to counsellors and themselves.	Clients <i>construct</i> their careers by narrating several short stories.	Clients’ small (micro) narratives are elicited.
Act 2: Basic conflict is presented. Insight is achieved, and defining moments are uncovered	Part 2: Clients are asked to authorise their career	The counsellor reads the client’s life portraits, which are discussed and related to the reason for seeking counselling. New interpretations emerge.	The counsellor <i>deconstructs</i> and <i>reconstructs</i> (weaves) these micro-stories into a larger story.	These narratives are <i>deconstructed, reconstructed</i> , and crafted into a preliminary draft of a larger narrative by a counsellor.

Act 3: Change and revitalisation are inspired by new insights	Part 3: Counsellor facilitates “movement” by clients	Actual counselling takes place, aimed at prompting clients to “move”.	Clients and counsellors <i>co-construct</i> a revised vision and mission statement (VMS). New aims and achievable actions are formulated. The intention is operationalised.	“Final” life portrait is <i>co-constructed</i> with a counsellor and authorised by clients.
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Maree (2015b) maintains that even though the initial attention is focused on the micro-elements of clients’ stories, the bigger picture, namely the bigger life story, is continuously guiding the process of career construction counselling. When clients reflect on the obtained life-story micro-reflections, with minimal interpretation or assistance from the counsellor, clear patterns reveal the central life theme, sub-themes emerge, and authentic self-portrayal commences. Clients begin to connect the different dots that collectively constitute their life story to let the grand career and life picture emerge. The career construction interview (CCI) thus provides a valuable instrument to elicit stories from individuals.

Savickas (2011a) and Maree (2015b) provide an eight-step strategy to help craft the client’s self-portrait. In Step 1, the client’s goals for career counselling are determined by recognising the client’s response to the question, “How can I be useful or of value to you?”. In Step 2, the client’s earliest recollections are used to identify his or her core problem or preoccupation because this is “where the life story metaphorically begins” (Taber, 2013, p. 158 in Maree, 2015b). In Step 3, the people the client admires most and what they represent are analysed to determine their self-concept, main life goals, and feasible solutions to the client’s main life problems. In Step 4, the client’s favourite magazine, television programme, and website are analysed to determine the best environment that fits the client’s lifestyle. In Step 5, the client’s favourite book or movie are analysed to determine whether the book or movie contains a character who was confronted with the same problem as the client and how the character solved the particular problem. In Step 6, the client’s favourite quotes or mottos (the advice they would give themselves) are analysed. In Step 7, the

different fields of study, occupations or options that may be appropriate (fitting) for the client are analysed. In the last step, Step 8, a response is given to the client's original request for career counselling. The overall process is thus reflective and reflexive and focuses on thematic content to design a life (Savickas, 2013b). Life-design counselling aims to carry out a constructive, deconstructive, reconstructive, and, ultimately, the co-constructive process of life-design that empowers individuals to function optimally within their multifaceted, subjective, interdependent, and socially constructed existences (Maree, 2015b, 2020a). Noteworthy is that the CCI does not have to be administered in isolation but that other narrative data sources can be integrated into the life-design process (Maree, 2015b). Other sources include the Career Interest Profile (*CIP*) (Maree, 2017c), observations, the participants' journals, or any other narrative information that the counsellor deems necessary to obtain the most data-rich information.

In summary, post-modern approaches provide the space for people to attach objective as well as subjective meanings to their career and life stories, which is necessary for individuals to adapt to changing circumstances and the work-related conditions required of them in the new occupational contexts of the 21st century (Maree, 2013b, 2020a; Swanson, 2013); a context in which their compass for action must point to possibilities in a liquid society with fluid boundaries rather than predictions in a stable society with solid boundaries (Savickas, 2019a). The context described is even more applicable to performing artists who have always been viewed as lacking in an orderly job sequence, hierarchical progression, and clear career 'paths'. Performing artists' work lives are often shaped by pragmatic economic choices and are characterised by freelancing hybrid practices and portfolio/protean careers within a gig economy⁴¹ (Alper & Wassall, 2000; Woodcock & Graham,

⁴¹ The 'gig' in the term 'gig economy' refers to short-term work arrangements originally in the form of a musical event. Currently, it refers to any event or project that the individual engages with to generate income. The tasks that underpin the gig economy are usually short, temporary, and unpredictable. An individual's performance, reputation, and delivery will determine whether an organisation will sign a deal - the next gig - again in future (Woodcock & Graham, 2020).

2020; Wyszomirski, 2006; Wyszomirski & Chang, 2017). The following section will further discuss the context of performing artists as a protean career type.

2.3 THE PROTEAN CAREER: CONTEXTUALISING THE PERFORMING ARTS CAREER

According to Maree (2020c), the ever-evolving world of work and the accompanying new jobs and industries have given rise to novel ways of work and new terminology. Evident in the previous section were terms used to characterise performing artists' work lives, such as freelancing, hybrid practices, portfolios, protean careers and the gig economy (Alper & Wassall, 2000; Woodcock & Graham, 2020; Wyszomirski, 2006; Wyszomirski & Chang, 2017). For performing artists, the world of work has also changed dramatically, e.g. through funding models (non-profit organisations, government funding for the arts and private or institutional funding, to name but a few) (Kreidler, 1996; Wyszomirski & Chang, 2017) and a weakening of consumer demands and policies governing the arts (Wyszomirski & Chang, 2017). Furthermore, with the impact of COVID-19 and widespread closure of the industry, theatres, galleries, sports venues, bars, restaurants, and parks, the world economy fell into a deep recession (Jeannotte, 2021).

In addition, South Africa experienced changes in the political arena, which for many also led to an attachment to the past, a lack of governmental support, a downturn in the economy becoming even more exaggerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the fragmentation of audiences; all of which impacted negatively on performing artists (Jeannotte, 2021; Mishan & Pranglely, 2014). The fragmentation refers to the divided nature of South African audiences as it seems that the current theatre audiences do not like to take risks on unknown shows, prefer light-hearted entertaining shows, lack arts education and appreciation, lack the habit of theatre-going, type-cast theatres as being 'Afrikaans', 'black' or 'white', and only being loyal to theatres that support their race, culture and language. Fragmentation leads to barriers between performing artists and the organisations that should support them (Mishan & Pranglely, 2014). Furthermore, there is no cultural policy or cultural

planning in South Africa which supports the creative industries' achieving social inclusion, economic regeneration and active citizenship to promote the creative industries in general and performing artists specifically (Abisuga-Oyekunle & Sirayi, 2018).

As the arts and the arts policy community grappled with how such meta-changes might impact creative workers' work patterns and practices, a plethora of new terms (and concepts) arose. In contrast, other longstanding terms and ideas were re-examined and re-purposed. In the following section, some of the terms will be explored.

2.3.1 New terms and concepts explained

Inkson et al. (2012) and Maree (2017c) contend that the new setting has led to new terminology being developed to address changes in the career landscape. Table 2.4 summarises new terminology surfacing in the new world of work.

Table 2.4

Examples of new career terminology (adapted from Maree, 2017c, pp. 16-17)

NEW TERMS TO DESCRIBE CAREERS	MEANING OF TERM
<i>Customised</i>	Workers are more indifferent to climbing the corporate ladder and prefer to more strongly focus on meeting their own needs than that of their employers (Benko & Weisberg, 2007; Maree, 2013a).
<i>Kaleidoscopic</i>	‘Like a kaleidoscope that produces changing patterns when the tube is rotated, and its glass chips fall into new arrangements, individuals shift the pattern of their careers by rotating different aspects of their lives to arrange roles and relationships in new ways’ (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005, p. 106). Workers create careers on their terms, which are conceptualised as a multi-layered and continually shifting constructions of their values, choices, and preferences. Three parameters in the kaleidoscopic model are authenticity, balance and challenge (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005).
<i>Post-industrial</i>	The idea of “stable work identities” is disappearing. Therefore, many contemporary workers continuously redefine themselves in different work-related contexts (Gershuny, 1993 in Maree, 2017c).

NEW TERMS TO DESCRIBE CAREERS	MEANING OF TERM
<i>Post-corporate</i>	Many workers are losing their jobs in the 21st century, particularly in corporate environments. Therefore, they have to move from trying to find permanent “jobs” in one (large) organisation to undertaking temporary “projects” with smaller, flexible firms; and from finding “jobs” to finding a conduit for their unique talents, identifying market-related opportunities, and identifying their personal “competitive advantage” (Baruch & Vardi, 2016; Pharaoh, 2009 in Maree, 2017c).
<i>Portfolio</i>	Workers are increasingly marketing, contracting, and leasing their occupational skills in different contexts and negotiating self-employment agreements (Handy, 1995). Individuals change their <i>career portfolios</i> to fit their own needs and the needs of the specific organisation (Maree, 2013a).
<i>Dejobbing</i>	The global economic meltdown has caused sweeping changes in the world of work, leading to many unemployed and “insecure” workers. Terms such as temporary, contingent, contract, freelance, part-time, external, consultant, and self-employed describe these workers (Savickas, 2012).
<i>Intelligent career</i>	The term intelligent career was introduced by Arthur et al. (1995, in Baruch & Vardi, 2016) and introduced the ‘know why, know-how, and know whom’ triad as a set of career competencies. In such an intelligent career world, people set personal goals and choose employment that furthers their fulfilment (Baruch & Vardi, 2016).
<i>Boundaryless</i>	The boundaryless career refers to a move towards the independence of traditional agreements within organisations (Arthur et al., 2005). It is characterised by regularly changing jobs and organisations over their lifespan and experiencing career “breaks” to retool themselves by engaging in self-study or full-time study to rethink their career paths (Hall & Mirvis, 2013).

Bridgstock (2005) notes that the above-described terms indicate a ‘phenomenon’ in which individuals need to enhance their human capital by navigating their careers and focusing on security in employability. She also states that this “new phenomenon” has a familiar ring to representatives of several occupations who present themselves as having faced this challenge for centuries. Occupations included small business owners in many fields, professional athletes and performing artists; all of which, arguably, have had long histories of boundaryless and protean careers (Middleton & Middleton, 2017; Wyszomirski & Chang, 2017).

According to Bennett (2009), two of the most common terms applied explicitly to the performing arts careers are portfolio (Handy, 1995) and boundaryless (Arthur, 1994; Arthur et al., 2005). According to Bennett (2009), Carr (2019), Middleton and Middleton (2017) as well as

Wyszomirski and Chang (2017), the term which best describes individuals working within the performing arts constitutes that of the protean career, which can be described as the extreme end of portfolio careers.

2.3.2 The protean career: Meaning, elaboration and linkage to the career construction theory (CCT)

The following sections discuss the protean career as a prism for analysing the unique careers of performing artists. The section will specifically focus on the meaning and elaboration of the protean career concept and link the protean career constructs with the constructs of the CCT.

2.3.2.1 Literal and figurative meaning

Throughout the chapter, the metaphor has resumed a central standing, which is no different from the genesis of the protean career idea (Inkson, 2006; Inkson et al., 2015). Protean careers are named after the mythical Greek sea creature Proteus, mentioned in Homer's *Odyssey*, who could, like the "shapeshifters" of Celtic and Icelandic mythology, change in form as the situation demanded (Hall & Mirvis, 1996; Inkson, 2006). Adaptability may be a desirable characteristic and, indeed, something that increasing numbers of people need to do in order to remain employable in the unstable, fluid and jobless world of work (Bennett, 2009; Hall & Mirvis, 2013; Inkson, 2006; Savickas, 2011a, 2011b; Swanson, 2013). However, the term has acquired a life of its own, away from the original myth it was based on (InksMareon et al., 2015).

Building on the image of "Proteus", Douglas Hall formulated the concept of a protean career as flexible, versatile, adaptive and self-directed (Hall & Mirvis, 1996). Individuals in such a career are adaptable, flexible, independent, can reinvent themselves to meet changing circumstances and needs, and are shaped by intrinsic rather than extrinsic values (Hall & Mirvis, 1996). The protean career consists of the person's varied positive and negative experiences in education, training, work or changes in the occupational field (Baruch & Vardi, 2016; Hall & Moss, 1998; Savickas, 2013a).

Within such a process, the person, not the organisation, is responsible for managing their career path (Baruch, 2004; Briscoe & Hall, 2002; Hall & Moss, 1998; Savickas, 2013a). The individual takes centre stage in setting personal and career goals, making career choices, and planning and managing their career path by developing their social capital according to their changing needs (Baruch, 2004; Hall, 1996; Hall & Mirvis, 2013; Savickas, 2011b). Protean individuals' career choices and search for self-fulfilment are the integral elements in their lives and are based on individually defined goals encompassing the whole life space (Hall & Moss, 1998). Furthermore, protean workers are motivated by psychological success, continuous self-directed learning, autonomy, flexibility and self-fulfilment and the word protean refers to people's ability to remain resilient and deal with the effect of new technologies and new concepts of work (Baruch, 2004; Bennett, 2009; Briscoe & Hall, 2002; Eby et al., 2003; Hall, 1996; Hall & Moss, 1998; Inkson, 2006; Savickas, 2011b).

2.3.2.2 Elaboration on the theory

Gubler et al. (2014) elaborated on the meaning of the protean career, stating that the notion of the protean career focuses on individuals' motives to follow particular career paths. The following sections will briefly elaborate on aspects like the meta-competencies related to the protean career, which include identity and adaptability and the protean dimensions, which include being values-driven or self-directed. Lastly, individuals can be both values-driven and self-directed. The different combinations of their behaviour may lead to different behavioural outcomes, which will also be briefly highlighted in the following section.

2.3.2.2.1 Meta-competencies related to the protean career: Identity and adaptability

With new perspectives on the 'career' and individuals who continuously need to adapt to dynamic and, at times, strenuous changes in the occupational world, careers have become a continuous learning process as the person must learn how to develop self-knowledge⁴² and

⁴² Referred to as identity- or self-awareness. Thus the terms, identity and self-knowledge, are used interchangeably.

adaptability. The two aspects are referred to as meta-competencies since they are the skills required for learning how to learn (Briscoe & Hall, 1999, 2006; Hall, 2002; Hall et al., 2018). The need for adaptability is perhaps self-evident. It enables the person to self-correct in response to new demands from the environment without waiting for formal training and development (Briscoe & Hall, 1999, 2006; Hall, 2002). However, adaptability alone is not enough.

Without self-awareness, adaptability could be a blind, reactive process, and the person could risk changing in ways that are not consistent with his or her values and goals (Hall & Moss, 1998). In the words of Hall (2002, p. 32), identity acts as "an internal compass, keeping him or her headed on the path with a heart amid all the turbulence." Adaptability alone might produce reactive change, while adaptability plus self-knowledge promotes generative change (Hall & Moss, 1998). Hall (2002; 2004) has highlighted that both meta-competencies are required simultaneously, highlighting that a dynamic environment may constantly force individuals to rebalance the two meta-competencies. It is the interaction of various combinations of the two attitudes and behaviours, resulting in individuals being considered capable of fully demonstrating a particular protean career orientation (Briscoe & Hall, 2006).

➤ *Two protean dimensions: Values-driven and self-directed*

Protean career orientation is a crucial individual difference variable across career stages and is positively related to different favourable work and career outcomes (Rodrigues et al., 2019). Core to the descriptions of a protean career is the notion that people with a protean orientation are more motivated to self-direct their careers according to their values (Hall, 1996). Protean careers are thus *values-driven* because people's intrinsic values provide the guidance and measure of success for their careers. Furthermore, they are *self-directed* in personal career management, indicating that people can adapt to performance and learning demands (Briscoe & Hall, 2006). Adaptability and flexibility can

substantially shape the career’s direction, potential, and success (Briscoe & Hall, 2006; Savickas, 2019a).

After a thorough literature search of all the relevant terms related to the protean career construct, Gubler et al. (2014) combine the meta-competencies (“identity” and “adaptability”) and two protean dimensions (“values-driven” and “self-directed”) to allow us to address two crucial aspects of protean careers: the simultaneous existence of stabilising forces (“identity”) and the capability to adapt quickly to changes in the environment (“adaptability”). Table 2.5 presents a refined conceptualisation of the protean career concept presented by Gubler et al. (2014).

Table 2.5

Refined conceptualisation of the protean career concept (adapted from Gubler et al., 2014, p. S33)

CONCEPT	DIMENSION	SUB-DIMENSION
Protean Career Concept	1. Being clear on one’s needs, motivation, abilities, values, and interests.	Identity
	2. Having personal values that are both the guidance and the measure of success in one’s career.	Being values-driven
	3. Being both competent and motivated to learn and adapt to a changing environment.	Adaptability
	4. Having a feeling of independence and being in charge of one’s career.	Being self-directed

➤ *Being practical: Primary characterisations of a career as viewed through the protean lens*

Individuals possess different combinations of the dimensions and the sub-dimensions, leading to different behavioural outcomes. Individuals can be both values-driven and self-directed, but different dimensions in combination may drive behaviour differently. Bingham (2013) and Hall and Moss (1998) refer to the combinations as four primary characterisations of career, as seen through the protean lens, including dependent, reactive, rigid, and protean. People who are neither values-driven nor self-directed in career management would be considered *dependent*, as they cannot define priorities or behaviourally and independently manage their careers. Individuals who are not values-

driven but self-directed in career management would not ultimately have the perspective to guide their careers sufficiently. Thus, they would be *reactive*. People who are values-driven but not self-directed cannot adapt to their career's performance and learning requirements and thus are said to be unable to entirely shape their careers. Such a career orientation would be labelled as *rigid*. Lastly, people with a *protean* career orientation are both values-driven in defining their career priorities and identity and self-directed in adapting to the performance and learning demands of the career. Such people are thus more able to lead themselves and others and are more capable of continuous, transformative learning.

The well-known but tragic story of Madame Butterfly (the 16 year-old Cio-Cio San and her struggle with lost love as she waits for her true love, Captain Pinkerton) expresses dramatically how a strong sense of identity and values, as well as adaptability, are needed to successfully steer the course of one's life. Captain Pinkerton is physically adaptive as he can cross the world and find himself at home wherever he travels. Unfortunately, he lacks an internal value system regarding moral guidance and identity. In stark contrast, Madame Butterfly is overflowing with devotion to her values, yet in the end she is unable to adapt to a world in which her values cannot find their ideal fulfilment, and thus she takes her own life (Briscoe & Hall, 2006; Onay, 2013).

While the consequences for a career may be less dramatic than that of Madame Butterfly, a sense of identity, guided by values and adaptability, remains core in shaping the direction, potential, and success of one's career (Briscoe & Hall, 2006; Onay, 2013). Together, the meta-competencies (identity and adaptability) give individuals a sense of when it is time to change and the capacity to change (Savickas, 2019a). According to Hall et al. (2018), protean career orientation elements are essential to human needs for growth and meaning. Lastly, an extreme form of the protean career perspective would occur when people's attitudes toward their career reflect a sense of calling in their work, i.e. an awareness of a purpose that gives deep meaning to the career (Briscoe & Hall, 2006).

2.3.2.3 Linkage between the protean career and the career construction theory (CCT)

According to Baruch and Vardi (2016), adaptability, a necessity in the contemporary world, does not necessarily lead to growth and meaning. Eager to not only find employment but, instead, become employable, people need to reinvent themselves despite an inability or reluctance, which can lead to bitterness, inefficiency and even misconduct. The stress and ambiguity associated with constant identity transformations may produce positive growth, adaptation, and even inappropriate work-related behaviour such as deceiving, faking, and politicking. Furthermore, the frequent transitions end in too many short-lived, transitory career experiences, limiting the chances of reaching maturity and high-level achievements. For many individuals, excessive transformations may prohibit the crystallisation of a stable and constructive career identity. Hall and Mirvis (2013) elaborate on this concept when they state that integrated identity development is crucial as people live and work through the self-construction required by a protean career.

Life-design is needed in the protean career based on self- and career construction, as the CCT refers to career identity, life themes and adaptability as core constructs (Del Corso & Reh fuss, 2011; Maree, 2019c; Savickas, 2019a). The protean career orientation also refers to identity and career adaptability, adding values as their core constructs. From the protean career perspective, individuals may thus either develop and grow, which may lead to career success or may display inappropriate work-related behaviour, which then may lead to career hindrances (Baruch & Vardi, 2016; Hall & Mirvis, 2013; Hall et al., 2018; Rodrigues et al., 2019; Savickas, 2011b, 2013b, 2019a;). Furthermore, both perspectives focus on the subjective perspective of their stories and ‘success’ (Maree, 2015a, 2018b; Savickas, 2013a). Lastly, both the protean career orientation and the CCT refer to the outcome of the process as a decision going over to action (Hermann et al., 2015; Maree, 2015a; Savickas, 2013a, 2019a).

The creative industries workforce has long engaged in protean careers, which necessitate the continual development of new opportunities and the corresponding skills required to meet each new

challenge (Bennett, 2009). From this background, Bridgstock (2005) positions the performing arts careers as protean, pointing to their self-employment and the multiplicity of positions that artists often pursue simultaneously. Therefore, it seems clear that the protean career perspective helps explain performing artists' context as they construct their lives and careers.

2.4 PUTTING THE SPOTLIGHT ON PERFORMING ARTISTS FOLLOWING A PROTEAN CAREER PATH

For several performing artists, the stark reality of their daily existence calls for their involvement in multiple temporary jobs, once-off gigs, freelancing, moonlighting, “session work”, “pick up” ensembles, working on public grant projects, and moving between arts and non-arts jobs in an attempt to make ends meet (Middleton & Middleton, 2017; Wyszomirski & Chang, 2017). Freelancing involves working on different projects for companies, whereas moonlighting means holding multiple jobs. The artist’s job is the “primary job” where the worker commits the most hours (Wyszomirski & Chang, 2017). Thomson’s (2013) study discovered that only 18% of performing artists earn all of their income from one occupational activity type.

Evidently, the performing arts constitutes an uncertain field in which to develop a planned career, fraught with risks, personal challenges, insecurities, conflicts,⁴³ and constraints as performing artists need to juggle various roles⁴⁴ and multiple jobs⁴⁵ (Bennett, 2009; Daniel, 2016; Daniel & Daniel, 2013; Thomson, 2013; Wyszomirski & Chang, 2017). There are also no planned career opportunities and no hierarchical career progression, resulting in performing artists managing their own careers (Inglis & Cray, 2012; Johnston, 2018; Jones & Walsh, 1997; Wyszomirski & Chang, 2017).

In an attempt to make sense of the above-described non-linear, flexible career path, the protean career type can be utilised (Wyszomirski & Chang, 2017). Hall and Mirvis (2013) note that the

⁴³ Such as time and role conflicts.

⁴⁴ Roles may include roles such as performers, directors, managers, teachers, in low-skilled administrative and technical roles.

⁴⁵ Jobs may include performer, composer, recording artist, session player, teacher, or administrator.

protean career concept provides many advantages for careers in the contemporary world of work as the career is much more flexible and socially constructed. Various authors (Bennett, 2009; Bridgstock, 2005; Kogan, 2002; Middleton & Middleton, 2017) confirm the protean career trajectory of performing artists and therefore it provides a suitable framework from which to make sense of performing artists' world of work.

Even though the term 'performing artist' has been prevalent throughout the current chapter, what it entails has not yet been fully explored. The following sections elaborate on the construct of what it means to be a 'performing artist'. Brief overviews of the career development trajectory of performing artists, as well as challenges and strategies to address the challenges of performing artists, will also be highlighted.

2.4.1 Conceptualising the construct of a 'performing artist': Descriptions and categories

According to Hadley et al. (2013), the term 'performing artist' is a vague term with no apparent description. In its most generic meaning, "performance" refers to an activity or behaviour, thus providing a clear guideline when referring to categories of "performance" (Hays, 2017). The challenge is that many authors refer to different categories of performers (Middleton & Middleton, 2017), such as professional musicians, dancers, singers, or actors (Kogan, 2002). Even though Middleton and Middleton (2017) describe "professionals" as artists who have received or are receiving formal education and are gainfully receiving remuneration for their work, there is no consensus concerning what exactly constitutes being professional (Jeffri, 2005).

A study by Brooks and Daniluk (1998) provides a valuable starting point for describing performing artists, as they described women performing artists as creative individuals who (a) identified themselves as an artist (e.g. a writer, poet, painter, or actor); (b) considered the pursuit and practice of her art to be of significant value and a primary life activity; (c) currently considered herself active in her chosen artistic field; and (d) considered her role as an artist to be her primary career.

Furthermore, the categories within the performing arts are wide-ranging and have traditionally included music (orchestral, choral, pop/rock and jazz), opera, musicals, dance, and drama (Butler, 2000; Kogan, 2002; Middleton & Middleton, 2017; Preece, 2011). There are also finer distinctions within each art form, with various authors categorising them differently. Kogan (2002), for example, distinguishes between pianists, string, brass and wooded instrumentalists. He also divides singers into opera, lieder, or performing in different genres. The dance field distinction is mostly between classical ballet and modern dance, while actors tend to specialise in dramatic or musical roles (Kogan, 2002).

Appleton (2012) includes music-theatre, comedies, music hall, variety, puppet shows, revues, mime, cabaret, folk music, live art, street performers, Vaudeville, experimental theatre, military bands and circuses in his overview of the performing arts. Some of the lesser-known concepts are briefly discussed to clarify them. Vaudeville, for example, is a theatrical genre of variety entertainment born in France at the end of the 19th century. Initially, Vaudeville was a comedy without psychological or moral intentions based on a comical situation. Furthermore, it consisted of 10 to 15 unrelated acts featuring magicians, acrobats, comedians, trained animals, jugglers, singers, and dancers. Radio, funny enough, originated in Vaudeville (Slide, 2012; McLean, 2015). Experimental theatre is a vague, catch-all term for several theatrical styles and movements in the 1900s. At that time, the accepted conventions for the writing and production of plays were pretty narrow. They leaned towards naturalism, which strives to mirror reality in acting, dialogue, costuming, and sets. The term has changed over time, as mainstream theatre has accepted many forms that were once considered radical. It is used interchangeably with the term *avant-garde theatre*. A production of *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* would be naturalist, while Blue Man Group's performances are more experimental (Davies, 1987). In today's technologically orientated theatres, virtual theatres will be, for example, more experimental until something new comes along.

Lastly, Moyle (2019) divides the performing arts into acting/drama-comedy (physical theatre, stage, screen), dance (communities, independent, genres, professional, styles) and music (orchestral,

bands, vocal, opera), to mention but a few different categorisations between the authors. Appleton (2012) and Kogan (2002) draw another critical distinction, which distinguishes between *creators* (like composers, playwrights, choreographers, and set design) that create the works (the products) and *performers* (like musicians, actors, singers, dancers and conductors) that interpret and then publicly perform the created work. The *creator* has various attributes, e.g. imagination and originality and the creations, such as a screenplay or song, are usually produced in private. Lastly, the creator need not be present when the work is performed. *Performers*, on the other hand, need to perform their craft publicly. Also, although the performer may sometimes perform solo, it is usually a team effort with members dependent on one another to promote the impact of challenging and impressive performances. For example, a play's successful execution may require a music ensemble, dance companies, theatrical repertory groups, or a cast of actors.

It should be noted, though, that a person might be both a creator and a performer with the boundaries not always clear and some skills overlapping, e.g. creativity (Kogan, 2002). The Creative Skills Europe Report (2016) supports the division mentioned above within the Live Performance Sector (as they term it) by differentiating between the creation (referring to the creator that creates the work) and production fields (referring to the performer who publicly performs the product, such as a drama) in artistic occupations. Table 2.6 summarises the conceptualisation of performing artists and finer distinctions made within the performing arts category.

Table 2.6

A summary of the conceptualisation of performing artists and finer distinctions within the performing arts category

CONCEPTUALISATION/CATEGORISATION	AUTHORS
The term “performing artist” is vague, with no apparent description.	Hadley et al. (2013)
“Professional artists” are defined as those who receive formal education and receive remuneration for their work.	Middleton and Middleton (2017)
“Performance” refers to an activity or behaviour, thus providing a guideline when referring to " performance " categories.	Hays (2017)

CONCEPTUALISATION/CATEGORISATION	AUTHORS
<p>Performing artists are creative individuals who: (a) identify themselves as artists; (b) consider the pursuit and practice of their art to be of significant value and a primary life activity; (c) currently consider themselves active in their chosen artistic field; and (d) consider their role as artists to be their primary career.</p>	<p>Brook and Daniluk (1998)</p>
<p>Different authors refer to different categories of performers.</p>	<p>Middleton and Middleton (2017)</p>
<p>Categories include professional musicians, dancers, singers, and actors. Categories include music (orchestral, choral, pop/rock and jazz), opera, musicals, dance, and drama.</p>	<p>Kogan (2002) Butler (2000); Kogan (2002); Middleton and Middleton (2017); Preece (2011)</p>
<p>Musicians are subdivided into pianists, string, brass and wooded instrumentalists.</p>	<p>Kogan (2002)</p>
<p>Singers are subdivided into those focusing on opera, lieder, or performing in different genres.</p>	
<p>Distinctions in the dance field are mostly between classical ballet and modern dance.</p>	
<p>Actors are divided into dramatic or musical roles.</p>	
<p>Divisions in the performing arts are made between music theatre, comedies, music hall, variety, puppet shows, revues, mime, cabaret, folk music, live art, street performers, Vaudeville, experimental theatre, military bands and circuses.</p>	<p>Appleton (2012)</p>
<p>The performing arts are divided between acting/drama-comedy (physical theatre, stage, screen), dance (communities, independent, genres, professional, styles) and music (orchestral, bands, vocal, opera).</p>	<p>Moyle (2019)</p>
<p>There are divisions between <i>creators</i> (like composers, playwrights, choreographers, and set design) that create the works (the products) and <i>performers</i> (like musicians, actors, singers, dancers and conductors) that interpret and then publicly perform the created work.</p>	<p>Appleton (2012) and Kogan (2002)</p>
<p>There are divisions between the <i>creation</i> (referring to the creator that creates the work) and <i>production</i> fields (referring to the performer who publicly performs the product, such as a drama).</p>	<p>Creative Skills Europe Report (2016)</p>

In an attempt to provide a pragmatic, all-encompassing description of performing artists within the South African context, the researcher integrated the descriptions and categorisations of the previous authors, describing performing artists as individuals, irrespective of gender or culture, who:

- (a) identified themselves as performing artists (focusing on actors, musicians and singers in any genre);
- (b) considered the pursuit and practice of their art to be of significant value and a primary life activity;
- (c) currently consider themselves active in their chosen artistic field;
- (d) consider their role as performing artists to be their primary career;
- (e) regularly perform in front of an audience (even though they may or may not be the creator of the content of the performance); and
- (f) have relevant experience in their chosen performing arts field.

Importantly, Middleton and Middleton's (2017) definition cannot be integrated into my conceptualisation of the performing artists, taking cognizance of the South African context. South Africa's political past impacted and continues to impact many South Africans' social conditions, resulting in many performing artists never receiving formal education (Arthur, 2008). The past's impact is also felt in the current higher education landscape, with disadvantaged students taking longer than others to attain their qualifications (Maree, 2017c). Ndebele (2013) notes that roughly 50% more white students graduate each year, with less than 5% of African and students of colour completing their higher education, with the country having a combination of first- and third-world socioeconomic characteristics impacting the country's high unemployment rate (Maree, 2020a).

In a similar 'contextual' vein, the STF's⁴⁶ central premise is that individuals do not function in isolation but are continuously part of structures and influences that have a direct impact on their career decision-making and development (McMahon, 2005; Patton & McMahon, 2006). The following sections will thus focus on the career development trajectory of performing artists.

⁴⁶ See section 2.2.4.1 for an outline of the STF theory.

2.4.2 The career development trajectory of performing artists

The career development trajectory of performing artists may differ considerably across various performing arts domains as the relationship between training and becoming a performer is not straightforward. For example, the vocal clarity of boys' voices is highly prized in Western tradition (Williams, 2010). The Drakensberg Boys Choir was developed to provide a platform for South African boys to perform in song. However, by puberty, their voices have changed so much that they may not achieve much success as professional singers in their adult lives. On the other hand, professional musicians playing instruments tend to begin training relatively early and continue throughout their lives. Simultaneously, professional actors may enter their professional acting career from childhood to adulthood as formal professional acting training is relatively recent on the route toward theatrical performance (Hays, 2017).

Various authors (Daniel & Daniel, 2013; Ericsson et al., 1993; Sternberg & Ericsson, 1996) have accentuated the impact of deliberate practice over various performance domains as the impact of performing artists' ability to deliver flawless performances is directly linked to their success. Ericsson and colleagues (1993) coined the term 'deliberate practice' to describe training activities designed to maximise improvement. They stressed *how often* one practises as being equally necessary to *how* one practises (Ericsson et al., 1993). It seems crucial to underscore that some controversies surrounding professional performers' nature-nurture debate⁴⁷ have often arisen and remain a source of concern (Ackerman, 2014). On the one extreme is the "talent myth" highlighted by stories such as Mozart that could bedazzle audiences with his giftedness. Not always mentioned is the strong influence his father, a musician and music teacher, had on the young Mozart (Ericsson & Pool, 2016). On the other extreme, there is the popularised but oversimplified (Gladwell, 2008) view that 10 000 hours or ten years of deliberate practice in a specific area can lead to performance expertise. Of

⁴⁷ Referring to innate talent vs life circumstances and deliberate practice.

particular importance is Ericsson and colleagues' (1993) description of deliberate practice, including well-defined tasks, informative feedback, repetition, self-reflection, motivation, and endurance (Moulaert et al., 2004). The quality and quantity of practice are thus critical (Ericsson & Pool, 2016; Nordin-Bates, 2012). According to Ericsson and Pool (2016), extreme standpoints on the dispute are fundamentally pointless as both nature and nurture, together with other interacting factors such as parental influences, are essential determinants of elite performances, enhancing performing artists' chances to attain successful careers.

Performing artists' career development occurs within a developmental and contextual framework (Hays, 2017). Various frameworks will be applied by focusing on the impact of the family throughout the performer's early, middle and late developmental stages and the impact that exposure to various external influences has on performing artists. Before applying these developmental and contextual frameworks for performing artists' career development trajectories, it might be prudent to provide a brief overview of Erikson's (1995) psychosocial theory. Doing so will provide a better understanding of identity construction's general development and how the different stages can be applied to performing artists.

2.4.2.1 Brief theoretical overview of Erikson's psychosocial theory of development

Erik Erikson played a key role in articulating a new framework for early childhood development in the 20th century that shed light on the way young children negotiate the early years (Maree, 2021). Accordingly, Erikson's (Erikson, 1995; Munley, 1975) psychosocial theory indicated the impact of the first years and accompanying experiences on children's ego development. The initial experiences impact the development of specific strengths (virtues), promote ego development, and contribute to identity construction (Erikson, 1995). Again, as in career development, forward movement is a driving force in ego development. Each psychosocial stage centres on an emotional polarity that children encounter during critical life stages in their formative years. New environmental demands

infuse positive and negative emotional components into developing their identity. Both emotional components are, to some extent, incorporated into the emerging person, but if the conflict is resolved satisfactorily, the positive component is reflected to a higher degree. The negative component predominates if the conflict persists or is not adequately resolved (Erikson, 1995). The stages do not occur within a strict chronological framework. However, each aspect of psychosocial development has a critical period of readiness during which, if it does not flourish, might lead to challenges that may occur later in life (Engler, 2014; Erikson, 1995; Munley, 1975). The stages progress in a cumulative rather than a linear fashion, and one stage's behaviours do not disappear with the successive stage. Lastly, each of the eight stages entails a life crisis, a crucial period in which the individual cannot avoid a final decision, one way or the other (Engler, 2014). Table 2.7 provides a brief overview of the average life stage, the psychosocial stage and the ego strength that develops as the crisis is resolved.

Table 2.7

The life cycle proposed by Erikson (adapted from Erikson, 1963 and Erikson, 1964, in Engler, 2014)

LIFE STAGE	PSYCHOSOCIAL STAGE	EGO STRENGTH (VIRTUE)	AGE
1	Trust vs mistrust	Hope	Infancy (0 to 1½)
2	Autonomy vs shame and doubt	Will	Toddler years (1½ to 3)
3	Initiative vs guilt	Purpose	Preschool years (3 to 5)
4	Industry vs inferiority	Competence	Primary school years (5 to 8)
5	Ego identity vs role confusion	Fidelity	Adolescence (12 to 18)
6	Intimacy vs isolation	Love	Young adulthood (18 to 40)
7	Generativity vs stagnation	Care	Adulthood (40 to 65)
8	Ego integrity vs despair	Wisdom	Maturity (65 +)

2.4.2.2 Parental influence on the career development trajectory of performing artists

Continuing on the developmental stages, Bloom (1985) and Côté (1999) distinguish three distinct phases of talent development for performing artists. The early or sampling years range from approximate ages 6 to 13. The middle or specialisation years range from 13 to 15 years, while the late or investment years are 15 years and beyond. Even though the phases were initially based on work done within the area of sports, the earliest models of talent development examined the development of expertise and talent, in the earliest formative years of children, across a range of performance domains, including science and the arts (Bloom, 1985; Ericsson et al., 1993; Sloboda & Howe, 1992). Within each stage, parents have specific familial developmental tasks to perform (Bloom, 1985; Côté, 1999).

➤ *The early stage*

Families are at the heart of children's psychosocial development and experiences throughout their formative years (Harwood et al., 2019). Harwood et al. (2012) support the importance of critical experiences during the formative years by elaborating on the importance of family members, and more specifically, the parents, in youth participation and performance, while Côté (1999) highlights specific familial development tasks that parents fulfil throughout the process.

Parents introduce their children to various sports, emphasising play and fun during the early years. Parents take their children to preliminary competitions and emphasise fun instead of results (Bloom, 1985). Parents also ensure that they assist their children's development by obtaining higher quality coaching for their children. Early parent-coach-child relationships are characterised by supporting the coach in creating a learning climate with process-orientated training and an absence of competitive pressure on the child.

To Creech's study (2010), parents' involvement from the start is significant in sports and the arts as children learn to play a new instrument. Creech's (2010) research indicated that the enjoyment

of music, motivation, self-esteem, self-efficacy, and personal satisfaction with music lessons, was enhanced when parents: (1) engaged with their children regarding what the children viewed as appropriate parental involvement, (2) negotiated with the child over practising issues, within the boundaries set by the teacher, (3) provided a structured environment for practice, (4) took an interest in encouraging teacher-pupil rapport, (5) communicated with the teacher concerning the child's progress, and (6) remained an extremely interested audience. Sloboda and Howe (1992) confirm these findings by highlighting the centrality of parental encouragement and the student's tenacity to navigate the early phases of musical development and later pursue musical excellence on a professional level. The adjustments relate to the whole family routine, where family activities centre on the child's activity and ensure their presence at training and competitions. MacNamara et al. (2006) highlight three familial development tasks impacting talent development, including the parents' role as providers, interpreters and role models through the progressive stages of talent development. Knight et al. (2016) add that positive parental behaviour includes parents focusing on their children's holistic development at home, motivational and constructive evaluation at training, limiting demands on the child through the provision of practical support, reading and understanding the situation and the child, and supporting the development of a growth mindset.

When viewing Bloom's (1985) and Côté's (1999) research from an Eriksonian perspective, it is clear that the initial sampling years (approximately 6 to 13 years) will include the life stages from infancy to the primary school years. During these stages, the individual must develop various ego strengths, most of which are initiated by the immediate family members, specifically the parents. Through the parent, the infant builds trust and thus the ego strength of hope develops; hope in what is possible. During the toddler years, the parents allow for exposure, usually fun, to a particular performance sphere, be it sports or the performing arts. A toddler will swing a bat or press keys on a piano (usually as parents or significant others are doing), thus developing autonomy or shame and doubt (depending on the parents' reaction). If autonomy develops, the individual will develop the ego

strength of a strong will. The initial sampling years are further elaborated on in the first years when the individual is exposed to introductory competitions, and thus they experience industry or inferiority within the particular performance arena. When ‘industry,’ in relation to other participants, is experienced, the individual develops the ego strength of competence and self-confidence (Engler, 2014; Erikson, 1995; Munley, 1975).

➤ *The middle stage*

As previously mentioned, the middle or specialisation years range from ages 13 to 15 years and occur during the late primary school years and the first year or two of adolescence. During the middle years, the focus shifts from fun to greater specialisation and higher levels of training and competition. Parents support their children in more intense, demanding and results-oriented environments, accepting and adjusting to their inevitable sacrifices, such as financial demands, transport needs and social sacrifices (Bloom, 1985).

Their ego (identity) and the field of performance are inseparable as they are their craft (such as being a performing artist), and their craft is who they are (Engler, 2014; Erikson, 1995; Munley, 1975). During the specialisation years, individuals construct their ego identity based on the field of performance; therefore, their commitment to their field is even more ingrained. Individuals need to deal with the polarities of taking the initiative and industry in their craft, or, experiencing guilt and inferiority. If both conflicts are resolved, individuals’ ego identity will be fuelled by purpose and competence in their craft.

Core to parental involvement is thus to assist their children in obtaining a balance between integration, which includes support and stability, and differentiation, which nurtures independence and challenge (Nordin-Bates, 2012). The influence of parents on young performers’ perceptions of competence, self-esteem, enjoyment, achievement motivation and pre-competitive anxiety cannot be overstated (Harwood et al., 2012; Rodrigues et al., 2019). Lastly, it is essential to note that even when

children progress towards professional levels, parents still play a crucial role in emotional support for their increasingly independent child as the family home functions as a refuge and social support from the ups and downs of performances (Bloom, 1985).

➤ *The late stage*

The late stage or investment years range from 15 years and beyond. The Eriksonian life stages will thus include the last few years of adolescence, young adulthood and maturity (Engler, 2014; Erikson, 1995; Munley, 1975). As previously mentioned, the stages do not occur within a strict chronological framework (Engler, 2014; Erikson, 1995; Munley, 1975). The investment stage, for example, can last only a few years (e.g. for ballet dancers), or it can last for decades (as in the case of musicians). During this stage, individuals must take care of themselves to “keep moving forward” through regeneration and not to stagnate. It is thus imperative that performing artists continuously reconstruct their identity, which may lead to an adaptation of their primary role of star performer moving into different roles, such as mentors, where years of wisdom gained may be used to the advantage of younger and upcoming performers.

2.4.2.3 External influences impacting the career development trajectory of performing artists

Even though the core family and its support are crucial in child and performer development, the broader community becomes increasingly influential (Hays, 2017). Baruch and Vardi (2016) highlight the impact of important others on art forms, such as dancers and musicians who begin training early in childhood (Middleton & Middleton, 2017; Moyle, 2019). Dancers’ lives become increasingly structured around dance training that affects body plasticity, friendship patterns, and support systems (Hays, 2017). For performers, the role of the teacher or the coach becomes central in the triangle of teacher, parent, and performer, which needs to be acknowledged and developed (Hays, 2017). Rodrigues et al. (2019) highlight the importance of not only having an extensive network but

also having the right network and thus having strong ties with influential people when following the protean career path of a performing artist.

In conclusion, performing artists' career trajectories are influenced and constructed by their talents, dispositions, family, and social background (Rodrigues et al., 2019). Furthermore, a thriving performing arts career is determined by performing artists' ability to deliver continuous flawless performances in a highly demanding and flexible protean work environment (Hays, 2017).

2.4.3 Challenges related to different facets of performing artists' career trajectories

Performing artists train and work within a unique setting, characterised by its non-linear, flexible protean nature (Wyszomirski & Chang, 2017). Consistent with this kind of setting, performing artists are confronted with an array of challenges and performance issues affecting them on and off-stage; all of which influence their career trajectories (Hays & Brown, 2004; Hays, 2012, 2017; Moyle, 2019). According to the systems theory framework of Patton and McMahon (1999), there are three types of influences and related challenges that can impact the management and career trajectory of individuals: a) intrapersonal challenges, b) contextual challenges (including environmental and societal challenges) and c) process challenges (referring to the recursiveness both within the individual as well as between the individual and the context as change occurs over time and chance). Each system (intrapersonal, contextual and process) will now be discussed as they pertain to the challenges influencing performing artists' career trajectories.

2.4.3.1 Challenges relating to intrapersonal dimensions

Various intrapersonal challenges affecting performing artists' career trajectories include perfectionism, performance anxiety, emotion, and injury.

➤ Perfectionism as an intrapersonal dimension-related challenge

According to Hall and Hill (2012), successful performance in any performing arts arena requires exceptional devotion to learning and practice over many years. The quest for perfect execution is

legitimised, encouraged and even revered by the performing artists themselves and stakeholders such as the audience (Hill et al., 2015). Perfectionism is a crucial characteristic of most performing artists as it creates a basis for current success and sustains ongoing success (Zwaan & Ter Bogt, 2009). There is, however, an ambiguous view on perfectionism as it seems to hold both positive and negative qualities for performance (Hall, 2006). Even though perfectionism can energise motivated performers and lead to several positive performance outcomes, it can also underpin dysfunctional cognition and negative affect, leading to psychological debilitation, health problems and interpersonal difficulties (Hall, 2006). According to Flett and Hewitt (2002), perfectionism, especially in a sports and performance context, is a crippling personality characteristic leading to maladaptive cognitions, negative affective responses and dysfunctional achievement behaviour. The definition is operationalised by Hays (2017) and Hall and Hill (2012), stating that for many artists, perfectionism is an emotional experience of all or nothing (a perfect performance or a total failure), dwelling on errors made in the performance, and viewing as a failure anything that is less than what they regard to be a 'perfect' performance.

Furthermore, performing artists seem to have a specific way of thinking about their performances that incorporates a reflective, continuous self-critical style in evaluating performance information and a belief that their self-worth is inextricably tied to perfect performances (Hall & Hill, 2012). The fear of not being perfect may intensify as they come closer to the actual performance event. Many performing artists are also overly concerned about the judgments of others, especially their peers, and a sense of duty not to let down the team (e.g. the band) intensifies their perfectionism (Hays, 2017). Perfectionism thus leads to a heightened sense of drive, which leads to obsessiveness, meticulousness, rigidity, anxiety, and a continuous commitment to improved performance (Hall & Hill, 2012; Hill et al., 2015; Stoeber & Eismann, 2007).

Furthermore, performing artists, especially in genres like that of the concert pianist, and rock or pop musicians, are expected to memorise the performance before they perform it on stage, adding to

the notion of being perfect (Ginsborg, 2004; Hays & Brown, 2004). The expectation is that the actual performance will take place precisely as it was rehearsed and memorised, but at the same time, the performer needs to be ready to improvise and thus deviate as needed during the actual performance (Hays & Brown, 2004). Ginsborg (2004) notes that even though performing from memory has advantages for both the performer and the audience, memory failure – however momentary – can have disastrous consequences. An example of such a consequence is when performing artists suddenly forget the words to a section of the song, which could unsettle them for the rest of the song and even extend to the rest of the performance. Experiencing such an incident on stage may have a detrimental effect on a performer's self-confidence, increasing the need for perfectionism and the fear and anxiety of not being perfect on stage (Nagel, 2017).

➤ *Performance anxiety as an intrapersonal dimension-related challenge*

Performance anxiety can manifest physiologically (such as in experiencing shaky legs or increased heart rate), behaviourally (evident in over-rehearsal or avoidance), cognitively (e.g. lack of self-confidence), or even volitionally (including negative self-talk),⁴⁸ escalating into further challenges for performing artists' health and mental well-being (Hays, 2017; Moyle, 2019; Nagel, 2017). On the positive side, perfectionism may drive excellent performances, increased achievements and success (objective and subjective) for performing artists. Unfortunately, it may also elicit a range of maladaptive processes, being overly self-critical, leading to increased fear and anxiety, negatively affecting performing artists' motivation, impairing their performance, and contributing to psychological distress (Hall & Hill, 2012).

⁴⁸ An example of negative self-talk is evident when performing artists tell themselves that they will never get a job if they do not deliver perfect performances.

➤ *Emotion as an intrapersonal dimension-related challenge*

The verbal and non-verbal expression of emotion plays a crucial role in all areas of performance (Hays, 2012; Juslin, 2009, 2016; Juslin & Timmers, 2010; Woody & McPherson, 2010). The central aspect of emotions in performance is explained in the words of Heinrich Neuhaus (1973, p. 29 in Woody & McPherson, 2010, p. 401):

“Whoever is moved by music to the depths of his soul, and works on his instruments like one possessed, who loves music and his instrument with passion, will acquire virtuoso technique, he will be able to recreate the artistic image of the composition; he will be a performer.”

The emotion felt by performing artists might assist them in understanding composers, playwrights, or choreographers' intentions. Actors are encouraged to fully understand their emotional experiences (McIlwain et al., 2010), thus allowing a full feeling to assist them in portraying their character most authentically. Such awareness will assist them in utilising all modalities of expression, including but not limited to bodily movement, tactile contact or autonomic responses (Keltner et al., 2016; Woody & McPherson, 2010). Performing artists need to balance the intensity and variety of emotional expression when performing, as the emotions experienced by performers assist in fully engaging with the audience (Juslin, 2016). According to Kenny et al. (2004), emotions do not stay on stage, as many performing artists experience generalised anxiety which negatively affects their lives. In stark contrast is the general view of emotions in the workplace as something that should be managed so as not to influence productivity (Morris & Feldman, 1997). For performing artists, the contrasting role expectations (being on and off-stage) may thus be quite challenging, leading to further anxiety and the successful management of certain facets of their protean careers. Kenny et al. (2004) elaborate on the fact that the same factor (perfectionism) that leads to outstanding performances may also cause an array of dysfunctional behaviour such as generalised anxiety, obsessiveness, and rigidity

(Kenney et al., 2004). As flexibility, continuous change, and the psychological success experienced by individuals are crucial aspects of a protean career path, perfectionism, obsessiveness, negative self-talk, and rigidity can harm the enactment of a successful protean career (Hall & Moss, 1998).

➤ *Injury as an intrapersonal dimension-related challenge*

Because of unexpected emotional or physical injuries, the duration and vulnerability of performing artists' careers differ significantly among the performing arts. As mentioned, dancers usually start training at a young age and complete their dance careers by their 40s at the latest (Hays, 2017). Their long hours of training, consisting of repetitive movements, pushing anatomical boundaries and demanding versatility may all contribute to the development of musculoskeletal injuries (Misegades et al., 2018; Van Winden et al., 2019). In Van Winden et al.'s study (2019), 81% of dancers had sustained an injury, of which 58% were substantially injured, with the most affected areas being the ankle, foot, lower back and knee.

Depending on the instrument, musicians' careers can extend well into late age (Hays, 2017). However, a high proportion (between 70 and 80 percent) of professional musicians experience a lifetime prevalence of performance-related musculoskeletal disorders (Chan et al., 2013; Silva et al., 2018). According to Kenny et al. (2018), there is quite a high prevalence of left shoulder injuries amongst orchestral musicians. The study by Martins et al. (2018) indicated that during a year, 69% of musicians experienced pain, tingling or numbness in their wrists or hands, while 54% experienced pain, tingling, or numbness in their shoulder. Even though actors are also capable of continuing their careers into late age (Hays, 2017), they are still a high-risk population based on the physical demands of their profession, with 72% of injuries occurring during class or rehearsal (Martin & Battaglini, 2019). Thus, they may be placed in dangerous situations or ones for which they might not have had particular training, which heightens the potential risk for injury (Hays, 2017). Musical theatre, for which one trains as a "triple threat" (singing, dancing and acting), can be especially hazardous. If

performers are even a few seconds out or a few steps off, they can put themselves and other performers or crew in danger (Hays, 2017). From the perspective explicated in this section, career transitions with the accompanying adaptability (as a crucial characteristic of a protean career path) and career identity could be an increased reality for performing artists; a reality for which they need to be prepared as they follow a protean career path (Middleton & Middleton, 2017).

2.4.3.2 Contextual challenges

Contextual challenges that may also influence the career trajectory of performing artists include a biased standard from evaluators and the work, economic, and technological environment.

➤ *A biased standard from evaluators as a contextual challenge*

Within the performing arts arena, specific technical standards and capabilities that performing artists need to achieve are required to be successful and to have a flourishing career, e.g. the ability to execute a step correctly in dance, to sing in key or play an instrument to a professional standard. The performer's goal, in brief, is concrete and action-oriented, which is to have the kind of impact that makes for a solid, possibly inspired performance (Kogan, 2002). The product, e.g. a play, undergoes multiple evaluations by drama critics, with a small percentage of such works labelled as classics and repeatedly performed over the years in theatres worldwide. Such an evaluation of new plays for merit illustrates the process of judging the creativity of products (Moyle, 2019). Actors are also subject to evaluation, as they strive for various awards, e.g. the Tony and Oscar competitions or the South African Film and Television Awards. Such awards are granted for the powerful interpretation of a particular role within the public eye as they undergo evaluation by mentors, critics, audiences, and the performer's peers in the field.

Furthermore, music and talent competitions are standard practice in the performing arts (Hays, 2017), usually starting during initial training and continuing throughout performing artists' careers (Hays, 2017; McCormick, 2009). During the last couple of years, performing artists competing for

the same place in competitions have become the format of various popular reality television shows. Shows such as these include “America’s got talent”, the “Eurovision Song Contest” (McCormick, 2009), and “Idols SA”, to mention but a few. It is noteworthy that even well-trained performing artists (like actors, musicians, and dancers) must regularly compete for the same limited career opportunities to ensure that they stay in the game of ensuring themselves a performing arts career. According to Hays (2017), the issue may be especially real for actors as auditioning for roles may be an ongoing fact, influencing their success in a sustained performing arts career.

However, the final decision of evaluators, such as winning a competition or obtaining a role in an audition, together with the accompanying opportunities, can often boil down to the personal preferences of the decision-makers. In an audition, for example, there might be two dancers who are both technically of the same standard but the artistic director might prefer a particular type of dancer (in terms of looks, i.e. height, colouring, and shape), or a certain type of artistic expression. Thus, subjective evaluation, based on criteria like creativity, the interpretation of a role, or a preference for a particular type of look or artistic expression, often leads to success for performing artists (Daniel & Daniel, 2013; Kogan, 2002; Moyle, 2019). Zwaan and Ter Bogt's (2009) study in the record industry confirms the subjective nature of artists and repertoire managers when selecting their preferred artists.

From the above it is clear that even though both the audience and evaluator responses to performances are highly subjective, it is a primary measure of acceptance when auditioning for a role or obtaining the satisfaction of the audience, other performers, critics, parents, administrators or themselves (Carr, 2019; Hays, 2017; Moyle, 2019). A core aspect of developing a protean career recognises that the individual “owns” the career. However, the biased nature of evaluations makes it difficult for performing artists to “own” their careers and thus jeopardise their own protean career path (Hall & Moss, 1998). Furthermore, a protean career attitude is driven by the individual's values (Lin, 2015). Unfortunately, the values of evaluators guiding performing artists’ careers negatively impact the successful execution of protean career trajectories. Therefore, performing artists will need

specific strategies and meta-competencies⁴⁹ to cope with the highly biased, competitive, dynamic, and volatile work environment.

In summary, performing artists evaluate their career success based on their personal development and the ability to follow their dreams, which will impact their perceived employability - a core antecedent in forming a protean career path (Rodrigues et al., 2019). Unfortunately, characteristics such as dysfunctional thought patterns, feelings and behaviours may negatively impact performing artists' view of their development and success, thus having detrimental consequences for constructing their protean career path (Lin, 2015).

➤ *The work environment as a contextual variable*

Unique occupation-related stressors that may need to be considered when working within the performing arts may include non-standard working hours, shifts from rehearsal periods to performance seasons, touring (sometimes for months or years at a time), and limited “downtime,” which means that performers learn to ignore primary circadian rhythms. Such a protean work environment delays general life skills, affecting the building of social networks or having time to explore other interests or re-skilling for “second careers” (Hays, 2017; Moyle, 2019). Moyle (2019) also notes that certain cultural norms are acceptable in the artist's work environment that would be unacceptable in other industries, e.g. emotionally abusive artistic directors or a rigid artistic hierarchy that encourages bullying and disempowerment of younger artists.

➤ *The economic environment as a contextual variable*

Financial issues, because of a lack of full-time employment and the associated benefits and limited salary ranges, are daily realities in the lives of performing artists (Burland, 2005; Hays &

⁴⁹ See section 2.4.4. for more on various meta-competencies.

Brown, 2004). As previously mentioned, heightened competition for jobs among performing artists increases the challenges in performing artists' work lives (Moyle, 2019).

As the 2008 economic downturn adversely affected cultural institutions worldwide (Pilkington et al., 2010), funding levels and consumer leisure spending reached perilous lows. According to Kogan (2002), for example, the unemployment rate for actors hovers around 90%-95%, while 67% of professional musicians work as freelancers or are self-employed. During 2008 and 2012, there was only a five percent growth in performing arts products being exported, implying that there is still a considerable gap in the market relating to the performing arts (Oyekunle, 2014). Even though South Africa has attempted to grow its Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI) through funding initiatives, the growth is still much too slow to provide relief, especially for the previously disadvantaged (Snowball et al., 2017).

Furthermore, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economy and performing arts has been devastating as the vast majority of smaller and major events, and international performance tours, were cancelled immediately after the virus outbreak. As such, the entertainment world was thrown into an economic crisis, with many performing artists hitting rock bottom as their income stream was cut off (Jeannotte, 2021). Such a volatile global economy and the associated uncertainty thereof put extreme strain on performing arts sustainability (Filice & Young, 2012; Jeannotte, 2021). Performing artists thus need to maintain a protean attitude and mindset, allowing them to remain employable and access career opportunities that fit their values and goals in such a high-pressure and stressful environment (Jeannotte, 2021; Lin, 2015; Rodrigues et al., 2019).

➤ *The technological environment as a contextual variable*

The new era of information communication technology (termed the Digital Revolution or the 4th IR, amongst others) refers to human life being overwhelmed by technology (Bulut, 2018). Current technologies available to performing artists are more complex and varied than conventional

techniques (Couchot, 2019). Technological advances allow artists to familiarise themselves with artefacts that initially had no artistic vocation, such as virtual humans (also known as “avatars”) and robots. It also allows attendees to be immersed in the performance experience, not previously possible, using virtual reality (VR) (Bulut, 2018; Couchot, 2019). On a side note, the term robot was the brainchild of a brilliant Czech playwright, novelist and journalist named Karel Čapek, who introduced it in his 1920 hit play, *Rossum’s Universal Robots (R.U.R.)*.⁵⁰

Theatres, for example, use computer graphics in the performing arts through projection techniques, including 3D holographic projection techniques, 4D optic illusion techniques, projection mapping and video projection. Images can be used as a part of the scenography or integrated into the performance, interacting with actors and creating interactive effects on stage (Bulut, 2018). ‘Sunday in the Park with George’ by Stephan Sondheim and James Lapine is a musical production where video projection is used as part of the production’s stage design. The digital dance and circus company ‘Adrien M et Claire B’ combines a choreographed performance with video projection mapping, computer-generated images and movement sensors to offer a dynamic response to the performer. In the production ‘Hakanai’, the sounds and visuals are generated live, creating a real and live relationship between the performer and the software (Bulut, 2018).

Virtual Reality (VR) technology enables audiences to have an intimate experience with the live performance and the performers (humans or otherwise) themselves, while mobile applications can be added to enhance audience participation even further (Bulut, 2018). An aesthetic approach to relationships between natural humans and artificial humans on stage, profoundly changes the nature of the relationship as audiences now evaluate the relationship in terms of pleasure, accompanied by emotions, feelings, moods and thoughts (Couchot, 2019).

⁵⁰ <https://www.sciencefriday.com/segments/the-origin-of-the-word-robot/>

While technology causes the theatre to be an immersive experience, it can also challenge the sustainability of the performing arts in general (Colbert, 2009), as theatres must cope with audiences that access nearly all forms of entertainment using a single device, switch gears rapidly and expect entertainment venues to share and achieve their aims (Filice & Young, 2012). During COVID-19 this was quite evident as venues shut down and people stayed at home, watching their favourite shows on their devices. Performing artists had to adapt, with many performing artists turning to social media and other online platforms to showcase their art. The virus and the consequences thereof have increased the speed of technology integration in the performing arts, not only in the short term but also in the long term, with technology in the arts (in whatever form) becoming the new normal. Technology has automated the music industry, and the dispersion of both opportunity and income has meant that performing artists are following even more of a protean career path than ever before by juggling more work, shouldering more risk, and being tasked with more career-management duties - often for lower rates - than before (Appleton, 2012).

2.4.3.3 Process challenges

As previously mentioned, the intra- and contextual challenges do not operate in isolation but interact in a circular motion as time and chance impact the process, thus affecting performing artists' management and career trajectory (Patton & McMahon, 1999). Process challenges can be viewed through career transitions and the accompanying identity challenges that performing artists face.

➤ *Career transition and identity as a process challenge*

It seems that even when performing artists' performance careers come to a natural end, they often pay little attention to the impact of such completion, and the transition to another career may prove to be extremely difficult (Roncaglia, 2006; Middleton & Middleton, 2017; Moyle, 2019). Musicians' most prominent transitional career issues occur between 40 and 49 years. They mainly include a changed self-perception as they have to change their views on themselves from younger to

“older” musicians and begin to notice declines in their professional ability due primarily to age-related, degenerative health factors (Gembris & Heye, 2014). Roncaglia (2006) observes that ballet dancers may be especially poorly equipped to deal with the end of their careers, whether the reasons include deselection, increased age, physical decline, injury, or being rendered redundant as their entire identity is intertwined in their art. Many who intend to enter the performing arts have practised since they were children and, understandably, have invested much in their identity as dancers, actors or musicians. When their attempts at making it professionally are silenced, they undergo a critical period of identity crisis to successful transition (Middleton & Middleton, 2017; Moyle, 2019). The more famous the artist was, and the longer their career, the more challenging the shift in the identity became (Moyle, 2019).

Independent of when performing artists’ careers end, it offers the start of a new career cycle coupled with the accompanying features of each new life and career stage. Performing artists must thus move afresh through aspects such as exploring, establishing and maintaining a new career field (see Table 2.1). Moving through the process, artists must relearn how to deal with ego polarities, starting with hope for the future, searching to find a new purpose and achieving new competence in the field. Lastly, they must obtain wisdom and share this wisdom and years of experience with the collective. It is thus necessary for artists to continually re-invent themselves as they move through mini-cycles (cycles occurring within a career stage) and maxi-cycles (cycles that occur over a lifetime) (Super et al., 1996; Watson & Stead, 2017).

Meta-competencies critical to providing a sense of direction and the creative energy for managing the protean career path include identity growth, career maturity and adaptability (Hall, 2002; Super et al., 1996). For performing artists, these meta-competencies will assist them in remaining employable as they navigate through the various intrapersonal and contextual career challenges constructing a protean career path (Rodrigues et al., 2019). Therefore, if performing artists have a protean career mindset, are self-directed in their career development, make career choices

based on their values and are adaptable throughout the transition period, they will be able to manage an effective protean career path and resolve their identity crises (Lin, 2015).

2.4.4 Strategies that performing artists implement to navigate their career challenges

The above discussion shows that performing artists struggle with an array of challenges on and off-stage, which requires performing artists to acquire a range of meta-competencies. The competencies are needed to identify as a performing artist and adapt to the career identity for following a protean career path, which is crucial in such a high-stress, ever-changing, and fluid environment. Performing artists can thus choose strategies that will positively or negatively influence their career identity. In short, performing artists could choose to deal with the challenges using maladaptive strategies, which lead to negative consequences, or they could employ positive strategies, which lead to general well-being, healthy career adaptation, and a valid protean career path.

2.4.4.1 Negative characteristics and maladaptive strategies

As previously mentioned, performing artists tend to be self-critical, focusing on the negative aspects of their performance. They may also reveal low self-confidence, anxiety, negative perfectionism, injuries, burnout, sleep issues, eating disorders, identity crises and a lack of emotional regulation in an attempt to deal with the demands of the industry. If this is the case, it could give rise to various maladaptive coping strategies (Hays, 2012, 2017; Moyle, 2019; Nordin-Bates, 2012; Szabó et al., 2019).

Maladaptive strategies include misusing alcohol and drugs and high risk-taking behaviour (Hays & Brown, 2004; Martin & Battaglini, 2019; Moyle, 2019). A survey conducted by Kenny and Asher (2016) of the causes of death for famous musicians between 1950 and 2014 found that, compared to the general population of the United States, famous musicians died earlier and proportionately more often from violent death (accident, suicide, homicide) and liver disease

(possibly due to excessive alcohol consumption). Sekulic et al.'s (2010) research on professional Croatian ballet dancers found that more than a third of male dancers indicated binge drinking, while 20% of female dancers smoked a packet of cigarettes daily (most likely as an appetite suppressant to maintain their figures in a highly competitive environment). In support of the result, Tse's (2015) study found that dancers' alcohol use is significantly higher than that of non-dancers. Lederman (1999) and Kenny and Asher (2016) note that within specific genres, such as pop, rock, country and jazz music, the support for alcohol and street drugs is ingrained within the performance atmosphere itself, and various prescribed medication is shared among the performers (Lederman, 1999). On a positive note, various authors (Middleton & Middleton, 2017; Moyle, 2019; Jeffri & Throsby, 2006) have mentioned characteristics and strategies that performing artists can apply to cope with their career challenges and to assist them in managing a protean career path.

2.4.4.2 Positive characteristics and meta-competencies

Positive characteristics can be defined as distinguishing positive traits that individuals possess, resulting in typically positive behaviour that assists performing artists in managing their protean career path. Having meta-competencies, on the other hand, refers to the possession of sufficient knowledge or the skills required in a specific field such as the performing arts.⁵¹ As already mentioned, various meta-competencies, such as identity growth (identifying with “being” a performing artist) and adaptability (needed in identifying and managing a protean career path), are critical competencies when dealing with the career challenges of performing artists. Ibert and Schmidt (2014) and Oakland et al. (2012) support the importance of adaptability to the demands of the market and adaptability to opportunities. The authors add resiliency as a crucial competency needed to promote artists' employability and maintain that both adaptability and resilience will bolster their

⁵¹ Both definitions are adapted from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/competencies>.

chance to survive and even flourish in such a highly demanding and competitive market, leading to employability (Di Fabio & Maree, 2017; Maree, 2013b).

Specific meta-cognitive psychological characteristics can also assist performing artists in dealing with the demands of the protean career, and, in doing so, develop excellence and effectively deal with their career transitions. Characteristics include passion, dedication, determination, positive self-belief, the ability to learn dynamically from mistakes, a realistic appraisal of performance skills and what is expected in the professional work venue, and coping skills for dealing with the pressures of the profession (Bennett, 2009; Middleton & Middleton, 2017; Wyszomirski & Chang, 2017). A realistic appraisal of artists' performance skills is connected to subjective evaluations of career success comprising specific internal components. The components include attitudes, orientation and perceptions, which assist individuals in creating a subjective construction of themselves; their work identity and career success positively influence the development of a protean career path (Bingham, 2013).

Bennett (2009) and Wyszomirski and Chang (2017) add two other crucial competencies for successfully enacting a protean career within the performing arts. Firstly, performing artists need well-developed entrepreneurial skills associated with performance art. As performing artists enter the cultural workforce, they automatically need entrepreneurial skills to select and combine multiple components to develop and increase their skills and value in the workforce. The critical common factor underlying all the varied forms that a protean career can assume is the balance between artistic training, on the one hand, and the development of entrepreneurial skills on the other. Key entrepreneurial competencies include creating opportunities, recombining available resources, and adjusting to varying contexts to construct a portfolio career (Wyszomirski & Chang, 2017). Refining the art of balancing the multiple pieces of a portfolio career simultaneously increases the chances of success.

2.4.4.3 Interventions that bolster developing a protean career mindset for performing artists

From the preceding sections it is clear that identity development is an essential core meta-competency needed by performing artists to cope and flourish in the performing arts environment. Identity development needs to focus on bolstering the career identity of being a performing artist on the one hand and identifying with the protean career path on the other. Hocking (2019) developed an identity development process for performing artists consisting of several elements. The first element is the *ill-defined artist*, which allows for a protean, shifting and flexible self-characterisation that keeps avenues of expression open. The second element is *becoming*, with the sense of transitioning from amateur to professional, i.e. self-identifying as an artist. The third element is *mixing identities*, such as being an artist, a mother and a friend. Constructing an *identity*, the fourth element, is about taking ownership of the identity, especially when sacrifices regarding your identity are required. Therefore, the core of being an artist is about regaining and maintaining sovereignty over your identity. *Calling*, the fifth element, emphasises the all-encompassing sacrificial nature of being an artist, such as skipping meals or other social activities in the service of art. It seems that performing artists that view their career as a “calling” tend to ignore the discouraging career-related advice of trusted mentors and thus keep their focus on the purpose and deep meaning of their career (Dobrow & Tosti-Kharas, 2012). The sixth element is *collaboration*, which raises issues of authorship and ownership. The art product is fundamentally a collaboration between the artist and significant others, such as the audience. Lastly, there is the outsider element, referring to a particular “art bubble” within which the performing artists live, which excludes them from the outside world. Performing artists also need to develop their identities outside of their particular art form, leading to a complete self, increased career resilience, and a readiness to face career disruptions (Middleton & Middleton, 2017; Moyle, 2019; Oakland et al., 2013). The protean career thus calls for integrating identities into a self-constructed meta-career identity, with a quest for personal creative satisfaction and professional validation adding to economic success (Wyszomirski & Chang, 2017).

According to Gubler et al. (2014) and Hall and Moss (1998), a crucial aspect of protean career behaviour is social networking (building solid ties with influential people). Zwaan et al. (2010) and Wyszomirski and Chang (2017) add that social skills for networking strengthens performing artists' relationships with professional support structures (such as art agencies). A personally vested professional performing arts identity is crucial for success in the performing arts. Performing artists can draw upon the professional support resources of norms, standards, and networks to accomplish the self-construction of a professional identity (Wyszomirski & Chang, 2017; Rodrigues et al., 2019).

Performing artists need a positive self-concept that will assist them in coping with uncertainty, instability and ambiguity and developing and sustaining their protean career path (Rodrigues et al., 2019). It seems that the essence of dealing with challenges within the performing arts is the process of identity construction (Middleton & Middleton, 2017). The protean career space is enlarged as work, and non-work roles are integrated, influencing a person's identity (Hall & Mirvis, 2013). According to Maree (2019a), life-design counselling takes the fluidity of the current job market into account and considers people's career-life identities. As previously mentioned, life-design counselling is primarily based on principles of career construction (Savickas, 2015b) and self-construction (Guichard, 2009). This approach promotes critical self-reflection, reflexivity, positive change, and forward movement (Maree, 2013c; Savickas, 2016b). Career construction will facilitate the construction, deconstruction, reconstruction, and co-construction of performing artists' sense of self, identity, and adaptability. Lastly, it will prepare them for future transitions in their personal and career lives within the protean career environment (Savickas, 2011a, 2011b).

2.4.5 Summary

This particular study, which applies the CCT of Savickas to the protean career path of performing artists, adds to the current research knowledge base, not only in the performing arts field but also in other fields. Fundamentally, the work of performing artists is characterised by the personal

construction of their careers and the continuous creation of work in its many shapes and forms (Bridgstock, 2005, 2012; Thomson, 2013; Wyszomirski & Chang, 2017). Furthermore, career construction within the performing arts is a complex process that warrants a unique approach to understanding what contributes to successful work participation and outcomes (Oam & Wyganowska, 2008). Of utmost importance is the fact that there are few empirical studies within the extant literature on the career development of performing artists, in general, and on each performing arts domain, e.g. actors, singers, dancers, and musicians. Furthermore, most empirical studies investigated performing artists from North America and Europe, with some from Australia and Puerto Rico, and almost nothing in the South African context (Middleton & Middleton, 2017). The study thus contributes to Wyszomirski and Chang's (2017) viewpoint that, given the rise in protean careers, the argument for embedded career and self-management skills can be extended beyond the arts and humanities to many other fields of study.

2.5 THE CONTEXTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE STUDY

Figure 2.2 illustrates the conceptual framework of the current study. From the figure it is clear that there are three primary constructs: the protean career environment, performing artists, and life-design counselling. The protean career environment (the first construct) acknowledges the ever-changing and fluid work environment in which individuals independently drive their careers. Most of the time, performing artists (the second construct) must function, cope, and thrive in such a protean environment. Core to this process is performing artists' self-construction and career construction. The three core pillars of career-construction theory are identity (the what), adaptability (the how) and life themes (the why). Life-design theory forms the basis of the intervention technique to assist in the construction, deconstruction, reconstruction, and co-construction of performing artists based on the self- and CCT. The arrows in the figure illustrate the reciprocal interaction between the constructs as they influence each other. Lastly, the broken line around the figure represents the ever-changing and

fluid environment (the more extensive system) that impacts the smaller system, namely the individual constructs mentioned here.

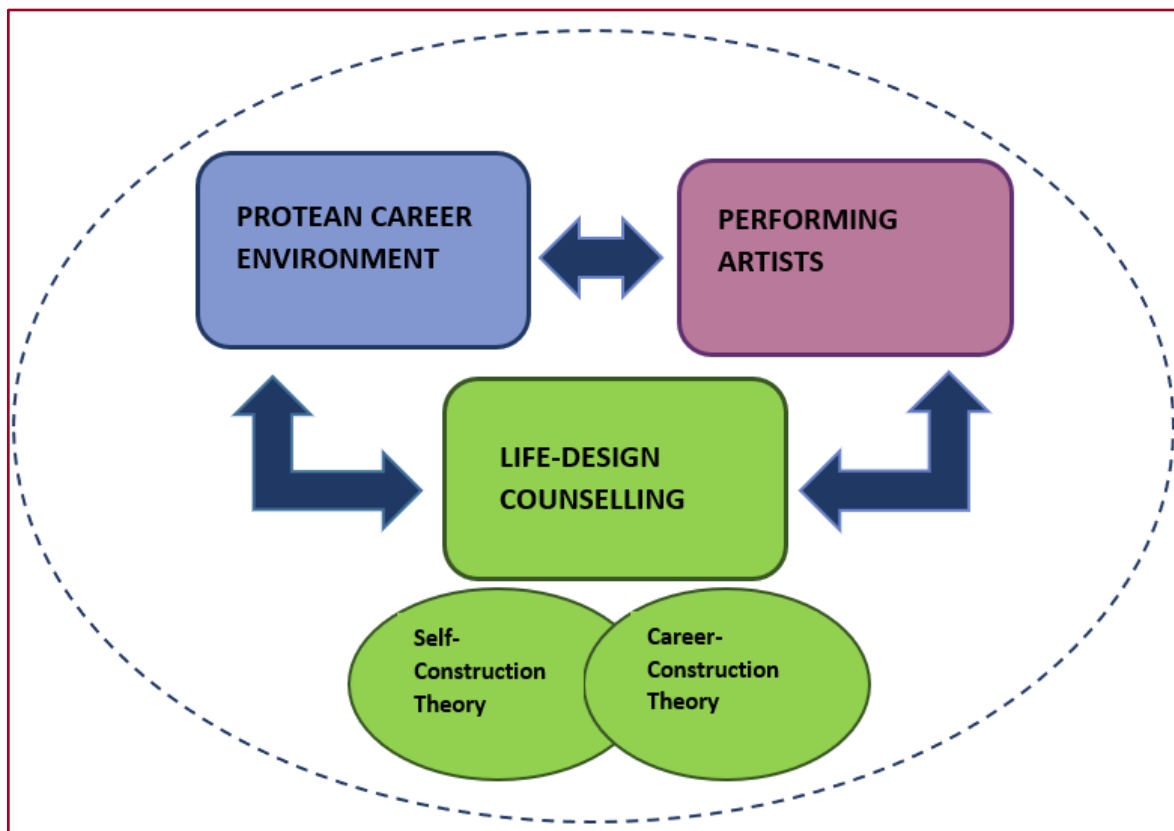


Figure 2.2: The conceptual framework of the study

2.6 CONCLUSION

A central theme of the current chapter was that of movement. Moving through various paradigms and theories across time and various levels,⁵² performing artists took centre stage while ‘acting’⁵³ on their careers. The chapter started by highlighting distinct career paradigms in response to the changing context of the world of work. The first paradigm was the formist paradigm of modernity, which talks about providing vocational guidance to people as **actors** that act out recommendations on the career stage. From this perspective, people can find an ideal match between

⁵² Referring, for example, to Super’s life and career theory or the STF theories discussed in the chapter.

⁵³ Acting in this context refers to performing artists taking action and not to the term ‘actor’ as described in the formist paradigm.

themselves and work environments that appoint people they resemble. Holland's theory of personality fit and the theory of work adjustment were covered as significant examples of the paradigm.

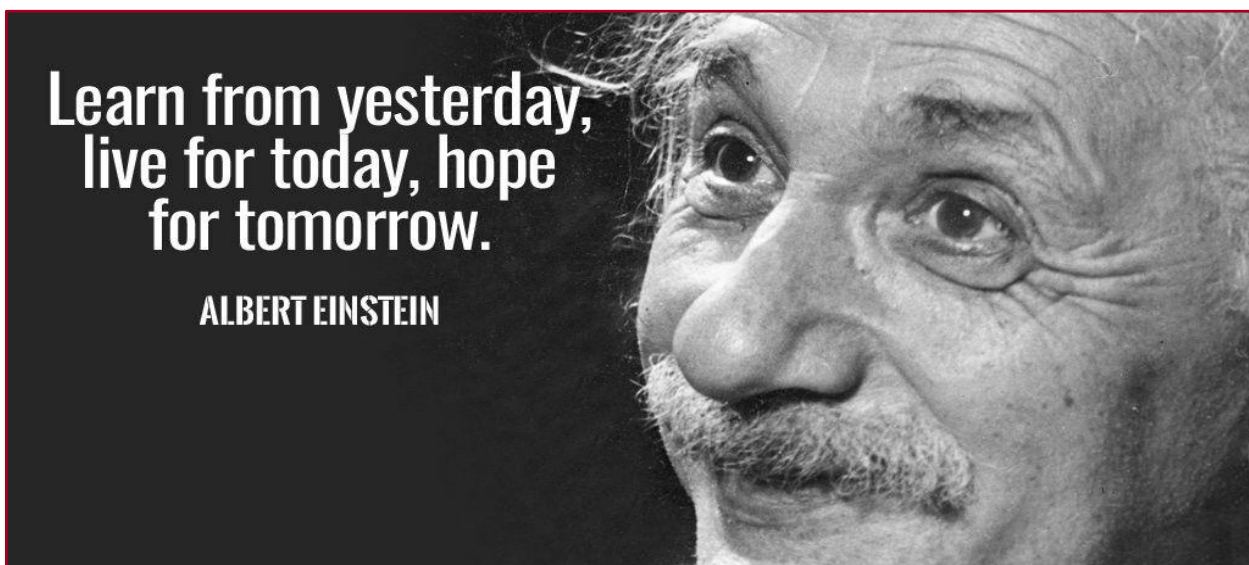
The second paradigm, the organismic paradigm of high modernity, addresses the provision of career education to people. Here, people are regarded as (motivated) **agents** acting on educational information. Super's life-span, life-space theory was reviewed as an essential theory of this paradigm. It also set the stage for the last paradigm.

An essential element within the contextualised paradigm of post-modernity is that people are regarded as **authors** of their own stories and design their own lives and career trajectories. Theories that constitute an integrated part of this paradigm include the systems theory framework of career development, the chaos theory of careers, and the CCT. Concentrating on the CCT, the chapter clarified constructs such as constructing a career, constructing career stories, the core pillars of a career, and lastly, the life-design intervention. Throughout the discussion, various paradigms and theories were applied to the career lives of performing artists.

The concluding aspect of setting the stage focused on the unique career trajectories of performing artists, namely the protean career trajectory. As the stage was set, the spotlight moved to the main characters, i.e. the performing artists. After the term 'performing artists' had been conceptualised, I moved on to discuss the career development trajectory of performing artists. I also highlighted the challenges they experience and strategies they can implement to navigate the crossroads experienced in the often harsh landscape of their career-life journeys. The chapter ended with a crescendo as the protean career environment, the performing arts and life-design counselling were presented as the study's contextual framework.

In summary, it is the movement or taking action which is the defining quality of the human condition as it is there where the "magic happens" (Savickas, 2011c). Therefore, the next chapter will focus on the study's action steps (the methodology) to obtain performing artists' inputs as they construct their life and career trajectories.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY



(Saeed, n.d)

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter presented my research study's robust theoretical and conceptual framework. In the current chapter, I employ the same scrutiny in the choice of the research design and methodology to ensure that the attributes of rigour and quality are adhered to, and the research design and methodology are aligned with the purpose of the study (Johnson et al., 2020). The chapter also deals with the various techniques involved in acquiring the data. Multiple data-gathering techniques were discussed, which were utilised in assisting me in answering my primary as well as secondary research questions. I discussed how I organised and analysed my data in a comprehensive and explanatory manner. I also refer to my role as a researcher and describe the ethical considerations during fieldwork and interactions with participants. The chapter concludes with the challenges I encountered while performing the study.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is a plan or strategy reflecting the researcher's procedures for gathering, analysing, interpreting, and reporting data (Mouton, 1996; Klopper, 2008). Therefore, it should delineate certain critical areas of the research process, such as selecting respondents, data-gathering techniques, and data analysis (Maree, 2016a). Developing a research design also facilitates the selection of appropriate research methods to minimise the bias inherent in qualitative studies and to help readers trust the research and the researcher (Johnson et al., 2020). However, it is crucial to notice that the research design is not set in stone but should be considered exploratory and flexible, depending on the context. Decisions surrounding qualitative research design should be ongoing, rather than a type of blueprint that dictates the specific aspects of the study (Mason, 2013). Maxwell (2005, pp. 2-3) suggests that the qualitative research design should be flexible in "the activities of collecting and analysing data, developing and modifying theory, elaborating or refocusing the research questions, and identifying and eliminating validity threats". Blanco and Rossman (2022) argue that establishing a good research design does not always follow a linear trajectory but instead goes back and forth between the initial plan and the realities dictated by the data gathering and analysis. A qualitative research design complemented the envisaged research, assuming that multiple socially constructed realities exist (Maree, 2012b). Qualitative inquiry is valuable, therefore, given its open-ended nature and the fact that it focuses not only on "what" but "how" (Teti et al., 2020). Yin (2011) highlights that the value of qualitative design lies in the deep meaning of people's lives, representing the views and perspectives of the people themselves.

A qualitative research design covers the contextual, social, institutional, and environmental conditions in people's lives. In many ways, these contextual conditions may strongly influence all human events. The qualitative research design is driven by a desire to explain these events through existing or emerging concepts, thus providing novel insights (Yin, 2011). Schreier (2018) and Tracy (2020) state that qualitative research ensures that the data produced is "rich" and "deep". Narrative

inquiry assisted me in answering the research question by developing a nuanced, in-depth understanding of the experiences and meanings inherent in the creation of the career path of performing artists (Henning et al., 2004; Johnson et al., 2020; Maree, 2012a; Tracy, 2020).

Even though my study was mainly qualitative, I included some quantitative techniques to facilitate better triangulation of results. Maree (2016b) states that quantitative research is a systematic process that utilises numerical data to generalise findings regarding the studied phenomenon. Landrum and Garza (2015) emphasise that researchers should consider qualitative and quantitative designs as a continuum upon which no single approach is more dominant, more valid or "valuable". Instead, we should embrace both designs as useful in providing a fuller description of the phenomenon being studied, as this can aid in generating a new knowledge base regarding that particular phenomenon. Thus, my research combined both types of research. However, the quantitative data support the qualitative design, as shown in Figure 3.1.

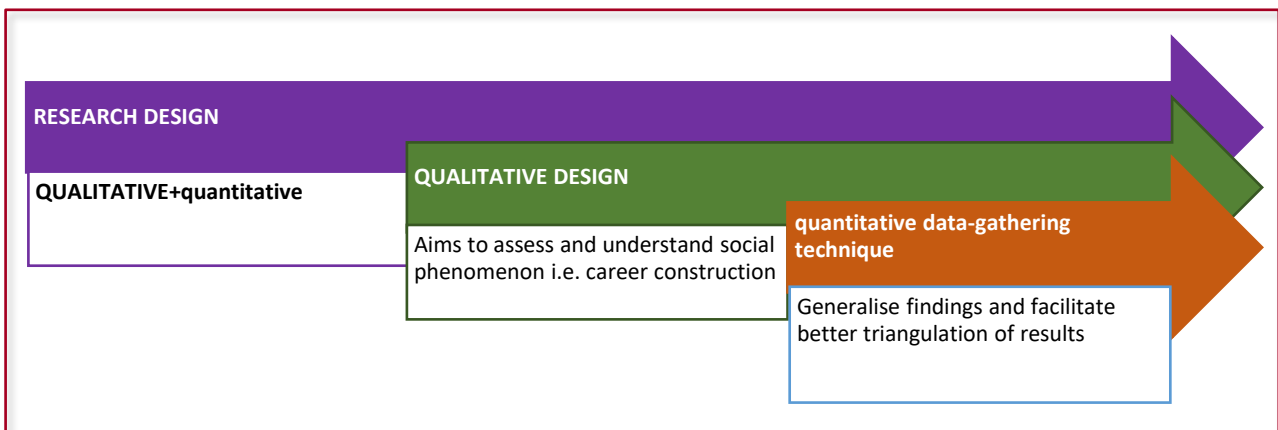


Figure 3.1: Visual representation of the research design

The study also employed an exploratory, descriptive research design (a multiple case study design) to obtain data from performing artists (Yin, 2003). Stake (1978) highlights the preference for the case study method when inquiring about experiences. The case study design views life as lived and underpinned by a socio-constructivist paradigm, thus supporting the notion that meaning is created through subjective human experiences (Stake, 1995; Tracy, 2020; Yin, 2003). The study

yielded descriptive knowledge, included narratives and stories, and thus provided a truthful description of the phenomena (Mouton, 1996). An exploratory research design was employed as there is no well-established body of knowledge on the current research topic (Mouton, 1996), with explicit reference to the combination of constructs (e.g. such as career construction, the protean career path, and performing artists in the South African context).

An INDUCTIVE-deductive approach was followed (the uppercase lettering indicates the preference given to the relevant design strategy), which yielded thick descriptions from an insider perspective within the specific context (Tracy, 2020). It is critical to understand the research context, in this case, performing artists, as one of the significant building blocks of the qualitative research component (Tracy, 2020). Emphasis was placed, therefore, on developing and building inductively-based new interpretations and theories of descriptions of events as they evolved from the lives of South African performing artists (Babby & Mouton, 2001; Tracy, 2020).

Lastly, I need to clarify my paradigmatic perspective, which influenced the research design and methodology. A paradigmatic perspective refers to how researchers view and approach the world around them (Maree, 2016a), thus, influencing the ontological paradigm of the study. Ponterotto (2005) states that *ontology* refers to the nature of reality and addresses the questions: "What is the form and nature of reality, and what can be known about that reality?" As participants constructed reality for themselves, the ontological paradigm of the study was that of constructivism-interpretivism (Ponterotto, 2005). What is expected in all constructivists' approaches is that they examine the relationship to reality by dealing with constructive processes in approaching reality. Accordingly, facts only become relevant through their meanings and interpretation by individuals themselves (Flick, 2004). The meaning-making processes are aptly illustrated in the construction, deconstruction, reconstruction, and co-construction of career construction counselling, as presented by Savickas (2019a), which is part of the conceptual framework for the current study. Maree (2016b) remarks as follows about the interpretivist perspective:

- It is based on subjective experiences and how people actively 'construct' their realities.
- Reality is not an objective construct but is better understood from an individual's perspective.
- We can only accurately gauge the meaning people assign to such a phenomenon by investigating a phenomenon.
- Interpretivist researchers are informed and influenced by their subjectivity and prior knowledge gained through experience.

Mason (2013) argues that the interpretive approach views a participant's interpretations, perceptions, meanings, and understandings as valuable sources of information to understand their perceptions about a specific phenomenon. Mason's (2013) viewpoint links to the premise of constructivism in that reality is the product of an individual's interpretation (Maree, 2013c). Working from this perspective assisted me to answer the research questions in a manner that provided unbiased depth and trustworthiness (Mason, 2013).

The *epistemology* of a study is concerned with the relationship between the "knower" (i.e. performing artists) and the "would-be knower" (i.e. me, the researcher) (Ponterotto, 2005). Following a constructivist-interpretivist paradigm, I advocate for a transactional and subjective stance that maintains that reality is socially constructed. Therefore, the dynamic interaction between myself and performing artists is crucial to capturing and describing the "lived experience" (experiences and associated preferences and choices of people but also the knowledge gained during and as a result of these experiences, preferences and associated choices) of the participants (Ponterotto, 2005).

The *axiology* of a study refers to the researcher's values in the scientific process. Following a constructivist-interpretivist paradigm, I maintain that my values and lived experiences cannot be divorced from the research process (Ponterotto, 2005). In qualitative research, the researcher is considered the main instrument for data gathering, analysis, and interpretation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Paisley & Reeves, 2001). As such, I brought my inherent (researcher) bias into the research

process, which must be acknowledged and identified (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Strauss (1987) coined the term *experiential data* when referring to researcher bias. The following quote from Strauss (1987) excellently illustrates the wealth of information contained in researchers' experiences:

"These experiential data should not be ignored because of the usual canons governing research (which regard personal experience and data as likely to bias the research), for these canons lead to the squashing of valuable experiential data. We say, rather, 'mine your experience, there is potential gold there.'" (p. 11)

I want to conclude this section by echoing the words of Saldaña (2021a) as he asserts that qualitative researchers, such as myself, with an arts background in music, theatre or dance, all share two things in common: (1) heightened perceptive insight into social life and (2) innovative methods for studying it, which is further highlighted by the research participants as performing artists. I should, therefore, acknowledge, describe, and "bracket" my values but not eliminate them (Ponterotto, 2005). The discussed research design and researcher paradigm directly impacted the various choices made in the research methodology (Klopper, 2008; Ponterotto, 2005).

3.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology refers to the research process and procedures that flowed naturally from my position on the study's ontology, epistemology, and axiology (Ponterotto, 2005). Given my paradigm, I embraced naturalistic designs where I am more involved in the research process and the participants themselves (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Ponterotto, 2005). The qualitative approach and, more specifically, narrative inquiry appealed to my interpretivist nature (Tracy, 2020). Therefore, I believed that this approach would be an appropriate method for allowing me to obtain an in-depth understanding of performing artists' experiences while following their unique career paths.

3.3.1 Sampling

A cornerstone of any research project is how the participants are sampled, as it enhances the integrity of the study and subsequent data gathered (Abrams, 2010; Nakkeeran, 2016; Opong, 2013). Maree and Pietersen (2010) emphasise that sampling should be of such a nature to ensure that the phenomena that the researcher is interested in will appear and, in effect, might enhance the generalisability⁵⁴ of the findings (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

My conceptual framework also influenced the research questions and sampling methods (Miles & Huberman, 1994). For the study, non-probability sampling was implemented as the method did not use a random selection of population elements (Maree & Pietersen, 2010). The chosen sampling methods constituted convenience and purposive sampling. Convenience sampling implies selecting participants from a convenient setting and availability (Maree & Pietersen, 2010; Schreier, 2018). Purposive sampling and, more specifically, criterion sampling required me to select sample members conforming to the inclusion criteria set out in order to support the study's purposes and research questions (Cooper & Schindler, 2003; Opong, 2013; Patton, 2002; Schreier, 2018; Van Hoeven et al., 2015). From the literature I developed the inclusion criteria that were applied to select the performing artists for inclusion in the study (Appleton, 2012; Brooks & Daniluk, 1998; Butler, 2000; Creative Skills Europe Report, 2016; Hadley et al., 2013; Hays, 2017; Kogan, 2002; Middleton & Middleton, 2017; Moyle, 2019; Preece, 2011). Thus, I selected performing artists as individuals, irrespective of gender or culture, who adhered to the following inclusion criteria:

- a) identified themselves as performing artists (focusing on actors, musicians and singers in any genre);
- b) considered the pursuit and practice of their art to be of significant value and a primary life activity;

⁵⁴ That said, I remain acutely aware that generalisability is not the aim of a qualitative study.

- c) currently considered themselves active in their chosen artistic field;
- d) considered their role as performing artists to be their primary career;
- e) regularly performed in front of an audience (even though they may or may not be the creator of the content of the performance); and
- f) had relevant experience in their chosen performing arts field.

Performing artists were selected from the general population fitting the inclusion criteria (Guest et al., 2006; Crouch & McKenzie, 2006). Furthermore, the sample differed in culture group, gender, life and career stages.

Maree (2012a, p. 73) states, "There is no 'right' sample size in qualitative research". Instead, the number of participants in a sample is usually related to saturation; that is the point where there is enough data available to provide "a complete description of the experience being studied" (Cohen, 2000, p. 12). The sample size for the study consisted of 19 participants. Various data-gathering methods were employed to obtain data-rich information, leading to potentially rich analytic insights (Saldaña, 2021b).

3.3.2 Data-gathering methods

According to Di Fabio and Maree (2013c), there is value in a combined QUALITATIVE-quantitative approach (UPPERCASE denoting the larger weighting given to the qualitative dimension). Maree (2022) notes that the approach "blends people's 'subjective stories' (qualitative data)" with the 'objective' test scores (quantitative information) (p. 4). The following sections highlight the role of each of these approaches, starting with the QUALITATIVE approach as my primary approach and briefly highlighting the quantitative approach playing a supportive role.

3.3.2.1 *Qualitative data-gathering techniques*

Qualitative data gathering mainly focuses on the accounts of people and compiles information on their experiences of the research phenomenon (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). Qualitative data-gathering methods include verbal documentation and recordings, e.g. interviews, observations and documents, providing rich information sources (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2008; Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Trainor, 2018). Qualitative research techniques are thus unique in their foundations and features, as they create pathways to a better understanding of the unspoken challenges that most people have to confront and resolve (Jackson, 2015). In the following sections, I will briefly highlight the primary qualitative data-gathering techniques I applied, including the Career Interest Profile (*CIP*, version 6) (Maree, 2017c), the career construction interview (CCI) (Maree, 2017a, Savickas, 2019a), observations and documents.

➤ *The Career Interest Profile (CIP)*

The Career Interest Profile (*CIP*, version 6) is a qualitative assessment instrument grounded in career construction and life-design theory with the aim of generating qualitative data (Maree, 2017c, 2020a, 2022). The *CIP* questions elicit information related to the differential, developmental, and psychodynamic (narrative) traditions and are purposely structured to promote reflection and reflexivity and the processes of narratability and biographicity (Maree, 2020a). Extensive research has examined the *CIP*'s credibility, validity, and trustworthiness (Maree, 2017c). For instance, a sizeable group of local and international experts reviewed and provided their input regarding various facets of the *CIP*. Based on their comments, the *CIP* was revisited and modified repeatedly to ensure that the questionnaire assesses what it purports to assess (Maree, 2017c). Various national⁵⁵ studies were conducted, including one amongst 1000 high school participants from average,⁵⁶ semi-urban/rural and rural schools, reflecting the socio-economic status of the South African provinces

⁵⁵ Including various regions in South Africa, for example, Gauteng, North-West and Mpumalanga.

⁵⁶ Average in socio-economic status.

they represented. Distinguished researchers such as Denzin and Lincoln (2003), Lincoln and Guba (1985 in Maree, 2017c) and Maree (2016b) confirmed that reliable, valid, credible, practical and effective strategies were used to ensure the trustworthiness of the data gathering during the studies. The research was also extended internationally,⁵⁷ proving the consistency of the rankings of preferred career categories across the data-gathering phases (Maree, 2017c). Lastly, Golafshani (2003, in Maree, 2017c) refers to the intensive process followed to ensure the content validity of the *CIP*. The studies mentioned above thus prove the rigour of the *CIP* as a valid, trustworthy and credible instrument to facilitate the clarification and construction of career-life stories in diverse South African settings (Maree, 2013b, 2022).

As such, I administered the *CIP* (Maree, 2017c) to elicit and gain a deeper understanding of the participants' life and career stories (Maree, 2022; Maree & Nortjé, 2022). Participants completed the *CIP* online through the JvR Online portal. The *CIP* consists of four parts (Maree, 2022; Maree & Nortjé, 2022). In Part 1, participants need to provide biographical details and information on family influences. In Part 2, participants respond to career choice questions (e.g. "Which three specific careers would you like most and which three the least?"). In Part 3, participants answer questions on their career category preferences and dislikes. Lastly, in Part 4, participants respond to micro life story questions (Maree, 2022).

➤ *The career construction interview (CCI)*

According to Hopf (2004) and Maree (2012b), interviews are the most important and commonly used data-gathering instrument in qualitative research, granting the interviewer the opportunity to learn more about the participant's ideas, beliefs, views, and opinions (Maree, 2012b). The general aim of the interviews was to acquire rich and descriptive information that would enable me to understand the participant's social reality and to come to a point of data saturation (Saldaña, 2021a; Taylor, 2005).

⁵⁷ Including the University of Florence and non-university contexts in Italy and Botswana.

Smith-Ruig (2008) supports qualitative research, utilising semi-structured interviews, as it provides a highly personalised and rich exploration of participants' career development. Conversational, in-depth interviewing was the primary data-gathering technique (Henning et al., 2004) as the technique allowed maximum flexibility in pursuing valuable information given by the participants.

After participants had completed the online *CIP*, I administered the career construction interview (CCI) (Savickas, 2019a). Completion times ranged from 60 to 90 minutes. According to Hartung (2011), the CCI is employed to assist people in better understanding themselves and elicits their subjective life-career themes. Additionally, it challenges people to tell stories that reveal who they are and hope to become (Maree, 2017a). Besides its first question ("How can I be useful to you?"), the CCI also contains the following important question, "What are your three earliest recollections?" (Maree, 2020b). The CCI (Savickas, 2019b) was implemented as a data-gathering technique and a career counselling strategy. It promotes understanding of the career construction process through a series of questions. Thus, I applied the CCI as an interview guide to stimulate conversation, allowing performing artists to take the lead in the data-gathering process (Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Smith & Osborn, 2008). However, Part 4, the narrative section, proved to be the most helpful section in answering the study's research objectives (Maree, 2013b). The semi-structured interview thus allowed me to develop rapport with the participant, enabling complex data to be elicited and thus allowing the freedom to pursue exploration of unforeseen areas (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). It also enabled me to promote and guide the discussion while simultaneously permitting participants the freedom to tell their stories in their own way (Smith & Osborn, 2008). Interviewing was ceased the moment information saturation was reached (Guest et al., 2006; Johnson et al., 2020).

➤ *Observations*

Mason (2013) states that observations can play a big part in qualitative research to support reflexive data analysis. Maree (2016b) agrees that they can contribute extensively to providing an

insider perspective into various dynamics. In the study, I was an 'Observer as Participant' as I looked for patterns and themes of behaviour to understand performing artists' assumptions, values, and beliefs and to make sense of the social dynamics (Nieuwenhuis, 2007).

➤ *Documents*

Documents refer to all written communications that may shed light on my research questions. Documents included the *CIP* itself, worksheets, e-mails, WhatsApp messages, and documents available in the public domain, e.g. posts on social media (Creswell, 2007; Henning et al., 2004, Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Patton, 2002; Taylor, 2005).

3.3.2.2 Quantitative data-gathering techniques

From the previous discussion, a qualitative approach focuses on eliciting participants' "stories" and uncovering subconscious knowledge about themselves to facilitate the identification of their key life themes. In contrast, quantitative information focuses on discovering participants' conscious knowledge about themselves (Maree, 2022), "usually expressed as scores and measures [that] yield numerical data" (Taylor, 2005, p. 4).

As previously mentioned, the *CIP* is divided into four parts, of which Part 2 (Career Category Preferences/Dislikes)⁵⁸ represents the very small quantitative facet of the questionnaire. Part 2 has strong psychometric properties and demonstrated satisfactory test-retest reliability and content and criterion-related validity (Maree & Sommerville, 2008).

⁵⁸ Refer to Table 3.1 for an outline of the categories.

Table 3.1

Brief description of the CIP categories (Source: Di Fabio and Maree, 2013a, p. 43)

INTEREST CATEGORY	INTEREST AREA DESCRIPTION
1. Practical-technical	Machinery (heavy or light)
2. Practical-creative and consumer science	Creative work
3. Musical	Performing, teaching and producing, as well as in music-related products
4. Arts (painting, sculpture and decoration) and culture	Producing or manufacturing artistic products and/or buying/selling artistic or decorative products
5. Word artistry	Verbal activities such as reading, talking and acting
6. Office-based (administrative, clerical and organisational) activities	The security and predictability of an office-based environment
7. Marketing	Marketing as a high-level discipline
8. Computer industry and technology	Gaining computer skills and knowledge and working with computers
9. Mathematics and accounting industry	Ordering ideas numerically
10. Social, caregiving, and community services and teaching (SCCST)	Helping other people
11. Entrepreneurship; running and maintaining a personal business	Making a success of a personally owned business
12. Adventure, plants, animals and the environment	Some aspects of the natural world
13. Sport	Participating in one or several sports and deriving pleasure from a favourite sport
14. Research	Research procedures and methods
15. Medical and paramedical services	Looking after and treating sick and injured people or animals
16. Tourism, hospitality and the tourist transport industry	Providing competitive services in diverse occupations such as running a B&B establishment
17. Legal practice and security services	The law as a mechanism for regulating human behaviour
18. Executive and management practice	Leadership and ordering ideas interactionally
19. Engineering and the built environment	Design, construction, engineering and related activities

It is essential to note that the quantitative approach not only supported the qualitative methodology, which aimed to answer the study's research questions. The approach also assisted with the triangulation of data, which refers to the process by which themes are developed in qualitative research (Ivankova et al., 2007).

3.3.2.3 Data-gathering plan

The data-gathering plan followed a predetermined sequence of events, as recommended by Maree and Van der Westhuizen (2009). Table 3.2 reflects the sequential steps of the data-gathering plan, planned activities, the research sites, as well as the applicable techniques used for gathering the data. From Table 3.2 it is clear that there is some overlap in the dates. Even though I followed the eight steps in sequential order, I did not do so in the same time frame for each candidate, as each candidate's beginning and end dates of the process differed.

Table 3.2

The data-gathering plan

DATA-GATHERING SEQUENCE	DATE	PLANNED ACTIVITIES/STRATEGY	RESEARCH SITE	SOURCE
Step 1	October 2018	I compiled a letter for participants explaining the research process, expectations, and roles the various stakeholders would play (see Appendix A). I compiled a letter of informed consent for participants to sign at the beginning of the data-gathering process (see Appendix B). The faculty's ethics committee approved both letters.	My office	Not applicable
Step 2	March 2020- May 2021	I contacted performing artists to obtain participants for the study via e-mail, WhatsApp, Facebook messenger, and phone.	My office	Not applicable
Step 3	July 2020- May 2021	I sent the Career Interest Profile (<i>CIP</i>) link to the participants via e-mail, after which I received a computer-generated outline of the participants' responses. JvR Online administers the system.	My office	<i>Career Interest Profile (CIP)</i>
Deconstruction phase of career construction				
Step 4	September 2020- May 2021	I conducted in-depth, open-ended, semi-structured individual interviews with participants. The information obtained from the Career Interest Profile (<i>CIP</i>) was used in formulating the guiding questions (Maree, 2017c). Questions from the career construction interview were added as necessary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At a location comfortable for the respondents. • My office via an online platform. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audio recordings • Fieldnotes
Deconstruction phase of career construction				
Step 5	January 2021- June 2021	I transcribed the audio recordings.	My office	Transcribed interviews
Deconstruction phase of career construction				
Step 6	January 2021- July 2021	I e-mailed participants the transcribed interview. Member checking involves asking the participants to verify the transcription of the interviews. In doing so, the participants ensure that the transcript truthfully reflects the meaning and intent of their contribution (Johnson <i>et al.</i> , 2020).	My office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-mail • Verbatim transcriptions • Field notes
Deconstruction phase of career construction				

DATA-GATHERING SEQUENCE	DATE	PLANNED ACTIVITIES/STRATEGY	RESEARCH SITE	SOURCE
Step 7 Deconstruction phase of career construction	August 2021- December 2021	I scrutinised other documents like e-mails, WhatsApp messages, and posts on social media. With regard to social media platforms, I focused on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.	My office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-mail, WhatsApp, and posts on social media
Step 8 Reconstruction phase of career construction	January 2021- July 2021	I e-mailed participants the worksheet that serves as a guide to refine their answers and clarify certain aspects (see Appendix C).	My office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-mail • Worksheet • WhatsApp
Step 9	October 2018- January 2022	To accompany steps 1–7, I kept a reflective journal.	My office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal field notes • Reflective journals and reflexivity (Creswell & Miller, 2000)

3.3.3 Analysing the qualitative data

The main aim of qualitative data analysis is to determine 'how participants make meaning of specific phenomena by analysing their perceptions, attitudes, understanding, knowledge, values, feelings and experiences in an attempt to approximate their construction of the phenomena' (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). As previously mentioned, I utilised an INDUCTIVE-deductive approach. The INDUCTIVE approach's primary purpose was to allow the research finding to emerge from the frequent, dominant or significant themes inherent in the raw data whilst engaging with the gathered data (Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Smith & Osborne, 2008). Deductive reasoning allowed me to have specific categories of information 'in the back of my mind as I made my way through the data analysis process' (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). I based the categories on various theoretical frameworks, such as Super et al.'s (1996) developmental theory, the systems theory framework of Patton and McMahon (2015), the core pillars⁵⁹ of the CCT (Savickas, 2013a), and strategies participants reported employing for surviving in a protean career. Please refer to Table 3.3 for an outline of the initial themes I had in mind before I started the data-collection phase.

Table 3.3

Outline of the initial themes I had in mind before the data-collection phase

INITIAL THEMES	SUB-THEMES
Developmental processes	Early life-career stage Middle life-career stage Late life-career stage
System influences	Intrapersonal systems influences Micro-societal influences Macro-societal influences
Career identity	
Career adaptability	Attitude Belief Competencies

⁵⁹ See Chapter 2, section 2.2.4.3.3 for an outline of the core pillars of career construction.

INITIAL THEMES	SUB-THEMES
	Career concern
	Career control
	Career curiosity
	Career confidence
Corresponding life themes	
Coping strategies	Positive strategies
	Negative strategies

The data analysis method I used was thematic analysis, as presented by Braun and Clarke (2006; 2013). The method was (primarily) developed for use within a qualitative paradigm. Thematic data analysis is a highly flexible approach that provides core skills for conducting qualitative analysis and can produce trustworthy and insightful findings and help to identify and analyse patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2012, 2013). The particular version emphasises an organic approach to coding and theme development and the active role of the researcher in these processes (Braun & Clark, 2006), thus allowing me, the researcher, to identify and make sense of the collective or shared meanings and experiences. The method also allowed me to actively develop and construct numerous themes guided by the research questions that assisted me in answering my research questions while also discovering various relationships, similarities and differences in the data (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

3.3.3.1 *Thematic data analysis*

To provide structure and trustworthiness to the identified and documented themes, I followed the steps and techniques of thematic analysis outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). Table 3.4 provides an outline of the steps and techniques I followed.

Table 3.4*Phases of thematic analysis (Adapted from Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 87)*

DATA ANALYSIS SEQUENTIAL STEPS		ACTIVITIES OR TECHNIQUES USED
STEP 1	Becoming familiar with the data	I immersed myself in and became intimately familiar with the data by listening to the audio recordings several times. After that, I captured observations that I had initially missed. Finally, I read and re-read all the written data. Doing this helped me begin the coding process more efficiently.
STEP 2	Generating initial codes	Coding was implemented as a data reduction method and as part of the analytic process, where the codes captured the semantic and conceptual reading of data. I generated initial codes for interesting data features relevant to the research questions that guided the analysis process. I coded every data item, collating the codes and relevant data extracts.
STEP 3	Searching for themes	I constructed themes as coherent and relevant patterns were discovered. Searching for themes proved to be an active process during which I identified similarities in the data. The phase was completed by collating all the coded data relevant to each theme.
STEP 4	Reviewing the themes and identifying sub-themes	The nature of each theme and the relationship between themes were defined, and sub-themes related explicitly to career construction were identified. Reviewing themes ensured that the themes identified were congruent with the data and portrayed a clear picture.
STEP 5	Defining and naming themes	A detailed analysis was made of each theme, and the most prominent and recurring themes were recorded. Next, I identified the essence of each theme and constructed a descriptive name for each theme.
STEP 6	Producing the final report	This phase involved integrating all of the analytic narratives. The data was contextualised concerning existing literature and my own research findings, after which I wrote my conclusions.

Although the thematic analysis approach has been presented here as a six-phase model with different steps, it is essential to note that the thematic analysis process is ongoing and iterative, implying that data gathering, processing, analysis and reporting are all intertwined (Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Smith et al., 2009; Clarke et al., 2015).

Lastly, I used ATLAS.ti,⁶⁰ which belongs to the genre of computer-aided qualitative data analysis software,⁶¹ a comprehensive software program that assisted me in structuring and organising the data (Friese, 2019; Kelle, 2004; Muhr & Friese, 2004). Importantly, ATLAS.ti did not analyse the data for me but assisted me in rendering a code-and-retrieve function, facilitating connections between codes to develop higher-order classifications and categories, and formulating propositions that imply a conceptual structure that fits the data during the analysis phase (Henning et al., 2004). Within ATLAS.ti I could code data segments and write down my ideas and thoughts in the memo function as I analysed the data. I used the various tools provided by ATLAS.ti to organise themes and sub-themes further and merge codes, for example. A tool I particularly enjoyed was creating word clouds which are electronic images that show the words used in selected documents in the form of a cloud. The words then appear in various font sizes according to how often they appeared in the particular document (Friese, 2019).⁶² Thus it became much easier to analyse data systematically and ask questions that I would otherwise not have asked because the manual tasks involved would be too time-consuming. The software thus assisted me with improving the validity and quality assurance when analysing the data. Importantly, I first executed ‘standard’ ATLAS.ti procedures to facilitate initial coding and identification of themes,⁶³ whereafter I analysed the exported text⁶⁴ using colour coding.

3.3.4 Quality assurance of the data

Quality assurance refers to consistent research results even if the research is conducted by a different researcher or obtained at a different time than the current research project (Maree & Van der

⁶⁰ ATLAS.TI stands for ‘Archiv für Technik, Lebenswelt und Alltagssprache’ (Archive for Technology, te Life World and Everyday Language. The extension ‘ti’ stands for ‘text interpretation.’ (Friese, 2019, p. xvi)

⁶¹ Abbreviated as CAQDAS.

⁶² See sections 2.2.2 and 2.2.3, where I employed word clouds to illustrate the most prominent themes in the sub-themes Abilities and Interests.

⁶³ Refer to Appendix D for the exported report from ATLAS.ti.

⁶⁴ I did this by highlighting certain aspects on the excel sheets that stood out as themes to me. Refer to Appendix E for an example of such colour coding.

Westhuizen, 2009). Creswell (2014) and Golafshani (2003) suggest that qualitative research is best evaluated according to the principles of trustworthiness.

Creswell (2014) defines trustworthiness as the degree to which research findings authentically reflect the personal or lived experience of the phenomenon being investigated and enhance the research's credibility. The trustworthiness of the current study was established by giving attention to the credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the research findings (Golafshani, 2003; Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Johnson et al., 2020).

3.3.4.1 Credibility

Shenton (2004) considers credibility an essential factor in establishing trustworthiness as it deals with the congruence of the findings with reality. Lincoln and Guba (1985) also consider this term consistent within the constructivist framework. Within the current study, the following strategies were employed to improve the credibility of the findings (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Henning et al., 2004; Koch, 1999; Loh, 2013; Patton, 2002; Shenton, 2004):

- As previously discussed, well-established research methods and data analysis software were utilised for data gathering and analysis (Shenton, 2004; Friese, 2019).
- The researcher employed triangulation over time (Henning et al., 2004; Patton, 2002) as several sources of information were incorporated together with interviews conducted over a few months.
- All participants were allowed to refuse participation in the study. Participation was thus voluntary, which assisted the researcher in ensuring that participants answered more honestly (Shenton, 2004).
- Member checks were conducted (Loh, 2013), allowing participants to read the interview transcripts and summarised worksheet, indicating if these indeed matched what they had intended to say.

- Gathering thick, descriptive data and prolonged and repeated engagement with the data increased reflexivity and crystallisation (Creswell & Miller, 2000).
- Self-awareness was practised (Koch, 1999) by the researcher. According to Patton (2002), researcher bias is inevitable; nonetheless, steps should be taken to ensure the research reflects the participants' experiences. Triangulation (as previously discussed) helps curb and limit the potential impact of researcher bias. The researcher also acknowledged and disclosed her own beliefs and predispositions (Shenton, 2004) that may have impacted decisions taken during the research process through reflexivity and journal keeping.
- An external coder verified themes and sub-themes to ensure the credibility and reliability of the data and themes recorded.

3.3.4.2 *Transferability*

Qualitative research targets a small number of individuals in a specific environment, making transferability one of the most challenging concepts to realise (Shenton, 2004). Gomm et al. (2000) suggest that transferability can be achieved by providing the reader with critical contextual factors. The intention is to provide ample details regarding the participants' context to allow readers to make such transfers. I attempted to do so through the detailed literature review presented in previous chapters and detailed feedback on the results presented in the following chapter.

3.3.4.3 *Dependability*

The process followed in the research study was reported on in as much detail as possible to ensure dependability (Shenton, 2004). The current chapter focuses on the research process in two sections, namely *Research design and implementation*, focusing on strategic aspects of the study such as planning and execution, and *data gathering*, dealing with the operational detail of fieldwork. *Reflection* will form part of the following chapters, including taking a reflective and evaluative look at the entire process.

3.4 ROLE OF THE RESEARCHER

During the research process, the researcher's role was crucial. The functions that I took responsibility for were the following (Symington, 2015):

- I explained the research purpose to the participants and obtained informed consent for their participation, recording and transcribing the interviews for analysis.
- In cases where I could interview participants face to face, I ensured that the facilities and the equipment, such as audio recorders, were in good working order and that the venue was comfortable and free of distractions.
- I attempted to create an atmosphere that speaks of warmth and which was inviting, where I could ensure that interruptions were limited.
- In cases where I used an online platform, such as GoogleTeams and Zoom, I ensured that the equipment was in good working order, that I downloaded the latest software, and that the surroundings were as free from possible distractions as possible.
- I ensured that sufficient opportunity was given to the participants to review the interpretation of the data to resolve any misunderstandings.
- I provided sufficient avenues for participants to reach me, such as through e-mail, Facebook messenger and WhatsApp.
- I analysed and interpreted the data using ATLAS.ti to assist me in organising the information in a systematic and scientifically rigorous manner.
- I adhered to the ethical standards (ethical code) specified by the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA).
- I participated in continuous self-reflexivity. According to Tracy (2020), self-reflexivity is crucial to qualitative research. It refers to carefully considering how my past experiences, points of view, and roles impact my interactions with and interpretations of the research scheme.

Taking cognizance of this fact, I continuously set aside time for self-reflection by pinning down my thoughts, feelings and behaviours throughout the research process.

- An educational psychologist was available for participants if the need arose. The purpose was to provide counselling to participants who might manifest emotional behaviours in response to their participation in the study. In doing so, I could function solely in my primary role as a researcher and, in so doing, avoid any role confusion between that of researcher and counsellor, ultimately safeguarding participants' well-being.

3.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Before commencing with gathering the data, I applied for and obtained ethical clearance from the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences Research Ethics Committee at the University of the Free State (Ethical clearance number: UFS-HSD2018/1182). As the primary researcher, I contacted all participants directly and explained to them the exact nature of the study and how the results would be used. After that, I obtained informed consent from participants using signed consent forms which explained the participants' right to withdraw from the project at any time (Allan, 2008) should they wish to do so, while acknowledging that they would not receive any benefits for participating in the study. Furthermore, participants also had to provide consent to continue completing the online qualitative assessment.

I ensured confidentiality and the right to privacy of all participants (Baez, 2002) by using pseudonyms and adjusting identifying data. I obtained anonymity and confidentiality by ensuring that no individual's identity could be traced based on the data and maintained this practice in the communication of the results. Transcribed interviews and results were communicated to the participants for verification purposes and to ensure the absence of misinterpretations throughout the research process. Lastly, I ensured that participants' best interests were served at all times and that they were protected from harm throughout the study.

3.6 CHALLENGES THAT AROSE

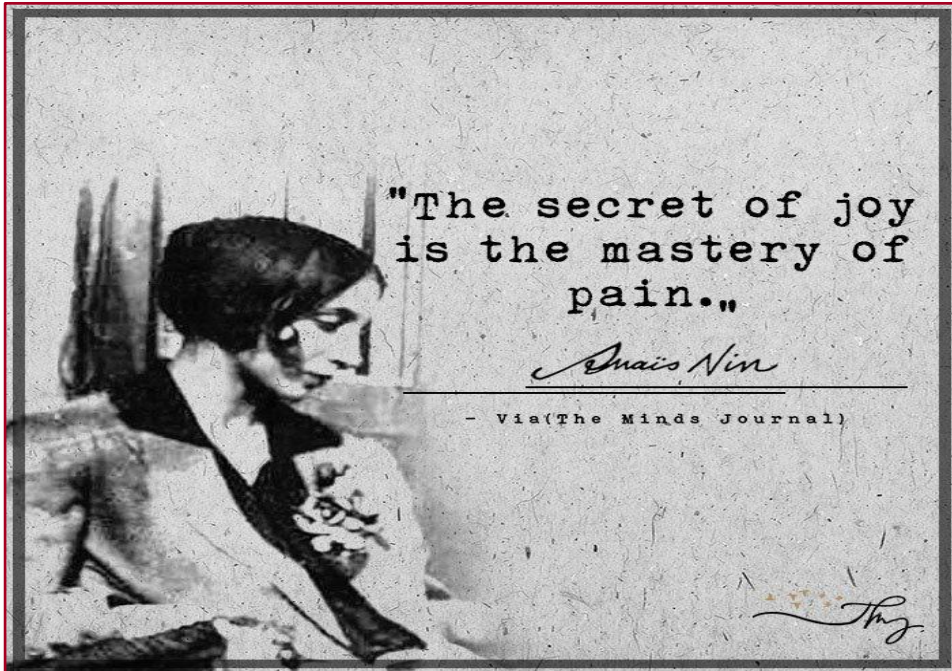
The following challenges arose during the study:

- The COVID-19 pandemic impacted the willingness of performing artists to participate. Many felt they were merely trying to survive during the specific time and were not in a suitable state for reflection.
- I contacted several performing artists who never responded to my communication.
- I contacted several performing artists who were unwilling to participate in the study.
- Participants agreed to the study and, unfortunately, then succumbed from COVID-19.
- Participants agreed to participate and withdrew from the study, with or without reason, after starting a particular step in the research process.
- Participants requested that specific information not be used or published.

3.7 CONCLUSION

The current chapter discusses the research methodology followed during this study. The methodology included the general research approach, obtaining the research participants, and the research participants' sampling. Furthermore, the gathering of the data and analysis were discussed, incorporating descriptions of the trustworthiness and ethical considerations the study had to comply with. Lastly, specific challenges that arose through the data-gathering stage were discussed. The following chapter presents and discusses the study's findings.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND REPORTING OF THE RESEARCH RESULTS



(The Minds Journal, 2020)

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter I discussed the research design, methodology, and various data-gathering and analysis aspects implemented in the study. The research study aimed to investigate the career construction process of performing artists in an ever-changing and fluid protean environment. To this end, I selected 19 study participants according to pre-determined criteria. The process included administering the Career Interest Profile (*CIP*), the career construction interview (*CCI*), and various life-design related activities. The chapter comprises a systematic discussion of the study results and the emerging themes identified through applying the method of thematic analysis. Central themes, sub-themes, and sub-sub-themes are discussed and supported by direct quotations from the participants, followed by a chapter summary.

4.2 PARTICIPANT PROFILE

Purposive sampling and, more specifically, criterion sampling were used to select participants who conformed with the inclusion criteria.⁶⁵ All the participants identified themselves as performing artists and considered the pursuit and practice of their art to be of significant value and a primary life activity. Even though most participants considered themselves active in their chosen artistic field, the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting consequences, such as not being allowed to perform on stage for more than a year, put pressure on them to engage in other income-seeking activities. For simplicity, practicality, and confidentiality, participants are referred to as participants #1 to #19 throughout Chapters Four and Five. Table 4.1 outlines the study's participant profile.

⁶⁵ See section 3.3.2 for an outline of the inclusion criteria.

Table 4.1

Participants' profile

CANDIDATE NUMBER	AGE	MEAN (μ)	STANDARD DEVIATION (S)	LIFE AND CAREER PHASE	GENDER	GENDER TOTALS	CULTURE GROUP	CULTURE GROUP TOTALS	LANGUAGE
# 1	28			Early to mid - Established	Female		Coloured		English
# 2	44			Early to mid - Established	Male		White		Afrikaans
# 3	62			Mid to retirement - Maintained	Male		White		Afrikaans
# 4	42			Early to mid - Established	Male		White		Afrikaans
# 5	56	39.84	12.18	Mid to retirement - Maintained	Female	13 Female	White	7 Black	Afrikaans
#6	32			Early to mid - Established	Female		Black		Sesotho
#7	52			Mid to retirement - Maintained	Female	6 Male	Coloured	3 Coloured	Afrikaans/English
#8	36			Early to mid - Established	Female		White	9 White	Afrikaans
#9	29			Early to mid - Established	Female		Black		Sesotho/Setswana
#10	29			Early to mid - Established	Female		Black		Sesotho/Setswana
#11	26			Early to mid - Established	Female		White		Afrikaans
#12	65			Retirement transition - Disengaged	Male		Black		Sesotho/English
#13	56			Mid to retirement - Maintained	Male		White		Afrikaans
#14	36			Early to mid - Established	Female		Black		Sesotho
#15	31			Early to mid - Established	Female		Black		isiXhosa/Sesotho
#16	32			Early to mid - Established	Male		Coloured		Afrikaans/English
#17	28			Early to mid - Established	Female		Black		Setswana
#18	32			Early to mid - Established	Female		White		Afrikaans
#19	41			Early to mid - Established	Female		White		Afrikaans

From Table 4.1 it is clear that the sample consisted of 19 participants, of which thirteen (13) were females and six (6) were males. The sample age ranged from 26 to 65 years, thus covering the early, middle and late life-career stages, with a mean average of 39.84 and a standard deviation of 12.18. The languages spoken by the various participants included Afrikaans, English, Sesotho, Setswana, and isiXhosa. Lastly, the number of participants in each culture group was seven (7) black participants, three (3) coloured participants and nine (9) white participants.

Table 4.2 elaborates on the participant profile, highlighting participants' highest qualifications, their performing arts category, and their income-generating activities.

Table 4.2*Participants' qualifications, performing arts category and income-generating activities*

CANDIDATE NUMBER	HIGHEST QUALIFICATION	PERFORMING ARTS CATEGORY	PERFORMING ARTS-RELATED INCOME-GENERATING ACTIVITIES	CREATIVE INDUSTRY INCOME-GENERATING ACTIVITIES	OTHER INCOME-GENERATING ACTIVITIES
#1	Degree: Music	Music: Instrumentalist	Performer & Creator	Entrepreneur: Festival/Event/Programme/ Artist Marketing director in the creative sector	None
#2	Degree: Music	Music: Instrumentalist	Performer, Creator & Music Director	Part-time music director at a non-profit organisation	None
#3	Degree: Visual Arts	Music: Instrumentalist & Vocalist	Performer, Creator & Music Director	Part-time music director at a non-profit organisation Entrepreneur: Singing school	Writer
#4	Matric Psychology Degree: Incomplete	Music: Vocalist	Performer	Sound and recording studio	Guesthouse & conference venue
#5	Degree: Drama & Theatre	Drama & Theatre	Performer & Creator		None
#6	Degree: Drama & Theatre	Drama, Theatre & Film Music: Vocalist	Performer, Creator & Theatre Director	Guest speaker Coach: Drama	Book publishing
#7	Grade 10	Music: Vocalist	Performer & Creator	Coach: Singing	None
#8	Degree: Drama & Theatre	Drama & Theatre Music: Instrumentalist	Performer & Creator	Coach: Singing	None
#9	Degree: Drama & Theatre	Music: Vocalist Dancer	Performer & Creator	Coach: Singing	None

CANDIDATE NUMBER	HIGHEST QUALIFICATION	PERFORMING ARTS CATEGORY	PERFORMING ARTS-RELATED INCOME-GENERATING ACTIVITIES	CREATIVE INDUSTRY INCOME-GENERATING ACTIVITIES	OTHER INCOME-GENERATING ACTIVITIES
#10	Honours Degree: Psychology	Music (Vocalist); Dancer	Performer & Creator		None
#11	Honours Degree: Drama & Theatre	Drama & Theatre	Performer & Creator	Coach: Drama	None
#12	Master's Degree in Fine Arts (Visual & Performing Arts) Honourary Doctorate in Drama & Theatre	Drama, Theatre & Film	Performer & Creator	Public speaker Coach: Drama Drama and Film Director	Writer
#13	Honours Degree: Law Honours Degree: Music Master's Degree: Music	Music: Vocalist	Performer & Creator	Coach: Drama Director: Music Entrepreneur: Singing school	Writer
#14	Matric Marketing Degree: Incomplete	Music: Vocalist	Performer & Creator	Director: Music Public speaker	Writer Temporary administrative position
#15	Matric	Drama & Theatre Music: Vocalist; Dancer	Performer & Creator		None
#16	Honours Degree: Drama & Theatre	Drama, Theatre & Film	Performer & Creator	Director: Drama and Theatre Coach: Drama	None
#17	Degree: Drama & Theatre	Drama, Theatre & Film	Performer & Creator		None
#18	Matric Degree: Graphic Designer Incomplete	Music: Instrumentalist & Vocalist	Performer & Creator	Entrepreneur: Artist director and production house	Part-time graphic designer

CANDIDATE NUMBER	HIGHEST QUALIFICATION	PERFORMING ARTS CATEGORY	PERFORMING ARTS-RELATED INCOME-GENERATING ACTIVITIES	CREATIVE INDUSTRY INCOME-GENERATING ACTIVITIES	OTHER INCOME-GENERATING ACTIVITIES
#19	Honours Degree: Visual Arts	Music: Instrumentalist & Vocalist	Performer & Creator Music coach	Coach: Music	Visual artist coach

4.3 DESCRIPTION OF THE DATA ANALYSIS PROCESS

When analysing qualitative data, researchers aim to bring a sense of order to what would otherwise be a diverse and chaotic set of data (Durdella, 2019; Largan & Morris, 2019). Neale (2016, p. 1097) supports this notion by stating that qualitative analysis needs to be "systematic and rigorous", with researchers imposing order on the various data sources, such as field notes, transcripts, documents or reflections. Researchers need to apply processes to the data to facilitate the ability to interpret it (Largan & Morris, 2019).

I approached the study employing a constructivist-interpretivist paradigm, as I understand the world as socially constructed through interaction with multiple realities and meanings (Durdella, 2019). Furthermore, I applied post-modern qualitative data generation techniques to gather and analyse the data. According to Jansen (2007, p. 22), "post-modernism values...the subjective and multiple voices of individuals and communities". He highlights that it is mainly applied in the artistic and social sciences and consequently was a good fit for the current study. The techniques included administering psychometric measures, such as the Career Interest Profile (*CIP*), conducting the career construction interviews (*CCI*), life-design counselling and obtaining information on the participant appearing in the public domain, such as posts on social media (i.e. through Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn). I have already outlined the data construction process in section 3.3.1. A minimal amount of 'quantitative data' was gathered, consisting mainly of the demographic and quantitative data collected in certain parts of the *CIP*.

The primary rationale for following the particular process was to engage with participants and understand their narratives and perspectives surrounding their lived experiences and sense-making process when constructing their careers in the performing arts amidst a fluid and ever-changing environment. While identifying themes, I implemented the various theoretical frameworks previously discussed by starting with a theoretical explanation for what is happening and then exploring the data set to see if this is accurate (Largan & Morris, 2019).

I also attempted to identify new themes, sub-themes, and sub-sub-themes as thematic analysis was implemented and facilitated a richer and more comprehensive description of the data gathered. The approach yielded specific themes associated with the candidates' lived experiences, past and current career development, future career aspirations, and, ultimately, their influence on their career construction.

My efforts at making sense of the data can best be described as an INDUCTIVE-deductive approach. I concur with the following view expressed by Bernard and Ryan (2010, p. 107) that "no matter how hard we try, there are no purely inductive (or deductive) studies". Jebb et al. (2017) maintain that scientific progress is maximised when there is a balance between deductive and inductive approaches.⁶⁶ Themes and patterns were identified primarily according to an inductive approach, as the themes identified were strongly linked with the data. The data analysis phase aimed to identify, evaluate, and interpret the effect of lived experiences on the career construction of performing artists.

Expectedly, a few additional themes, sub-themes, and sub-sub-themes emerged inductively during the data analysis process. These were substantiated during the data analysis by including examples of the participants' responses. A credible external coder, Dr Gerryts, who obtained her PhD in career construction and life-design counselling more than eight years ago, and who has been active in private practice, was requested to analyse and either confirm or refute the themes, sub-themes, and sub-sub-themes as identified by myself.

Lastly, I utilised ATLAS.ti, a comprehensive software program that assists in structuring and analysing the data (Kelle, 2004; Muhr & Friese, 2004).⁶⁷

4.4 PRESENTATION OF THE THEMES AND SUB-THEMES

I drew on participants' experiences to help me identify themes, sub-themes, and sub-sub-themes (Azungah, 2018). Table 4.3 summarises the relevant themes, sub-themes, and sub-sub-themes that

⁶⁶ See section 3.2 for a discussion on the INDUCTIVE-deductive approach followed in the study.

⁶⁷ See section 3.3.3.1 for a short discussion on ATLAS.ti.

emerged during the deductive-inductive process. Below, I discuss how themes and sub-themes were identified.

Table 4.3

A summary of the identified themes, sub-themes, sub-sub-themes and sub-sub-sub-themes⁶⁸

MAIN THEME ⁶⁹	SUB-THEMES	SUB-SUB-THEMES	SUB-SUB-SUB-THEMES	
THEME 1: REJECTION	1.1 LEVELS OF REJECTION	1.1.1 Intrapersonal level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cognitive level • Affective level • Behavioural level 	
		1.1.2 Micro-societal level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not fitting into the traditional school system • Bullying by fellow students • Bullying by recording companies • Not fitting into societal roles and expectations 	
		1.1.3 Macro-societal level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performing arts industry • Performing arts governance 	
	1.2 DEALING WITH REJECTION	1.2.1 Intrapersonal level		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Career adaptability (including the four Cs and positive ABC) - Spirituality • Negative strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Disequilibrium in career adaptability (including the four Cs and negative ABC) - Substance abuse - Suicide attempts
			1.2.2 Micro-societal level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educating society through open narratives
			1.2.3 Macro-societal level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved governance

⁶⁸ Created by myself.

⁶⁹ Please note that the themes in the green sections refer to the first level of themes. Themes in the blue sections refer to sub-themes. Lastly, purple sections refer to sub-sub-themes and sub-sub-sub-themes. Also, note that the different shades of purple distinguish between the different sub-sub-themes and sub-sub-sub-themes. The colour coding is applicable throughout the chapter.

THEME 2: THE IDIOSYNCRATIC JOURNEY TOWARDS CONSTRUCTING A CAREER CHOICE	2.1 EXTERNAL INFLUENCES	2.1.1 Significant others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents • Family • Community
		2.1.2 Educators	
		2.1.3 Specific situations	
	2.2 INTERNAL INFLUENCES “CAREER IDENTITY”	2.2.1 Self-concept “Sense of being an Artist”	
		2.2.2 Ability	
		2.2.3 Interest	
THEME 3: CAREER DEVELOPMENT TRAJECTORY	3.1 ASPECTS IMPACTING PERCEIVED PERSONAL & CAREER SUCCESS OR FAILURE	3.1.1 Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived success • Perceived failure
		3.1.2 Craft competency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived competence • Perceived incompetence
		3.1.3 The business of performing arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclination towards the business of performing arts • Aversion to the business of performing arts
	3.2 CAREER SURVIVAL SKILL SET	3.3.1 Career concern	
		3.3.2 Career control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-responsibility • Driven • Preparation • Perseverance
		3.3.3 Career curiosity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse skill set • Creating own opportunities • Continuous re-invention of self
		3.3.4 Career confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive self-view and self- confidence • Independence • Risk-taking

THEME 4: THE CREATIVE URGE TO CONVERT 'PAIN' INTO CREATIVE EXPRESSION, HOPE, SOCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS AND PURPOSE	4.1 HEALING THROUGH CREATIVE EXPRESSION			
	4.2 ACTIVE MASTERY OF PASSIVE SUFFERING - PAIN CONVERTED INTO PERSONAL HOPE, AND SOCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS BECOME PURPOSE	4.2.1 Collective and interactive experiences between performing artists and audiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance • Theatre 	
		4.2.2 Performing artists' mentoring as part of their social contributions and purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performing arts • General life 	
	THEME 5: TRANSFORMATIVE PROCESS LEADING TO FORWARD MOVEMENT	5.1 EXPERIENCE OF THE LIFE-DESIGN INTERVENTION	5.1.1 Enjoyment	
			5.1.2 Perseverance	
		5.2 INCREASED SELF-AWARENESS & KNOWLEDGE		
5.3.1 Increased positive self-view				
5.3.2 Increased risk-taking				
5.3.3 Increased assertiveness				
5.3 CHANGED BEHAVIOUR		5.3.4 Increased resilience		
		5.4 ENVISAGED SHORT-TERM GOALS	5.3.1 Improved emotional well-being	
			5.3.2 Increased purpose-driven actions	

4.5 PROCEDURES FOR IDENTIFYING THEMES AND SUB-THEMES

The goal of data analysis was to summarise the data obtained according to meaningful themes and sub-themes. Thematic analysis offers insight into patterns of meaning and allows the researcher to make sense of these meanings as they present themselves within a data set (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

The analysis involved constantly moving back and forth between the entire data set and the coded extracts of data used for analysis. According to the steps of the thematic analysis outlined in Chapter Three, the different codes were sorted into potential themes during data analysis, and the relevant coded data extracts were collated within the identified themes. The data was narrowed down to a few themes and correlating sub-themes. Main themes were derived from the most prominent codes and had the most evidence to support them. The themes identified could also relate directly to the literature reviewed. Triangulation was also crucial as some themes overlapped and had to be merged to avoid redundancy and duplication. The themes were then reviewed to ensure that they formed a coherent pattern. Lastly, I considered the validity of individual themes to the data set, and afterwards, I disregarded irrelevant data.

4.6 IDENTIFIED THEMES AND THEIR APPLICABILITY TO THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

When identifying themes, it is crucial to remember that it is more than a mere description of data but rather an attempt to argue the research questions. The analysis aimed to address the following research questions:

4.6.1 Primary research question

What life-career experiences of performing artists, as a protean career type, including musicians, singers and actors in their early, middle and late life-career stages can be identified within the framework of career construction?

4.6.2 Descriptive research questions

The descriptive research questions of the study include:

- What life-career experiences influence the career trajectory of performing artists, including musicians, singers and actors in their early, middle and late life-career stages in South Africa?
- How does the identity construction (the what) of performing artists in the South African context occur?

- How does the career adaptability (the how) of performing artists in the South African context occur?
- What are some of the life themes (the why) related to performing artists within the South African context?

4.6.3 Exploratory research question

The exploratory research question of the study include:

- How does knowledge of performing artists' life-career experiences (relevant to the current study, such as their identity construction, career adaptability and life themes) assist in understanding the career construction of performing artists' life-career stages within the South African context as a protean career type?

As evident from the outline above, the identified themes were essential in addressing the specified research questions. Even though it was challenging to match a specific theme to a specified research question, there was a definite interrelatedness and interconnectedness between the main themes, the sub-themes and the research questions. Therefore, the researcher had to carefully collapse many presenting sub-themes to ensure clear and identifiable distinctions between the themes and that they adequately address the research questions.

4.7 IDENTIFYING THE SOURCE OF A QUOTE




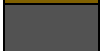















As previously mentioned, qualitative analysis must be systematic and rigorous (Neale, 2016). In applying such an approach, I employed a three-digit coding system,⁷⁰ where the first number referred to a particular participant and the second number referred to specific sources I had obtained the information from. It is important to note that no page numbers are generated when importing documents into ATLAS.ti, but rather paragraph numbers. Therefore, the third number refers to the paragraph number in the source. The only exception is source B, the *CIP*, a PDF-generated report; therefore, I referred to page numbers. Each participant was assigned a colour to aid the reader in

⁷⁰ See Table 4.4

following responses from participants throughout the identified themes. Participants' "verbatim" responses can thus be found following the coding system.

Table 4.4

Data referencing and coding system

PARTICIPANT NUMBER #	COLOUR	DATA SOURCES	PARAGRAPHS/PAGE LINES
# 1		A. <i>CIP</i> – Computer-generated report	Different pages/ paragraphs
# 2		B. Career construction interview (CCI)	
# 3		transcribed	
# 4		C. Career construction interview (CCI) -	
# 5		Worksheets	
# 6		D. Other relevant communication from	
# 7		candidates via e-mail, or WhatsApp	
# 8		messages, not integrated into the CCI	
# 9		worksheets	
# 10		E. Researcher’s process notes and	
# 11		reflections on candidates	
# 12		F. Documents in the public domain, such	
# 13		as Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn	
# 14		G. Researcher's personal reflections on	
# 15		the research journey	
# 16			
# 17			
# 18			
# 19			

Example: 4;B;18

4 = Participant 4

B = Transcribed interview

18 = Paragraph 18

Exceptions: In source A, the *CIP* report, the third number refers to the page number, as the report is exported as a PDF file.

From Table 4.4 it is clear that there are seven data sources (A-G). Table 4.3 elaborates on exactly what each data source entails.

Table 4.5

Explaining each data source

SYMBOL	SOURCE	EXPLANATION OF SOURCE
A	CIP-Report	The computer-generated report after candidates completed the questionnaire on the JvR assessment portal.
B	Career construction interview (CCI)	The career construction interview (CCI) was recorded and then transcribed.
C	CCI Worksheets	The interview content was summarised into a worksheet sent to participants for comments and further insights. Their feedback was integrated into the worksheet to have an integrated, summarised version of each candidate's career construction process (Maree, 2020a; career construction interview downloaded from http://www.vocopher.com/).
D	Process notes	Includes notes as I proceeded through the process with each candidate, together with my actions and reflections on the process.
E	Other communication	Included general communication via e-mails or WhatsApp messages from the candidate.
F	Informal documents available in the public domain	Includes posts made on social media such as Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.
G	Researcher reflections on personal journey	The researcher's reflection throughout the research project.

4.8 INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Defining a specific construct requires that inclusion⁷¹ and exclusion criteria⁷² be stipulated. Thus, criteria were defined, which determined whether or not a particular piece of data should be included or excluded in the specific theme or sub-theme.⁷³ Table 4.6 below elucidates these inclusion and exclusion criteria.

⁷¹ Inclusion criteria in the context of theme identification refers to certain attributes verbatim responses need to possess to be included in the particular theme, sub-theme or sub-sub-theme.

⁷² Exclusion criteria in the context of theme identification refers to specific attributes verbatim responses do not possess and are therefore excluded from the particular theme, sub-theme or sub-sub-theme.

⁷³ Refer to Table 4.6 for the inclusion and exclusion criteria used in linking data to themes, sub-themes and sub-sub-themes.

Table 4.6

Inclusion and exclusion criteria linking data to themes, sub-themes and sub-sub-themes

THEME 1: REJECTION		
Sub-theme	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
	Comments ⁷⁴ made by participants referring to...	Comments made by participants referring to...
1.1 LEVELS OF REJECTION		
1.1.1 Intrapersonal level	<p>...their personal experiences of not being acceptable or valuable to society and thus "being wrong".</p> <p>This could be reflected on a <i>cognitive level</i> (negative thoughts), <i>affective level</i> (negative emotions) and <i>behavioural level</i> (harmful and destructive behavioural patterns), reflecting participants' perceived rejection by society.</p>	<p>...their personal experiences of being acceptable and valuable to society.</p> <p>This could be reflected on a <i>cognitive level</i> (positive thoughts), <i>affective level</i> (positive emotions) and <i>behavioural level</i> (positive and uplifting behavioural patterns), reflecting their perceived acceptance by society.</p>
1.1.2 Micro-societal level	<p>...feedback they received from their interactions with others on a societal level imply that who they are and what and how they do things is unacceptable; thus, not fitting into the "right" way of 'being' and 'doing'.</p> <p>This included not fitting into the traditional school system, experiencing bullying by fellow students and recording companies. It also included not fitting into societal roles and expectations.</p>	<p>...feedback they received from their interactions with others on a micro-societal level is acceptable.</p>
1.1.3 Macro-societal level	<p>...direct or indirect interactions and feedback with others on a macro-societal level implying that who and what they are is unacceptable and unimportant, whether on an industry or governance level.</p>	<p>...direct or indirect interactions and feedback with others on the macro-societal level imply that who and what they are is acceptable and important, whether on an industry or governance level.</p>

⁷⁴ Comments also refer to written feedback, communication and expressions of participants as presented in the various data sources.

1.2 DEALING WITH REJECTION

1.2.1 Intrapersonal level	<p>...<i>positive strategies</i> they used on a personal level to deal with rejection. It includes strategies referring to Career Adaptability⁷⁵ and Spirituality, where Spirituality was defined as participants' inclination and practices toward a higher power.</p> <p>...<i>negative strategies</i> they used to deal with rejection on a personal level. It includes disequilibrium within Career Adaptability strategies, substance abuse and suicide attempts.</p>	...not related to either positive or negative strategies used in dealing with rejection.
1.2.2 Micro-societal level	...strategies they implemented to alleviate rejection on a micro-societal level. The strategy included educating society through open narratives.	...not related to strategies they use to deal with rejection on a micro-societal level.
1.2.3 Macro-societal level	...suggestions and action plans that could be implemented on a macro-societal and, thus, national level to give performing artists recognition and support. The main suggestion includes improved governance.	...not related to strategies they use on a macro-societal level in dealing with rejection.

THEME 2: THE IDIOSYNCRATIC JOURNEY TOWARDS CONSTRUCTING A CAREER CHOICE

Sub-theme	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
	Comments made by participants referring to...	Comments made by participants that do not refer to...

2.1 EXTERNAL INFLUENCES

2.1.1 Significant others	<p>...<i>positive (supportive) feedback</i> from significant others (including parents, family, and the community) regarding a career choice in the performing arts.</p> <p>...<i>negative (unsupportive) feedback</i> from significant others (including parents, family and community) regarding a career choice in the performing arts.</p>	...either positive or negative feedback or input by significant others (including parents, family, and the community) regarding their career choice in the performing arts.
2.1.2 Educators	...positive feedback and support from educators regarding a career choice in the performing arts.	...positive feedback and support from educators regarding a career choice in the performing arts.
2.1.3 Specific situations	...specific situations that impacted their choice to follow a career in the performing arts.	...specific situations that impacted their choice to follow a career in the performing arts.

⁷⁵ See sections 1.6.11 and 2.2.4.3.3 for a detailed explanation of the term, which include Attitudes, Belief and Competencies (ABC).

2.2 INTERNAL INFLUENCES - CAREER IDENTITY

2.2.1 Self-concept "sense of being an artist"	...their perspectives on their career self.	...their perspectives on their career self.
2.2.2 Ability	...their perception of their talents and skills and thus abilities.	...their perception of their talents and skills.
2.2.3 Interest	...their interest in a particular career field.	...their interest in a particular career field.

THEME 3: CAREER DEVELOPMENT TRAJECTORY

Sub-theme	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
	Comments made by participants referring to...	Any comments made by participants not referring to...

3.1 ASPECTS IMPACTING PERCEIVED PERSONAL AND CAREER SUCCESS/FAILURE

3.1.1 Education	<p>...obtaining a formal qualification and perceiving this as positively impacting their personal and career trajectory.</p> <p>...not obtaining a formal qualification and perceiving this as negatively impacting their personal and career development trajectory.</p>	...formal education and qualifications.
3.1.2 Craft competency	...their perceived level of competence or incompetence of their craft.	...competence or incompetence of their craft.
3.1.3 The business of performing arts	...an <i>inclination towards</i> or an <i>aversion to</i> the business of performing arts.	...any aspect related to the business of performing arts.

3.2 CAREER SURVIVAL SKILL SET

3.3.1 Career concern	...a future orientation.	...a future orientation.
3.3.2 Career control	...their ability to have control over their career choices, and includes an enhanced self-responsibility, being driven, through preparation and perseverance.	...their ability to have control over their career choices.
3.3.1 Career curiosity	...their curiosity towards various interests and alternatives, including a diverse skill set, creating opportunities and a continuous re-invention of self.	...their curiosity towards various interests and alternatives.
3.3.4 Career confidence	...an expectation of career success and includes a positive self-view, self-confidence, increased independence and risk-taking behaviour.	...any expectations of career success.

THEME 4: THE CREATIVE URGE TO CONVERT 'PAIN' INTO CREATIVE EXPRESSION, HOPE, SOCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS, AND PURPOSE

Sub-theme	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
	Comments made by participants referring to...	Any comments made by participants not referring to...
4.1 Healing through creative expression	...emotional healing taking place through engaging and expressing their creative and performing art.	...emotional healing takes place through engaging and expressing their creative and performing art.
4.2 Active mastery of passive suffering - pain converted into hope, and social contributions become purpose	...active mastery of passive suffering and thus converting pain into personal hope, and social contributions become purpose.	...active mastery of passive suffering and thus not converting pain into personal hope, and social contributions become purpose.
4.2.1 Collective and interactive experiences between performing artists and audiences	...collective and interactive experiences between participants and audiences, to assist in healing for both parties, thereby converting pain into personal hope and social contributions become purpose.	...collective and interactive experiences between participants and audiences.
4.2.2 Performing artists as mentors as part of their social contributions and purpose	...mentoring (within the performing arts and general life) as active mastery of passive suffering, turning pain into hope and social contributions and thus their purpose.	...mentoring (within the performing arts and general life).

THEME 5: TRANSFORMATIVE PROCESS THROUGH VULNERABILITY AND FORWARD MOVEMENT

Sub-theme	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
	Comments made by participants referring to...	Any comments made by participants not referring to...
5.1 Experience of the life-design intervention	...their experience of the life-design intervention and accompanying meta-reflections.	...their experience of the life-design intervention and accompanying meta-reflections.
5.1.1 Enjoyment	...positive experiences during their meta-reflections portrayed on a cognitive, affective and behavioural level.	...positive experiences during their meta-reflections.
5.1.2 Perseverance	...their perseverance during the intervention and meta-reflections despite difficulties.	...their perseverance as they experienced difficulties during the intervention and meta-reflections.
5.2 Increased self-awareness and knowledge	...becoming aware of aspects within the 'self' and thus answering the question, "Who am I?" thus leading to increased self-knowledge.	...becoming aware of aspects within the 'self' and thus answering the question, "Who am I?"
5.3 Changed behaviour	...behavioural changes resulting from the life-design intervention.	...behavioural changes resulting from the life-design intervention.

5.3.1 Increased positive self-view	...an increased positive self-view as a behavioural change.	...an increased positive self-view as a behavioural change.
5.3.2 Increased risk-taking	...increased risk-taking behaviour.	...increased risk-taking behaviour.
5.3.3 Increased assertiveness	...an increase in their assertiveness.	...an increase in their assertiveness.
5.3.4 Increased resilience	...an increase in their resilience.	...an increase in their resilience.
5.3 Envisaged short-term goals	...the goals they aim to accomplish in the near future. Goals included improving their emotional well-being and increasing their purpose-driven actions.	...goals they aim to accomplish in the near future.
5.3.1 Improving emotional well-being	...action steps they plan to take to improve their emotional well-being.	...action steps they plan to take to improve their emotional well-being.
5.3.2 Increased purpose-driven actions	...being more purpose-driven in their career, with a specific focus on their craft and business-related actions.	...being more purpose-driven in their career, with a specific focus on their craft and business-related actions.

4.9 RESULTS AND FINDINGS OF THE QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

In the following sections, I will provide a theme-by-theme discussion of the findings of the qualitative data analysis.

4.9.1 Introduction to Theme 1: Rejection

At the core of the first theme, the construct of ‘rejection’ surfaced during the analysis phase and could be identified in all the different data sources. Participants experienced rejection from an early age, which continued throughout their lives. Rejection was intensely felt as being wrong, unimportant and unvalued, just because I am and do things differently, which can be seen in the following quote, "*Welcome in my world.*" (#3;A;13). Participants experienced rejection on different levels and within different systems. The following quotes summarise the experience of rejection for performing artists on an intrapersonal level (#7;B;222-224):

"Indifference is the unfairness of being...(silence). I don't look like you. I don't sound like you. I don't do things the same like you. Why do you want me to? Why can't I just be me? Why be....(silence; looks away) someone else, that's not me?"

Importantly, rejection did not stop in the developmental phase or early career phase but continued throughout participants' lives (#14;B;4):

"I think growing up, it used to bother me because I used to, I used to feel that being different doesn't allow me to fit in...you know. Being the outsider, this is not only as a kid but also today."

Rejection on an intrapersonal level is reflected in participants' experience of themselves in how they think (Cognitive Level) and feel (Affective Level) about themselves, which is then reflected in their behaviour. Furthermore, participants experience rejection or even bullying when they interact on a micro-societal level with systems such as family members or institutions, e.g. schools or recording companies. On a macro-societal level, participants experience rejection from the industry itself, which takes the form of intense competition. They also need to uphold a specific image from a governance perspective in which the industry itself is deemed unimportant, with very little administrative and resource support on national and governmental levels.

In reaction to rejection, participants implemented various strategies on intrapersonal, micro- and macro-societal levels. On a personal level, they implemented positive and negative strategies. Positive strategies refer to Career Adaptability⁷⁶ and Spirituality, where Career Adaptability results in participants portraying positive coping attitudes, beliefs, and competencies towards themselves, their craft, and their careers. A positive experience of Spirituality and belief in a higher power was also a fundamental positive strategy in dealing with rejection.

Negative strategies included a disequilibrium in Career Adaptability,⁷⁷ resulting in negative attitudes, beliefs, and competencies towards themselves, interactions with others, and careers. Other negative strategies included substance abuse as well as suicide attempts. To address the issue of rejection on a micro-societal level, participants suggested educating society through open narratives,

⁷⁶ Referring to the positive side of the continuum of the four Cs of Career Adaptability.

⁷⁷ Referring to the negative side of the continuum of the four Cs of Career Adaptability.

thus bringing the issues to the forefront and discussing them in open forums. Strategies on a macro-societal level include developing creative platforms and improved governance.

Table 4.7

Research findings relating to Theme 1: Rejection

THEME 1: REJECTION	
Sub-theme	Description
1.1 LEVELS OF REJECTION	Rejection refers to not accepting or being indifferent towards an individual, which implies that the individual is not valued or important. Within society as a system, it could appear within the individual (intrapersonal level), social system (micro-societal level) or in the environmental/societal system (macro-societal level) (McMahon, 2005; Patton & McMahon, 1999, 2015).
1.1.1 INTRAPERSONAL LEVEL	The intrapersonal level refers to specific processes within a person on three levels: <i>cognitive</i> (thoughts), <i>affective</i> (emotional), and <i>behavioural</i> .
Comments and examples from participants depicting rejection on an intrapersonal level	
COGNITIVE LEVEL	
(#3;B;249): <i>“Ek dink omdat ek nog my hele lewe lank dink, mmm, die pakkie is verkeerd afgelewer. Ek was nooit bedoel vir moeder aarde nie. Nie tussen mense nie. Miskien in die natuur. Ek, ek, ek weet God verstaan ook nou al as ek dit sê. Ek is van alles wat God geskep het, die minste lief vir die mens. Doodeenvoudig.”</i> <i>“I think because I have thought my whole life, mmm, the parcel was delivered wrongly. I was never meant for mother earth. Not between people. Maybe in nature. I, I, know that by this time God understands when I say this. Of everything God created, I love people the least. As simple as that.”</i>	
AFFECTIVE LEVEL	
(#2;A;13): <i>“Having phobias, being scared of challenges, the difficulty of believing in myself.”</i> (#13;B;308-309): <i>“Ja, dis die tipiese kunstenaar probleem wat jy vreeslik vinning ‘n depressie kan slaan, ‘n neerslagtigheid en dan jouself vra, ‘Hoekom doen ek dit nou eintlik?’, jy weet, en daai bietjies bietjies, daai self bejammering vir n rukkie.”</i> <i>“Yes, it is the typical artist problem where you can become depressed very quickly, a despondency and then you ask yourself, ‘Why am I actually doing this?’, you know, and that little by little, that self-pity for a while.”</i>	
BEHAVIOURAL LEVEL	
(#13;A;11): <i>“To try to survive with people and an environment that I’m not used to and do not fit in”.</i> (#4;A;13): <i>“I was always the odd kid that did things differently.”</i> (#14;B;284-287): <i>“I don’t want to fit in anymore because... fitting, trying to fit in costs me. It costs me a lot of things.”</i>	
From the quotes it is clear that participants view themselves as "not belonging", thus being excluded and alone, resulting in many of them feeling judged, guilty, scared, depressed and many other negative cognitions and emotions. Participants also experienced negative behaviour, as perceived by others, and some participants tried to adjust their behaviour to fit into societal expectations.	

1.1.2 MICRO-SOCIETAL LEVEL

The micro-societal level (social systems) refers to systems with which individuals interact, e.g. educational and institutional systems and peers through which they experienced rejection because of not fitting into societal roles and expectations (Patton & McMahon, 2015; Pryor & Bright, 2003).

Comments and examples from participants depicting rejection on a micro-societal level

NOT FITTING INTO THE TRADITIONAL SCHOOL SYSTEM

(#5;B;173): *“As jy 'n bietjie anders dink as ander mense of anders maak as ander mense in society, dan is jy verkeerd. Nie anders nie, net verkeerd. Ek het op skool gedink dis um, interessant. Ek het my boek oorgetrek met ander, ek dink met koerantpapier of iets, want dit was vir my mooi, of iets. Die juffrou het my uit die klas uit gestuur. Um, ek moes hoof se kantoor toe gaan want ek het die, ek het disrespek of whatever, omdat ek kreatief was, want dit is wat dit was.”*

“If you think a little differently or do things differently than other people in society, then you're wrong. Not different, just wrong. I thought at school it was um, interesting, I covered my book with other, I think with newspaper or something, because it was beautiful to me, or something. The teacher sent me out of class. Um, I had to go to the head's office because I had the, I disrespected or whatever, because I was creative, because that's what it was.”

(#19;B;174): *“Die skoolsisteem noodwendig dink ek nie support spesifieke persoonlikhede altyd nie. En ek en my broer was obviously...ons was maar net hier aan die sideline.”*

“The school system I don't think necessarily supports specific personalities all the time. And my brother and I were obviously... we were just here on the sidelines.”

BULLYING BY PEERS

(#3;B;273): *“Ek het, kan onthou ek is as kind is ek deur geweldige bullying. Um, dis baie sleg as jy, as jy 'n klavierspelende, kunsinnige kind is.”*

“I did, I can remember, as a kid I went through tremendous bullying. Um, it's very bad if you, if you're a piano-playing, artistic kid.”

(#5;B;164&173): *“Being different than other children and thus "wrong" and not being understood. Um, I'm animated when I talk, so ek kan onthou Anna Coetzee⁷⁸ toe sy die eerste dag vir my ontmoet, haar woorde was, "Jy is mal", standard ses, because I'm animated, when I speak. Um, ag en dit is nie net ek nie. Dis alle mense. Alle mense wat 'n bietjie kreatief of dingese is, frowned upon, in plaas daarvan dat ons society dit embrace, en dit is nou maar seker hoe ouers hulle kinders grootmaak is om, embrace die maatjie wat 'n bietjie anders is, want dis kreatief.”*

“Being different than other children and thus "wrong" and not being understood.

Um, I'm animated when I talk, so I can remember Anna Coetzee, the first day she met me, her words were, "You're crazy", standard six, because I'm animated when I speak. Um, oh, and it's not just me. It's all people. All people who are a bit creative or things, are frowned upon, instead of our society embracing it, and it's probably just how parents raise their children is to embrace the buddy who's a little different because it's creative.”

BULLYING BY RECORDING COMPANIES

(#7;B;320-324): *“Want ek kon nie sing nie, ek kon nie werk vir niemand anders nie. Ek kon nie op 'n stage klim en shows doen om my brood op my tafel te sit nie, want my stem en hierdie gesiggie behoort aan hulle. Hulle bring nie vir my geld nie. Hulle bring ook nie vir my shows nie. Toe sê ek, 'No way, that's not the way to live'. Nee, jammer vir dit. So I had to stand up for myself. Because everybody was like afraid, nee, ooh hel. You know that it broke me. I never went back to record for more than fourteen years. I brought out that one album and I walked away. I never recorded after that ever. Until 2013 and daai album was in*

⁷⁸ Pseudonym

1997, ne? And there again, the same thing repeated itself. So I'm not, I'm not interested. Stel nie belang in die musiekbedryf nie. As ek hom doen, doen ek hom alleen. En ek doen hom privaat.”

“Because I couldn't sing, I couldn't work for anyone else. I couldn't get on a stage and do shows to put my bread on my table because my voice and this face belonged to them. They don't bring me money. They also don't bring me shows. Then I said, 'No way, that's not the way to live'. No, sorry for that. So I had to stand up for myself. Because everybody was like afraid, no, oh hell. You know that it broke me. I never went back to record for more than fourteen years. I brought out that one album and I walked away. I never recorded after that ever. Until 2013 and that album was in 1997, right? And there again, the same thing repeated itself. So I'm not, I'm not interested. I'm not interested in the music industry. When I do it, I do it alone. I do it privately.”

NOT FITTING INTO SOCIETAL ROLES AND EXPECTATIONS

(#17;B;294-296): *“And the role that society plays in indoctrinating us. I was forced to play a role, also what you're saying now of you confront it, but this is who I am. The truth of I'm an actor, this is what I want to be but the confrontation against or versus what society is doing towards us, indoctrinating us to be something or do something that we're not.”*

(#19;B;383-386): *“Ek dink dalk is dit omdat dit, dit female artists is, want baie keer (aarsel) mense, ek spot altyd en sê ek wil kitaar speel soos 'n ou, soos 'n man, want daar's altyd hierdie ding van meisies kan kitaar speel, maar kan jy rerig compete met ouens?”*

“I think maybe it's because it, it's female artists, because a lot of times (hesitation) people, I always scoff and say I want to play guitar like a guy, like a guy, because there's always this thing of girls can play guitar, but can you really compete with guys?”

(#5;B;174-181): *“I don't really fit in anywhere. In die performing arts moet jy nie in die Here glo nie. Um, nee. Jy moenie, want niemand doen nie. Dis nogal 'n ding. Ek weet nie hoekom nie, maar dis 'n ding. Um, ek weet nie rerig hoekom ek so nêrens inpas nie, but I don't fit. Ek behoort nêrens nie.”*

“I don't really fit in anywhere. In the performing arts, you should not believe in the Lord. Um, no. You don't, because no one does. It's quite a thing. I don't know why, but that's a thing. Um, I don't really know why I fit in nowhere, but I don't fit. I don't belong anywhere.”

On a micro-societal level, participants experience rejection from various sources with whom they interact. First, it started at the school level, where they were verbally and physically bullied by fellow students and excluded from social interactions and groups. Some participants also viewed the educational system as rigid and a space that did not allow them to fit in. It continued into adulthood when they expressed emotional bullying by recording companies into a particular image in order to fill a market gap. Lastly, family members misunderstand and reject them as they do not fit the traditional roles of spouse, parent or worker.

1.1.3 MACRO-SOCIETAL LEVEL

Lastly, the macro-societal level refers to McMahon's (2002) and Patton and McMahon's (2015) Environmental/Societal System, including historical trends, political decisions, socio-economic status, globalisation, the employment market and geographical location, in which participants experienced rejection.

Comments and examples from participants depicting rejection on a macro-societal level

PERFORMING ARTS INDUSTRY

(#7;B;316): *“Dis 'n strange industrie wat ons in lewe, hoor. Dis 'n lelike industrie. Ek weet nie van ander wat in die industrie uhm, so swaar moes probeer om êrens te kom nie soos wat ek moes nie”.*

“It's a strange industry that we live in. It's an ugly industry. I don't know of others who, in the industry, had to try so hard to get somewhere like I had.”

(#18;B;382-386): *“Ek is nou maar nie die maerste meisie, nie. So ek sukkel nog altyd bietjie met dit. Op die verhoog ook. Ek, mens word altyd half maar gejudge oor hoe jy lyk. Ek het al kliënte gehad, iemand wat ek en jy baie goed ken, het al vir my gesê: Ek het jou al geboek al is jy vet.”*

“I'm not the skinniest girl. So I've always struggled with this a little bit. On the stage as well. Me, a person, is always, half, judged about how I look. I've had clients, someone you and I know very well, who said to me: I've already booked you even though you're fat.”

PERFORMING ARTS GOVERNANCE

(#12;B;19): *“My dream was really to be artistic director in a major institution in the similar way that you have in the US and in Europe, you know. So that their model is that the administrator supports the artistic director and not the other way around, which is what's happening here in our country. It's as though artistic directors are a nuisance. Now these people know about governance and what have you, but they are not artists and that's the core business of the theatre. So, there's an issue.”*

(#5;A;18): *“I would love to work in a country where I don't have to promote myself to get work, where I will get work because of talent, where actors get paid enough to make a proper living. In South Africa, it is not even a profession.”*

Evidently, participants also experienced rejection on a macro-societal level, within the industry and on a governance level. The industry is highly competitive, with performing artists rejecting each other to reach the top. Furthermore, participants noted that they had to look and act in a certain way to be acceptable, on and off-stage. Lastly, the negative economy and worldwide COVID-19 epidemic directly impacted the livelihoods of participants in that there were fewer or no opportunities to perform.

Being undervalued and rejected is also experienced on an administrative and governance level, with very little support and resources to protect the interest of performing artists and the industry. Participants summarised the dire situation by mentioning that they have to market themselves as independent artists⁷⁹ and are not employed by creative organisations based on their talent. Participants also highlighted that they are not represented in the administration of companies, boards, or forums to look after their interests. Furthermore, funds are not allocated towards upholding the physical resources, such as theatres of the creative industries, with the government not looking after their interests and even going so far as to antagonise the arts. A participant highlighted this by stating that the performing arts are not classified as a ‘profession’ in South Africa.

1.2 DEALING WITH REJECTION

Refers to how performing artists deal with rejection, albeit using positive or negative strategies, as well as suggestions, actions, and plans they envisage on an intrapersonal, micro-societal and macro-societal level.

1.2.1 INTRAPERSONAL LEVEL

Performing artists demonstrate both positive or negative intrapersonal strategies for dealing with rejection.

Comments and examples from participants depicting positive and negative strategies implemented when dealing with rejection on an intrapersonal level.

⁷⁹ Referring to the protean career.

POSITIVE STRATEGIES

Career Adaptability (including the ABC)⁸⁰

ATTITUDE (A):

(#9;B;461): *“So, I want to hear it, and I always want to make sure that whatever I'm grateful for - someone will know that I'm grateful for it. So, I always take moments where maybe I'm going through a tough time, I have moments where I will jot down like what I'm happy about. I'll go back to that and just read it and reminisce on the happy times and just be grateful that I could still experience those moments. Because it is those moments that get me through the hard times.”*

(#12;B;33): *“Absolutely. I had the end picture in mind. So, I wanted to act and also direct in my undergrad. And then in my Master's I wanted to direct and also manage. And, and, they didn't stop me. They could not stop me.”*

BELIEF (B):

(#8;A;13): *“It's okay not to fit into a societal mould. There are more narratives than one. There's literally a thousand different ways to be happy and fulfilled.”*

(#14;B;284-287). *“Until I realised that I was not meant to fit in. I'm okay with not fitting in.”*

COMPETENCIES (C):

(#18;A;7): *“Learning new skills and challenging myself.”*

(#13;B;323): *“Ek sal miskien nie altyd sing nie, maar daar's soveel ander dinge wat ek nog kan doen.”*

“I may not always sing, but there are so many other things I can still do.”

SPIRITUALITY

(#3;B;288): *“Selfs nou met die Covid, kon ek rustig slaap. Die Here het nou rerig vir my voorsien. Dis nie sommer net 'n ding om te sê nie, ek het geweet, maar in my moeilikste omstandighede was Hy mos nou vir my da.”*

“Even now with the Covid, I was able to sleep peacefully. The Lord really provided for me. It's not just a thing to say, I knew, in my most difficult circumstances that He was there for me.”

(#8;B;162). *“Dis die magic van existence, right daar. Vir my voel ek baie sterk, obviously al die antwoorde wat mens possibly kan soek, is in daai area.”*

“That's the magic of existence, right there. To me, I feel very strongly, obviously all the answers one can possibly seek are in that area.”

When dealing with rejection, participants employed two main positive strategies. The first positive strategy refers to career adaptability, reflected in their positive coping attitudes, such as gratitude towards life. Furthermore, they reflected a sense of being a victor instead of a victim, thus confronting their issues. They also portrayed a focused attitude towards their end goal and what they would do to get there, even amid adversities. Another positive strategy that was evident was implementing their spiritual values in their lives and dealing with hardships through practices such as reading their Bible and praying.

⁸⁰ To adapt to a world very different from my own, participants use coping attitudes (A), positive beliefs (B) and specific competencies. When applied positively to the four Cs (concern, control, curiosity and confidence), it assists the individual in coping. Refer to Theme 3 for an outline of the four Cs, as experienced by the participants.

NEGATIVE STRATEGIES

DISEQUILIBRIUM IN IN CAREER ADAPTABILITY (ABC)

ATTITUDE (A):⁸¹

(#2;B;205): *“So mens is nogals baie krities.”*⁸²

“So one is very critical.”

(#3;B;201-202): *“Mmmm, wat het meeste van die kunstenaars gedoen toe die Covid nou kom? Hulle het op Facebook gaan sê, help, kry ons jammer, ons is besig om dood te gaan. Flippet, jy moes daaraan gedink het voor COVID gekom het.”*

“Mmmm, what did most of the artists do when Covid came? They went on Facebook and said, help, feel sorry for us, we're dying. Flippit, you should have thought about it before COVID came.”

BELIEF (B):⁸³

(#9;B;81): *“If I'm confronted with a new challenge, I tend to procrastinate. Because I'm like 'Will I do my best at it?' and 'What if I don't?' And then sometimes that voice just gets louder and louder and then is just... I hide.”*

(#17;B;51-53): *“I think that's why I focus on the negative and also other details and then I get stuck. I'm unable to move from that. I sort of just get stuck on that and I just think I can't do it.”*

(#6;B;54-55): *“I would put up a front and would present this very confident women who believes so much in her ideas, but even after presenting the idea, deep down, I would be, oh my goodness, that sucked so much, are they gonna like it you know? I always say, most of the artists, we have alter egos. Most of us are so shy, most of us are so nervous before the show, most of us are like, yoh, can I do this? We doubt ourselves, but, then, what you see on stage is a completely different thing.”*

COMPETENCIES (C):⁸⁴

(#1;B;153): *“Everybody complains that I don't, I don't communicate. Like I bottle a lot, um, just flip.”*

(#9;B;114&118): *“I am scared to hurt people's feelings. So, I then don't tell this person that I don't like what you did or do I just let it go and hope they don't do it again? You know... that's just how I am. I, I avoid confronting situations.”*

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

(#1;A;12): *“Being fired from a project for drinking.”*

(#7;B;348): *“If I stayed, I was gonna die. Die drugs, die bad vibes, dit was net vrot.”*

“If I stayed, I was gonna die. The drugs, the bad vibes, it was just rotten.”

SUICIDE ATTEMPTS

(#9;B;194): *“I was not mentally healthy to a point where I was suicidal. I've once attempted suicide and I was hospitalised for like a week. So, my health is an issue... Yeah. especially my mental health.”*

Participants applied various negative strategies in dealing with rejection which included a disequilibrium in the four Career Adaptability strategies as reflected in their victim- and critical attitude towards themselves, their craft, and life. This led them to doubting themselves and their competencies.⁸⁵ Furthermore, results reflected participants as being stuck, thus being a victim, feeling and acting fearfully and not living their authentic selves. Other negative strategies included substance abuse such as alcohol and drugs. Unfortunately, suicide was also viewed as a strategy.

⁸¹ Negative attitude towards self, your craft and others has a negative impact on your competencies or lack thereof.

⁸² Referring to his work.

⁸³ Negative beliefs towards self, your craft and others has a negative impact on your competencies or lack thereof.

⁸⁴ Competencies causing disequilibrium in career adaptability.

⁸⁵ Also referred to as abilities.

1.2.2 MICRO-SOCIETAL LEVEL Performing artists have suggestions impacting the micro-societal level when dealing with rejection.

Comments and examples from participants depicting how they deal with rejection on a micro-societal level

EDUCATING SOCIETY THROUGH OPEN NARRATIVES

(#1;B;134-136) *“What’s important is to educate the people that are observing our lives, so having a conversation... having the people around me understand. We need to start having open conversations about this.”⁸⁶ Why we are the way we are and this is how we want to be treated, and yeah. Um, definitely understanding the importance of having an open narrative.”*

When dealing with rejection on a micro-societal level, participants mentioned educating society through open narratives, implying that they have open discussions and conversations with the people around them so that there is a safe place to create an understanding of performing artists and how they want to be treated.

1.2.3 MACRO-SOCIETAL LEVEL Performing artists have suggestions impacting the macro-societal level when dealing with rejection.

Comments and examples from participants depicting how they deal with rejection on a macro-societal level.

IMPROVED GOVERNANCE

(#12;B;81-82): *“As artists we have the heart; we can see it in our heads. We can create magic. Our weakness is in the administration. I sit on the council of the X⁸⁷ Foundation. I went in there and started learning about governance. And so that whole issue of governance, and understanding there is responsibilities that go with occupying that seat. There are times I will vote yes to things, even though they are not my first choice, but my seat says I must vote for the welfare of the institution. And so when I vote in there, it must be for the institution and the stakeholders. Ja. Governance is something that is very important to me and I wish, I wish all managers, all managers, could be forced to take some courses in governance so that the Arts do not rest on the shoulders of CFO’s.”*

On a macro-societal level, participants referred mainly to improved governance. Participants referred to improved administration of the performing arts industry on a governmental and provisional level, together with better management of resources, thus impacting the retention of performing artists, not only for the current situation but also for generations to come.

4.9.2 Introduction to Theme 2: The idiosyncratic journey towards constructing a career choice

Theme 2, “The idiosyncratic journey towards constructing a career choice”, emerged as the impact of external and internal influences on participants’ career choices became evident. As we are social beings, our choices are influenced by external factors with which we interact, which directly impact our identity. As participants referred to ‘significant others,’⁸⁸ educators and specific

⁸⁶ Referring to creatives being misunderstood.

⁸⁷ Referring to a specific foundation within the Creative Industry. I omitted this to ensure confidentiality.

⁸⁸ Including references made to parents, family and the community.

situations,⁸⁹ it was evident how these factors impacted their career choice. Findings central to the choice to follow a career in the performing arts constituted the positive and supportive feedback they received from at least one individual⁹⁰ held in high esteem (#5;A;9):

“People who were kind and who believed in me influenced me most. Because they got me to do more than I thought I could.”

Also, the feedback was not always explicitly related to the performing arts, per se, but related to following your dream, whatever that dream may be, as evident in the quote (#17;B;287):

“My mom has always been supportive. She was always like do whatever you want to do, um, just do it.”

Another critical external influence included specific situations participants encountered which exposed them to the performing arts; whether formally, like taking music lessons or informally like singing at family gatherings, as can be seen in the quote (#9;B;26):

“I grew up in a family of singers. That is what we did for fun; that is what we did ALL the time. Family reunions, we're singing. At church, we're singing.”

Internal influences that impacted participants' career choice was their self-concept, interest and abilities, which impacted their career identity. Core to their career identity is that the performing arts is not only a "craft" (something they do) but "something" that encapsulates their "being"; thus "who they are", having no choice but to follow this inner voice urging them to follow the "dream" of who they are (#12;B;30).

“But I was always un...restless, and so eventually I get married in 1980 and then my wife says, 'No, you're gonna be a problem to yourself and to everybody. This thing is so much in you, just go and study this thing.’”⁹¹

⁸⁹ The identified sub-themes.

⁹⁰ Irrespective of whether the individual is part of the significant others or an educator, referring to two sub-themes.

⁹¹ Referring to drama, theatre and film.

Their perception of their abilities centred around their view of themselves as competent in various creative endeavours, from creating to executing art, such as creative writing, music, directing, coaching and even photography. In the majority of cases, participants were confident in their artistic ability and applied it in various overlapping contexts, whether on or off-stage.

Central to the above is their core interest in creative, flexible and passionate activities encapsulated by the Artistic and Social Environment, which they framed with words like "living, dreaming, healing and love", together with a strong aversion towards occupations that focus on meticulous, structured, repetitive activities. Participants described these activities as 'boring' and as being 'stuck'.

(#18;B;60): *"Ek raak verveeld. Ek kan nie net op een ding fokus vir agt ure op 'n dag nie. Dit sal my breek. Dis hoekom ek nie 'n kantoor job wil hê nie. Jy weet daai een, daai monotonous, selle takies oor en oor breek vir my. Waar ek kan nou vir 'n uur fokus en dan doen ek, sê nou maar, bietjie grafies en dan dink ek ek het nou genoeg van dit gedoen dan gaan ek ry gou met hierdie klient of ek doen gou bietjie dit of ek oefen gou bietjie of ek sien 'n student. So my dag, nie een dag lyk dieselfde nie, nie een week lyk dieselfde nie."*

"I get bored. I can't just focus on one thing for eight hours a day. This will break me. That's why I don't want an office job. You know that one, that monotonous, some tasks over and over breaks me. Where I can now focus for an hour and then I do, say, a little graphic design and then I think I've now done enough of that, then I'll go for a drive with a client or I do a little bit of this, and then I train a little bit or see a student. So my day, not one day looks the same, not one week looks the same."

Participants thus clearly preferred careers in which they could be creative, versatile, and passionate, with a focus on people.

Table 4.8

Research findings relating to Theme 2: The idiosyncratic journey towards constructing a career choice

THEME 2: THE IDIOSYNCRATIC JOURNEY TOWARDS CONSTRUCTING A CAREER CHOICE	
Sub-theme	Description
2.1 EXTERNAL INFLUENCES	According to Coetzee et al. (2016), external factors, such as family, education or chance factors, influence the nature and significance of work in the total lifespan of any given individual.
2.1.1 SIGNIFICANT OTHERS	They can be described as parents, families or the community that participants view as key figures they look up to for guidance and advice, and whose opinion significantly influences the career choice of the participant. Their impact can either be positive and thus supportive towards a performing arts career choice, or hostile and thus unsupportive and antagonistic towards a career choice in the performing arts.

Participants' comments and examples depict significant others' influences on their idiosyncratic journey towards constructing a career choice.

SIGNIFICANT OTHERS' FEEDBACK ON A CAREER CHOICE IN THE PERFORMING ARTS

POSITIVE FEEDBACK

(#1;B;224-226): *“The garage at our house was a band room, and most Saturdays, my dad would have rehearsal, but it was literally like a garage band style where both garage doors were open. The sound would be pumping into the street, the gate would be left open and anybody that played an instrument could come indoors. Yeah, that happened frequently, and I enjoyed that a lot.”*

(#13;B;21&204-207): *“My pa het daai jare ook nog gesing. So, hy was baie in die musiek. Ek het agter op die verhoë aan die slaap geraak. Interessant hy⁹² wou my nooit in dié wêreld gesien het nie, maar hy het my onbewustelik wakker gemaak vir hierdie wêreld. Ek het al daai goed met hom in geërf, jy weet. En um, my ouma self het nog gesing en van my ooms en tannies. So ek het uit hierdie familie, wat op daai stadium baie musikaal gesentreerd was, geopereer.”*

“Those years my father also still sang. So, he was very much in the music. I fell asleep at the back of stages. Interestingly, he never wanted to see me in this world, but he unwittingly woke me up to this world. I've inherited all that stuff through him, you know. And um, my grandmother herself was still singing and some of my uncles and aunts. So I operated from this family, which was at that stage, very musically centred.”

(#5;A;9): *“People who were kind and who believed in me influenced me most. Because they got me to do more than I thought I could.”*

⁹² Referring to his dad.

NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

(#17;B;287): *“My dad wasn't happy. My dad was, he kept on saying like sort of talk about the negative side of acting and all of that. Um, he wanted me to do something more stable.”*

(#18;B;158): *“So, die dag toe ek na my pa toe gaan en vir hom sê ek wil musiek gaan studeer, toe's dit net: daar's nie 'n manier nie. Jy gaan nie werk kry nie. Jy kan nie dit doen nie.”*

“So, the day I went to my dad and told him I wanted to go and study music, he just said: there's no way. You're not going to get a job. You can't do that.”

There were no definite career trends or qualifications from fathers, with qualifications ranging from obtaining a Grade 7, Matric, Diplomas and Degrees in a diverse range of non-art-related fields. The most prevalent career trend from the mothers' side was education, with other trends ranging from completing Grade 7, Matric, Diplomas and Degrees in diverse fields of study. Only one participant's mother and family members were musicians and music teachers.

What is perhaps more noteworthy is that even though the performing arts may not have been participants' parents' and family's primary career, there was an unambiguous and *positive* message and exposure towards the performing arts, whether in the form of an informal band, singing as a past-time or being involved in a symphony on a part-time basis. Almost all candidates (12) referred to the positive feedback, support and encouragement they received from their parents and family members to follow their dreams, whatever they may be. Central to the instrumental support participants received is the emotional and physical support received, such as funding participants while pursuing a performing arts career and assisting them with tasks while pursuing their performing art studies; even if it was to their own detriment, such as having to support the household on a small salary while allowing spouses to follow their calling.

Negative feedback from significant others, such as parents or extended family, mainly focused on the performing arts as an unstable career choice with no structure or security and, therefore, not a "real" job, i.e. a traditional job.

2.1.2 EDUCATORS

Educators, such as teachers, can also be viewed as important role models influencing the choice of a career in the performing arts.

Participants' comments and examples depict educators' influence on their idiosyncratic journey to construct a career choice.

(#18;B;152-156): *“So sy't die junior koor afgerig en toe iets in my raakgesien al in graad een eintlik... en dan't ek altyd weggeloop na haar klas toe. Dan gaan oefen ek op haar klavier. Die senior fase onderwyser het ook 'n groot impak op my gehad en daar't ek in die koor ok aangegaan en aangehou begelei by die junior koor en gesing in die senior koor en toe ek nou hoërskool toe gaan toe kry ek 'n beurs om musiekles te neem. By die vrou wat ek toe nou klasgeloop het tot in matriek het, ja, by my onderwyser. Sy't, toe sy my hoor toe my geborg vir sang en sy't my opgelei tot in matriek.”*

“So she coached the junior choir and then spotted something in me already in grade one actually... I always walked away to her class. Then I practiced on her piano. The senior stage teacher also had a big impact on me and there I also went on in the choir and kept accompanying the junior choir and singing in the senior choir and when I went to high school I got a scholarship to take music lessons. This was with the same who I had learned with until matric, yes, my teacher. She, when she heard me she sponsored me for singing and she trained me until matric.”

Again, many candidates (nine) referred to the support and encouragement they received from teachers in the performing arts, whether in music, drama or theatre. Teachers thus provided a clear message of passion, interest and support in the performing arts, sometimes beyond the particular teacher's call of duty.

2.1.3 SPECIFIC SITUATIONS Specific situations refer to either one-off events and experiences or recurrent situations impacting participants' career choices.

Participants' comments and examples depicting specific situations impacting their idiosyncratic journey towards constructing a career choice.

(#2;A;9): *“The high school I went to had a huge influence on me, as they had the right subject choices for me where I was allowed to take drama as a subject and music as a subject. I thrived.”*

(#8;A;9): *“The first time I heard a live symphony orchestra and my first production. I remember the exhilaration that I felt with both events.”*

(#16;B;100): *“I was in primary school when I saw Tobie Cronje for the first time on TV and I was thinking, 'Oh, that's what I am supposed to do if I want to be all of those things' ... So it was like, oh my soul, there's a brown child as small as I am. And he's on TV so I can definitely do it.”*

From the analysis of the above verbatim quotes, it is clear that exposure, whether it is a one-off experience (such as hearing your first orchestra), or more continuous exposure (such as having access to various performing arts subjects), has a definite impact on a career choice in the performing arts. Also impacting the choice are the opportunities that come with that exposure, such as sharing a stage with other well-known performing artists. Lastly, certain situations forced participants to make a career choice in the performing arts, which the participant would not necessarily have made.

2.2 INTERNAL INFLUENCES "CAREER IDENTITY" Internal influences relate specifically to the belief that what people know, who they are (their identities"), and thus how they view themselves, impact the idiosyncratic journey towards a career choice. Part of the identity is the construction of the Career Identity.

2.2.1 SELF-CONCEPT "Sense of being an artist" Self-concept is related to participants' sense of self or self-view, thus answering the fundamental question, "Who am I?" (Maree, 2017c), explicitly relating the concept to the journey of a career choice.

Participants' comments and examples depict their Vocational Identity and specifically their self-concept's impact on their idiosyncratic journey towards constructing a career choice.

(#12;B;117): *“This this is YOU. It's not something you like. This, this is you'. And that's what pushed me to go and audition at WITS and got in.*

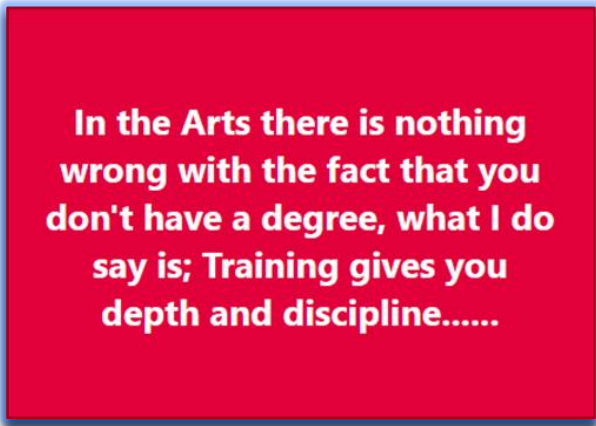
(#9;B;24-28): *“My mom tells me I sang before I spoke. So, before I had my first word, I sang. I sang my first solo at church when I was like seven or something. So that's always been who I am. It is not something I really chose... I think it chose me.”*

(#8;B;290-295): *“Dit was tussen musiek en drama. En toe't ek drama gedoen, en ek het geminor in viool anyway. So dit was altwee deel van dit, ja... En sielkunde vir 'n oomblik, maar toe's ek soos, whatever, nee. Dis te, dis te uhm, structured. So definitief drama en musiek.”*

“It was between music and drama. And then I did drama, and I minored in violin anyway. That was both part of it... And psychology for a moment, but then I'm like, whatever, no. It's too, it's too uhm, structured. So definitely drama and music.”

After analysing the verbatim quotes, two main ideas surfaced. The first evident idea is that the performing arts encapsulates participants "being"; thus, being "who they are" and not just a craft they perform. The second important idea is that they did not have a choice in deciding on a career path in the performing arts but as if the "performing arts" chose them and all they could do was "obey" in order to be authentic and happy.

The first sub-theme refers to specific aspects influencing participants' perceived career success or failures. The first aspect that directly impacted participants' perceived personal and career success was obtaining a qualification, making them feel good about themselves and their achievements. Not obtaining such a qualification makes them feel they have failed in this area, even if they acknowledge that they do not need it to succeed in their career. The following is a quote posted on Facebook by one of the very successful participants that summarises the reason for a qualification in the performing arts (#16;F;23):



In the Arts there is nothing wrong with the fact that you don't have a degree, what I do say is; Training gives you depth and discipline.....

Another essential indicator of career success or failure is the participants' perceived competence or incompetence in their chosen speciality within the performing arts. Participants viewed certain aspects as perceived success criteria within their craft, such as being competent, implying they have achieved a specific set and level of skills. Aspects within performances themselves, such as the number of shows (e.g. having performed in 50 shows), location of performance (such as nationally or internationally), with whom they perform, and sharing the stage with acclaimed performers, are also viewed as success criteria. Lastly, producing an artistic product, such as an album or video distributed nationally or internationally, and being members of prestigious organisations or guilds, also added to their perceived success criteria. Unfortunately, self-doubt regarding their craft and perfectionism leads them to procrastinate, looking at external sources for affirmation. Therefore, they did not take on new opportunities as often as they should, impacting their career success trajectory and thus becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy. The following verbatim quote clearly illustrates this (#9;B;77&81):

“I want to be the best at everything that I do, and it often stems from insecurities of, umm ', Can I do this well enough?' Am I good enough for it? If I'm confronted with a new challenge, I tend to procrastinate because I'm like, ' Will I do my best at it?' and 'What if I don't?' And then sometimes that voice just gets louder and louder and then is just... I hide.”

The last aspect impacting participants’ perceived career success or failure refers to “The Business of Performing Arts.” There was a clear distinction between participants who experienced a positive driving force and those who experienced a negative driving force in the performing arts business. As a positive driving force, a few participants were naturally inclined and motivated toward the business side as it was a natural progression from their current position. They started production-, event- or marketing companies, creating festivals and brands and thus improving the industry on a micro- and macro-societal level, even if the business itself was still not self-sustaining. On the contrary, other participants were pressured into the performing arts business, as they could not financially support their dream of exclusively being a performing artist. Therefore, they had to engage in other income-generating activities to support themselves financially⁹⁴ within and outside the creative arts. Participants indicating an aversion towards the business side indicated a negative attitude towards money in general, financial management and planning, and other management functions involved in being a producer or business manager. The following quote reflects the general trend of participants toward the business of performing arts (#1;B;11):

“But there are a lot of people that study in the creative industry, and walk away with qualifications and haven’t a clue what to do and do not have the business or the entrepreneurial acumen to turn their craft into a, to monetise it for themselves, basically. They just wanna create, they just wanna be creative.”

⁹⁴ Refer to Table 4.2 for an outline of income-generating activities.

The second sub-theme refers to a “Career Survival Skill Set” that emerged as part of participants' Career Development Trajectory. The skill set consists of the four Cs of Career Adaptability,⁹⁵ including Career Concern, Career Control, Career Curiosity, and Career Confidence. High Career Concern emerged as participants indicated that they enjoyed challenges, continuous innovation, taking action, demonstrating optimism and hope for the future and thus were proactive regarding their future planning and actions.

Participants portrayed certain traits that indicated a high level of career control. Traits included participants having a high level of self-responsibility, drive, preparedness (perhaps even being over-prepared) and perseverance in facing extreme challenges.⁹⁶ A high level of career curiosity included obtaining a diverse skill set, creating their own opportunities, and continuously re-inventing themselves. Lastly, career confidence was evident as participants indicated a positive self-view and self-confidence⁹⁷ and preferred working independently with high risk-taking behaviour.

Table 4.9

Research findings relating to Theme 3: The career development trajectory

THEME 3: CAREER DEVELOPMENT TRAJECTORY	
Sub-theme	Description
3.1 ASPECTS IMPACTING PERCEIVED PERSONAL AND CAREER SUCCESS OR FAILURE	Includes aspects that participants value within their personal and career development trajectory perceived as positively or negatively impacting them, thus leading to career success or failure. Aspects include education, craft competency and the Business of Performing Arts.
3.1.1 EDUCATION	Education significantly impacts individuals' goals and aspirations (Maree, 2020b).
Participants' comments and examples depict their perceived educational success and failure impacting their career development trajectory.	
PERCEIVED SUCCESS	
(#13;A;12): <i>“My academic successes.”</i>	
(#12;B;37&51): <i>“You see, studies help you to be focused. I remember him from Ezra 7:10. Ezra devoted himself to the study, to the practice and to the teaching. You cannot, you cannot change that order. Even</i>	

⁹⁵ See section 2.2.4.3.3, “Core pillars in the construction of a career” for an outline of Career Adaptability, the four C’s and its applicability to performing artists.

⁹⁶ Refer to Theme 1 for a discussion of some of these challenges.

⁹⁷ Refer to Theme 3, sub-sub-theme 3.1.2.

in our field you and I, you, you study first. You can't break the rules that you don't know. That's what drama school and places like that are there for. For you to make mistakes in a comfort zone and to find your signature within that theory. Find yourself in what you're doing and then go and teach... Sorry, I get excited, but that's non-negotiable for me."

PERCEIVED CAREER FAILURE

(#7;A;12): *"Not being able to complete school."*

(#14;B;227): *"I honestly, I don't know why I'm seeing it as a failure. I think it's the pressure of um... people that are surrounding me, you know, that have qualifications. And sometimes I feel like I'm growing up and I don't have, you know, a single qualification, and sometimes it just makes me feel bad about myself."*

Many participants felt proud of their academic achievements, whether obtaining a primary degree or an Honorary Doctorate. Even though a formal education within the performing arts is not necessarily required to obtain a specific job opportunity, it seems to have certain advantages, impacting participants' future goals and aspirations. It also assists participants in obtaining knowledge, skill, depth and discipline in the performing arts. Studying also provides a safe space within which to experiment and get valuable feedback to develop and grow. Lastly, participants seemed to view obtaining a qualification as an external acknowledgement of their chosen career path.

On the downside, participants mentioned that obtaining a qualification within the creative and performing arts is often complex as the end-product may be subjectively evaluated based on the personal preference of the evaluator and not really on the competency of the artists. They are also unsure of what to study as their day-to-day tasks incorporate various skills and competencies not integrated into one qualification. Lastly, they do not view obtaining a qualification as necessary to be successful in their chosen career trajectory, but they do experience external societal pressures relating to the importance of a degree and therefore feel pressured to obtain a qualification, specifically a degree, which holds a certain status in the community.

3.1.2 CRAFT COMPETENCE

Refers to participants' perceived level of competency or incompetence within their area of specialisation within the performing arts.

Participants' comments and examples depict their perceived competence or incompetence in their craft, impacting their career development trajectory.

PERCEIVED COMPETENCE

(#2;A;12): *"Establishing myself as a capable arranger, composer and performer."*

(#3;A;12): *"Successful opera and contemporary singer."*

(#16;A;12): *"Believability in my acting."*

PERCEIVED INCOMPETENCE

(#6;B;369): *"I've been insecure and always looking for affirmation from others."*

(#9;B;265-267): *"Everyone just comes 'Oh my gosh, that was so beautiful' and I'm just like yes, yes I did that! And then I go back home and I'm like oh my gosh, was I any good?"*

Participants viewed the following aspects as perceived success criteria within their craft:

- being competent, thus having achieved a specific set and level of skills;
 - aspects within performances themselves, such as the number of shows (e.g. having performed in 50 shows), the location of performances (such as nationally or internationally), with whom they perform, and sharing the stage with acclaimed performers;
 - producing an artistic product, such as an album or video distributed nationally or internationally, and being members of prestigious organisations or guilds.
-

Unfortunately, when participants doubt themselves and their level of competency, they tend to procrastinate, look towards external sources for affirmation and do not take on new opportunities as often as they should, impacting their career success trajectory.

3.1.3 THE BUSINESS OF PERFORMING ARTS Refers to entrepreneurial acumen such as obtaining resources and managing the performing arts as a business - albeit a one-person business or an entrepreneur engaging continuously in new business ventures.

Participants' comments and examples depict an inclination towards or aversion to the business of the performing arts, impacting their career development trajectory.

INCLINATION TOWARD THE BUSINESS OF PERFORMING ARTS

(#12;B;17): *"I got a Fulbright to go and do an MFA in Theatre Directing. So yeeah, ja...it was like I had a major and a sub-major. I just felt, no, I will not go home and always be asking for jobs and negotiating. I want to manage my own business."*

(#1;A;12&17): *"Owning two of my own festivals; being the head of a production for women; Festival/Event Director; Marketing Manager ensuring the success of brands in the creative sector; Orchestra/Programme Director Development of youth and contributing to building an industry and careers for young creatives; Arts Administrator: Working on programmes that are structured for success for creatives and developing audiences; Artist Manager ensuring that creatives are represented fairly and professionally."*

AVERSION TOWARDS THE BUSINESS OF PERFORMING ARTS

(#11;A;12) (#15;A;12) (#3;A;12): *"Failing to financially support my dream"*.

(#11;B;133): *"Ek haat geld. Ek haat dit. Ek hou nie daarvan om daaroor te praat nie. Ek hou nie daarvan om met geld te werk noodwendig nie. Dis, dit is vir my 'n euwel, as ek dit nou so kan stel. Daar's altyd probleme. Daar's altyd bakleiery."*

(#11;B;133): **"I hate money. I hate it. I don't like to talk about it. I don't like working with money, necessarily. It's, it is an evil for me, if I can put it that way now. There are always problems. There's always fighting."**

(#15;B;458): *"I'm not good with money. I don't think I know how to manage money, cause even after I get paid, and I don't know what's the right amount to pay people. I think I always overpay people and then I get left with nothing in the end. So, that is my problem. And also spending the money, the money that I have. I don't think I know that, I don't think I know how to say, okay, I do have this money but it's not mine to spend. I should probably save it for a certain thing."*

A few participants (three, to be precise) showed a natural inclination towards the business of performing arts as a natural progression of their craft. They aimed at addressing the typical hindrances experienced in the performing arts by starting production-, event- or marketing companies, creating festivals and brands and thus improving the industry. However, not one of these business ventures had been economically successful as yet. On the flip side, some participants mentioned that they could not financially support their dreams as performing artists and were unable to leave a financial legacy. Therefore, they are forced to participate in other income-generating activities to support themselves financially.⁹⁸

Some participants seem to have a strong aversion toward finances and managing their careers as a business. Their disdain includes a negative attitude towards money in general, financial management and planning, and other management functions involved in being a producer for productions or a business manager. In conclusion, it seems that most participants prefer to focus on the creative aspects of their craft and only get involved in the business/entrepreneurial side if they are forced.

⁹⁸ Refer to Table 4.2 for an outline of income-generating activities.

3.2 CAREER SURVIVAL SKILLS	Refers to Career Adaptability and specifically the four Cs (Concern, Control, Curiosity and Confidence). ⁹⁹
3.2.1 CAREER CONCERN	Refers to a future orientation and awareness of the importance of planning for the future, portrayed by either playfulness and optimism or apathy and pessimism (Savickas, 2005, 2013b). It answers the question, "Do I have a future?"

Comments and examples from participants depicting Career Concerns as part of their career survival skills impacting their career development trajectory.

(#18;B;70-72): *“Ek hou van nuwe uitdagings en ek hou van goed doen. So ek hou daarvan om ja te se vir mense. Ja, want dis nog iets om te doen. Ek wil asseblief nooit ledig sit nie. Ek wil net altyd iets hê om te doen.”*

(#18;B;70-72): **“I love new challenges and I love doing stuff. So I like saying yes to people. Yes, because it's another thing to do. I never want to sit idle. I always want something to do.”**

(#13;B;297): *“Jy moet gaan soek en jy moet net nie opgee nie. So that is where the survival lies. Om te bou en te bou en dis nogsteeds so. Ek moet voor my ander ouens wees, daarom doen ek, nou hierdie gedenkuitvoering. Nog niemand anders het aan dit gedink nie. Dit plaas my voor. Uhm, ek was gelukkig. Ek was een van die eerste Afrikaanse sangers wat in ‘n modern opera oor, uhm, ag wat is die ou se naam tog nou, wat toegesluit is daai tyd? Ag jinne, Breyten Breytenbach...wat eintlik uit ‘n revolusionêre punt geskryf is. So dit sit my ok weer voor; en so is daar heelwat goeters wat ek doen om seker te maak ek is vorentoe, as om net ‘Funiculi, Funicula’ te sing.”*

“You have to go looking and you just shouldn't give up. So that is where the survival lies. To build and build and it's still like that. I have to be ahead of the other guys, that's why I'm doing this memorial performance. No one else has thought of this yet. This puts me ahead. Uhm, I was fortunate. I was one of the first Afrikaans singers to be in a modern opera about, uhm, oh what is the guy's name now, who was locked up? Oh geez, Breyten Breytenbach... it was actually written from a revolutionary perspective. So it puts me in front again; and so there are quite a few things I do to make sure I'm ahead, as opposed to just singing "Funiculi, Funicula.”

From the above quotes, it is clear that participants have a high Career Concern as they understand the importance of being proactive in future planning. Participants demonstrate their Career Concern by enjoying challenges, continuous innovation, taking action, and demonstrating optimism and hope.

3.2.2 CAREER CONTROL	Refers to the individual's ability to control career choices versus career indecision (Savickas, 2010). It thus answers the question, "Who owns my future?"
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Comments and examples from participants depicting Career Control with a specific focus on enhanced self-responsibility, being driven, preparation and perseverance, and these factors impacting their career development trajectory as part of the career survival skill set.

⁹⁹ See section 2.2.4.3.3, “Core pillars in the construction of a career” for an outline of Career Adaptability, the four C’s and its applicability to performing artists.

SELF-RESPONSIBILITY

(#8;B;446-449): *“Dat al my sukses en happiness kan net nie kom van...ander mense nie. Dis te erg vir my. Daai power, moet myne wees. En dis vir my baie belangrik dat ek dit, dat ek daai power het. Making things happen for myself has been incredibly empowering.”*

“That all my success and happiness can't just come from... other people. It's too much for me. That power, must be mine. And it's very important to me that I have this, that I have that power. Making things happen for myself has been incredibly empowering.”

(#12;B;31): *“Something I always tell students, when you go into university, you must go in there with your agenda. It doesn't matter what the, eh courses are and eh, groupings...and I even directed things I was not getting credit for.”*

DRIVEN

(#12;B;31&33): *“And at that point, you understand, at WITS you needed a minister's consent to get into WITS as a black person. So I went through this person, went through that person, and finally I got the minister's consent and I went to WITS. So in third year I started asking, pestering the director, the lecturers to be an assistant director and then I went into directing big-time. So I had two majors then, acting and directing; and I even directed things I was not getting credit for...I had the end picture in mind...And then in my Master's I wanted to direct and also manage. And, and, they didn't stop me. They could not stop me.”*

(#10;B;269): *“We took a decision that we are going in fully, we are now driven more than ever because we realised the power we possess. That we can do this.”*

PREPARATION

(#9;B;95): *“This was the first initiative and the fact that we were considered to be part of this was a big deal for me. So, what I did was...I practiced almost every day. And I would overwork myself and like I wouldn't sleep at night. I'd listen to the songs in the middle of the night... just...to remember this note and then tomorrow I want to discuss things with the boys...That's how I overwork myself.”*

(#12;B;115): *“When I go and audition, I prepare. When I go on set, I prepare. When I direct, I am careful about my skill and the language I use. Professionalism within the faith and professionally in the arts. It matters all the time...You must prepare...professionalism in every sphere.”*

PERSEVERANCE

(#7;B;127): *“So I had to teach myself how to stand strong, how to wipe the tears and move on (shows with hands how she had to move on). Whether I liked it, whether I wanted to take a moment just to feel sorry for myself, or to say, it's okay, want niemand het dit gedoen nie, dis okay... Dis die manier hoe ek myself moes grootmaak. Ek moes dit leer.”*

(#5;B;152): *“I show up even though I'm scared, nervous, low on self-esteem and what not else, I show up.”*

(#13;B;295): *“Maar daar's survival, om daar te gekom het. Dit is nie 'n maklike pad nie, en ek sê altyd vir my studente, wat altyd met 'n ster in die oë instap en sê ek wil sing. Dink jy ek's goed genoeg? Dan sê ek, Hoe graag wil jy dit hê? Dit is wat alles bepaal. Jy kan met die wêreld se talent sit, as jy nie rêrig die passie het om deur te druk deur die hardships nie, 'You never going to make it.’”*

“But there's survival, to get there. It's not an easy road, and I always tell my students okay, who always step inside with a star in the eye and say I want to sing. Do you think I'm good enough? Then I say, How much do you want it? That's what determines everything. You can sit with the world's talent, if you don't really have the passion to push through the hardships, 'You are never going to make it.'”

From participants' comments it is clear that a high level of Career Control is present. Participants portray radical self-responsibility over their life and career decisions and are highly driven. As part of their self-responsibility, they seem to prepare and even over-prepare. As such, they do not merely rely on talent or years of experience. Lastly, they are resilient, which means they persevere through hardship and go against all odds.

3.2.3 CAREER CURIOSITY Refers to curiosity towards various interests and alternatives (Savickas, 2013b). It answers the question, "What do I want to do with my future?"

Comments and examples from participants depicting Career Curiosity with a specific focus on their diverse skill set, creating their own opportunities and a continuous re-invention of self and the impact thereof on their career development trajectory, as part of the career survival skill set.

DIVERSE SKILL SET

(#19;B;89-91&192-194): *"Jy moet al jou skills gebruik. Ek meen ek kan darem ook teach. En ek het by 'n graphic design plekkie gewerk. Daai ondervinding wat ek daar opgedoen het...jy het skills as jy net bietjie, bietjie...dis effort... Ek het basies drie loopbane, kuns, visual, visual arts ennn, musiek en uhm gallery house, ek noem dit gallery house. Daar's teach. Ek hou huiskonserte."*

"You have to use all your skills. I mean, I can teach too. And I worked at a little graphic design place. That experience I gained there was... you have skills if you have just a little, little... it's effort... I basically have three careers, art, visual, visual arts andddd, music and uhm gallery house, I call it gallery house. There's teaching. I have house concerts."

(#12;B;26-27): *"Look I started by acting, and then there was no director, and I went into directing and then there was no writer and then I went into writing."*

CREATING OWN OPPORTUNITIES

(#8;A;13): *"Motivate yourself, do not wait for opportunities, create them yourself."*

(#1;B;9): *"I've created a lot of my own opportunities by volunteering a lot of my time to sort of demonstrate, to first of all build my own skills but also to demonstrate the value of having somebody like me as part of your various projects. Um, in order to create a position for myself, which has never resulted in full-time employment but it has evolved into the multiple things I have done as a freelancer."*

CONTINUOUS RE-INVENTION OF SELF

(#12;B;53): *"As an artist, you must never copy yourself. You must, as, as, as Levia Thuli said, my other, my Master's teacher, you must be reinventing yourself all the time."*

(#6;B;35-36): *"So, right now, I'm incorporating other artworks as in the poetry, the um, using film, the visuals, like I think, more visually now, than I would just...initially. Now I started seeing images, you know. So that's something I really wanna develop; Yes, I need to develop this even further."*

From participants' comments it is clear that they have a high Career Curiosity as they demonstrate curiosity and courage. They continuously develop their skill set to improve their competency within their specific craft (depth) and expand their skill set (width), and, in doing so, create their own opportunities. Thus, they do not stagnate but continuously re-invent themselves, which is also evident in the various income-generating activities within and outside the Performing Arts and Creative Industries.¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰ Refer to Table 4.2

3.2.4 CAREER CONFIDENCE

Reflects the expectation of career success. It relates to feelings of self-efficacy concerning individuals' ability to successfully execute a course of action needed to make and implement suitable career choices (Savickas, 2005). It answers the question, "Can I do it?"

Comments and examples from participants depicting Career Confidence, including aspects such as having a positive self-view and self-confidence, being independent, and increased risk-taking behaviour and the impact thereof on their career development trajectory, as part of the career survival skill set.

POSITIVE SELF-VIEW AND SELF-CONFIDENCE

(#1;B;9): *"I've created a lot of my own opportunities...but also to demonstrate the value of having somebody like me as part of your various projects."*

(#13;B;323): *"Ek sal miskien nie altyd sing nie, maar daar's soveel ander dinge wat ek nog kan doen."*

"I may not always sing, but there are so many other things I can still do."

INDEPENDENCE

(#8;A;10&13): *"Just want to be allowed to do my own thing though. Independence is awesome!"*

(#18;B;196): *"Ja. Ek wil dit self... ek wil dit op my manier doen. Ek dink dis waar daai hardkoppigheid bietjie inkom want ek wil nie 'n A&R bestuurder hê wat vir my sê presies wat ek moet sing, hoe ek moet aantrek, met wie ek mag meng."*

"Yes. I want to do it myself... I want to do it my way. I think that's where that stubbornness comes in a bit because I don't want an A&R manager telling me exactly what I must sing, how I should dress, who I must mix with."

RISK-TAKING

(#8;A;9): *"I took major chances because I really had no fear."*

(#1;B;169): *"Um, I don't mind taking risks and sometimes at the expense of, like I was actually saying to John¹⁰¹ now, um, 'cause we were talking about financial goals and everything, um, I will disinvest my investments to host a festival and self-fund myself instead of waiting for three years to be funded by whoever."*

After analysing the quotes, it seems that participants have high Career Confidence portrayed in their positive self-view and -confidence. Therefore, they view themselves and their world positively, believe in their ideas and way of doing things and are highly independent, preferring an autonomous work environment instead of working in a structured work environment. Their high Career Confidence also leads them to take risks that other individuals might not be willing to take.

4.9.4 Introduction to Theme 4: The creative urge to convert pain into creative expression, hope, social contributions, and purpose

After analysing the different data sources, a fourth theme emerged. At the core of this theme, participants referred to "The creative urge to convert 'pain' into creative expression, hope, social contributions, and purpose". Furthermore, I identified two sub-themes that shed some light on participants' conversion from pain to healing.

¹⁰¹ Pseudonym

The first sub-theme highlights the emotional healing participants experience as they engage in and express their creative and performing art, thereby finding healing through being creative, whether it is through writing new songs or plays. They also find healing as they express themselves through the artwork by acting, thus portraying a character or music, e.g. using their emotions to provide a deeper interpretation of songs. The arts also act as a spotlight as they shed light on issues that participants had previously been unaware of or may have hidden away, and thus the arts provide a safe space where participants can voice their pain without feeling too vulnerable or exposed as they “hide” behind the character. Lastly, it is challenging to separate the creative and performing arts as many participants use creative arts to provide content for the performing arts. The following words capture the essence of the first sub-theme, “Healing through creative expression” (#18;F;10-11):

“I think music in itself is healing. It's an explosive expression of humanity. It's something we are all touched by. No matter what culture we're from, everyone loves music. – Billy Joel”

The second sub-theme focused on the active mastery of passive suffering, thus converting pain into personal hope, and social contributions become purpose. A dynamic, reciprocal relationship between participants and the audience brings healing to both parties. Firstly, participants share their stories of pain with audiences and as such their ‘pain’ makes social contributions and becomes their purpose. There is also an interaction between participants and audiences, with participants being emotionally aware of their perceived or actual experiences while trying to impress and please audiences. Participants value their supporters¹⁰² and are inspired by them. Some participants also referred to the ‘theatre’, which allows participants and audiences a safe space within which they could be vulnerable, reflect on their lives, and debate controversial societal issues; a space in which to heal, teach, learn and mentor.

¹⁰² Refers to both the audience when performing and supporters outside the performance space.

Participants thus 'contribute' through mentoring in a formal setting when they provide vocal or drama coaching,¹⁰³ or in an informal setting such as when an actor shares "tips" on better portraying a character on set. Participants also provide informal mentoring focusing on general life issues by providing emotional support and encouragement to students or, more formally, by volunteering their services, free of charge, at community centres such as Lifeline. Thus, their pain is converted into a purpose as they give others hope and assist in their healing process.

In summary, the process¹⁰⁴ thus gave participants a purpose through their being able to provide a social contribution as they actively master what they passively suffer, bringing participants confidence, hope and happiness, but most of all, a purpose. The following quote captures the essence of the theme (#3;E;56-67):

"Only art can take the holler of a returning soldier and turn it into a shared expression and a deep collective experience.

Music, like all art, gives pain and our most wrenching emotions voice, language, and form so it can be recognized and shared.

The magic of the high lonesome sound is the magic of all art.

It is the ability to both capture our pain, and deliver us from it at the same time...

The transformative power of art is in the sharing. Without connection or collective engagement, what we hear is simply a caged song of sorrow and despair. We find no liberation in it.

It is the sharing of art that whispers,

"you are not alone."

Brene Brown, Braving the Wilderness

¹⁰³ Refer to Table 4.2.

¹⁰⁴ Process refers to the conversion from pain to purpose as participants actively master what they passively suffered.

Table 4.10

Research findings relating to Theme 4: The creative urge to convert pain into creative expression, hope, social contributions, and purpose

THEME 4: THE CREATIVE URGE TO CONVERT PAIN INTO CREATIVE EXPRESSION, HOPE, SOCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS AND PURPOSE	
Sub-theme	Description
4.1 HEALING THROUGH CREATIVE EXPRESSION	Refers to emotional healing as participants engage with and express their creative and performing art.
<p>Comments and examples from participants depicting healing through creative expression.</p> <p>(#15;B;268): <i>“My music to me is more like a, like a purpose, you know? When I sing a certain song, or when I write it, I, I expect certain emotions or, or healing.”</i></p> <p>(#17;A;9) (#17;B;147): <i>“I was molested growing up and I tried to hide away all the emotions that came from that trauma. And I grew up in a home where I didn't feel safe to express myself, so finding entertainment really influenced me and my healing process... because entertainment became my voice.”</i></p> <p>(#14;F;5-6): <i>“We share our stories not only to heal others but also ourselves. We laugh, we live but most of all we love... We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us; and as we let our light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. This is our own journey and we gonna embrace it.”</i></p> <p>After analysing the quotes, it became evident that the creative and performing arts serve a purpose in participants' healing process. The creative and performing arts provide a safe space where participants can voice their pain in a legitimate space without feeling too vulnerable or exposed. Many participants use their experiences in their creative writing or portraying a character as part of the process. Furthermore, the arts can shed light on issues that participants may be unaware of or have hidden away. Lastly, the creative and performing arts are intertwined as many participants use one (creative arts) to provide the other (performing art) with content.</p>	
4.2 ACTIVE MASTERY OF PASSIVE SUFFERING - PAIN CONVERTED INTO PERSONAL HOPE, AND SOCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS BECOME PURPOSE	Refers to an individual’s process of actively mastering passive suffering, converting the pain into personal hope and social contributions, transforming into their life purpose.
4.2.1 COLLECTIVE AND INTERACTIVE EXPERIENCE BETWEEN PERFORMING ARTISTS AND AUDIENCES	Refers to the reciprocal relationship between the participant and the audience. The audience refers to the people watching the performance and loyal supporters, whereas the theatre is the space where performances occur and contain the correct equipment for performances, such as props, lighting, and sound. Thus, the purpose of the space is for performances.
<p>Comments and examples from participants depict the collective and interactive experience between participants and audiences leading to hope, social contributions, and purpose.</p>	

PERFORMANCES

(#14;B;263-264): *“There's this other time that I wanted to do an event and I called it broken for a blessing... We don't realise that sometimes in the journey that we are going through, the pain, the disappointment and all the other things that happen in our lives prepare us for the blessings that we are or the blessings that we will be in other people's lives.”*

(#5;C;73): *“I experience fear, anxiety, dread, being different and thus wrong. Therefore I want others to laugh and not share what I have and are experiencing, and thus to heal.”*

(#15;C;119): *“... use my music to heal, bring confidence, hope and happiness, making a difference locally and internationally.”*

(#3;C;78): *“Die wisselwerking wat dit tussen my en my gehoor bring, bring genesing vir beide my en my gehoor.”*

“The interplay it brings between me and my audience brings healing to both me and my audience.”

(#16;B;309&315): *“It's scary to go on stage, feel the audience. Uhm, Daar is nie...it goes roller coaster with you. Ja, en dan is alles okay. Dan wonder ek hoekom? Elke mens het mos sy eie ervaring, kom sit met sy eie background en kom van verskillende huise af. So I think it's...maybe it has something to do with acceptance. Is the audience gonna accept it? And then when you're on the stage that acceptance is there.”*

“It's scary to go on stage, feel the audience. Uhm, There is not...it goes roller coaster with you. Yes, and then everything is okay. Then I wonder why? Every person has his own experience, comes to sit with his own background and comes from a different house. So I think it's...maybe it has something to do with acceptance. Is the audience gonna accept it? And then when you're on the stage that acceptance is there.”

(#6;B;60): *“The audience, there are those people who are so loyal to my work, those people who would drop everything and just come see my shows...I value them, so much; they motivate me (deep sigh). I think I, um, they, they inspire me more than I inspire them.”*

From the above quotes it is clear that participants use their experiences, the pain and the suffering, and convert it into a message of hope for themselves and everywhere they perform. Through their journey from pain to hope, they use their performances to heal, bring confidence, hope and happiness to others, and in doing so, make social contributions providing participants with their specific life purpose. Participants are tuned into the perceived or actual experiences of others¹⁰⁵ they aim to impress, please and to be accepted, while at the same time being inspired by them. Therefore, reciprocal relationship brings healing to both the participants and others.

THEATRE

(#16;B;134&201): *“And I think maybe that's why I also enjoy theatre, want teater gee mos 'n lekker mirror reflection van wat in society aangaan en deur middel van jou performance heal jy.”*

“And I think maybe that's why I also enjoy theatre, because theatre offers a nice mirror reflection of what is going on in society and through your performance you heal.”

(#16;C;112-113): *“I will be happy and successful when I am able to shine my light as a theatre owner and producer and use the theatre as a platform to heal, teach, learn, mentor and give people opportunities.”*

The theatre allows participants and audiences to be vulnerable and reflect on their lives, and provides a safe space to debate controversial and societal issues. The theatre thus provides a space to heal, teach, learn and mentor.

¹⁰⁵ Referring to the audience and supporters on a local and international level.

4.2.2 MENTORING

Refers to the relationship where a more experienced individual shares his or her expertise with a more inexperienced individual. The relationship focuses on formal or informal career or skills development but can expand to other areas (Ragins & Kram, 2007).

Comments and examples from participants depict how they actively mastered their passive suffering, converting pain into personal hope and social contributions through mentoring.

PERFORMING ARTS

(#12;B;135): *"I try and multiply myself every time I am on set or whatever. I pass on. I just give freely. The theories, the practice, the tricks, the what have you. Somebody I'm acting with is struggling to interpret their role, I say, this is how you can do it. And then they go and do the scene, and they come back, and they say, 'How did you know that?' And I say, 'Don't worry.' See I can open up all the textbooks from WITS and Columbia, I can. But that Ezra 7:10. I have practised. I can teach now."*

GENERAL LIFE

(#3;B;247): *"As ek sien hoe die mense op my pad kom wat so nodig het om te hoor, maar jy gaan hierdeur kom, jy kan dit oorleef, en ja ek deel my omstandighede met hulle om vir hulle te sê, hoe dit was en dan verstaan hulle. Skielik as jy na die prentjie kyk besef jy, my situasie en John¹⁰⁶ s'n... Dis eintlik nie so erg nie. Kom ek stick net by wat hy sê en miskien is dit 'n oplossing."*

"When I see the people coming my way who so need to hear, but you're going to get through this, you can survive it, and yes I share my circumstances with them to tell them what it was like and then they understand. Suddenly when you look at the picture you realise, my situation and John's... It's actually not that bad. Let me just stick to what he's saying and maybe that's a solution."

(#7;B;151): *"Die twist in alles is vir my, is die feit...omdat ek daar was, weet ek presies hoe om iemand te help. En ek sê nie ek, ek dink ek weet hoe nie. Ek weet presies hoe om iemand te help."*

"The twist in everything is for me, is the fact... because I've been there, I know how to help someone. And I'm not saying I, I think I know how. I know exactly how to help someone."

(#11;B;52): *"Ek wil mense kan inspireer en motiveer. Ek wil vir hulle kan sê, Luister hierso. Hierdie is waar ek deur gegaan het. Hierdie is waardeur hierdie ene deurgegaan het. Hoekom kan jy nie ook nie?"*

"I want to be able to inspire and motivate people. I want to be able to tell them, listen to me here. This is what I went through. This is what this one went through. Why can't you too?"

Through participants' process of actively mastering their pain and trauma and the culmination of their experiences within and outside the arts, they have hope and make social contributions. Contributions can either be in a formal setting, as when they provide vocal or drama coaching,¹⁰⁷ or in an informal setting, when an actor shares "tips" on better portraying a character on set. Furthermore, mentoring is not limited to the arts and can expand to providing emotional support and encouragement. Thus, participants' pain is converted into hope, social contributions, and purpose.

4.9.5 Introduction to Theme 5: The transformative process leading to forward movement

The fifth theme emerged as participants gave feedback on their experience of the life-design intervention. The theme's core focus is on the "Transformative process leading to forward movement". The first sub-theme focused on participants' meta-reflections as they reflected on their experience of the life-design intervention. From analysing participants' meta-reflections, it emerged

¹⁰⁶ Pseudonym

¹⁰⁷ Refer to Table 4.2.

that they enjoyed the intervention on three levels. On a cognitive level, they enjoyed analysing their experiences, constructs and insights, while on an affective level, they experienced delight and contentment with their life and the process itself. Lastly, they were pushed forward in their actions (behaviour) by the positive drive released by the process. Importantly, they also persevered through the intervention process, despite the difficulty of being confronted with themselves, thus facing their fears and weaknesses. However, they were determined and courageous, persevered through the intervention, and experienced personal triumphs and freedom in some areas.

Through the intervention, reflections and meta-reflections, participants gained increased self-awareness and knowledge (the second sub-theme), thus answering the question, "Who am I?". They discovered and re-discovered aspects of themselves and their careers that they were unaware of, or had forgotten. Thus, the intervention assisted by integrating diverse aspects of their identity and adaptability into coherent life themes, assisting participants with a clear "life script" to follow, which led to the third sub-theme, i.e. changed behaviour.

The first area where behavioural changes occurred was participants' increased self-efficacy, self-belief and self-acceptance. Participants have also started appreciating their lives and journey, acknowledging that they do not have to have everything figured out, and can enjoy the growth they have already experienced and the rest of the journey. Participants also indicated increased risk-taking

behaviour, assertiveness and resilience. The following quote that a participant posted on Facebook reflects the sentiment of the first three sub-themes (#6;F;62):

This year might have been the best financially ...but emotionally and psychologically, it has been the most demanding.

Adapting to motherhood and making sure I'm still relevant in the arts has been so tough. Finding a balance between being the badass mom that I am and a great artist that I am has been a challenge and a half.

However, I did it. I achieved way more than I ever did. I made national and international moves.....I won even though I felt like I was losing my mind some days.

I am extremely grateful for the support I have from family and friends.

Here's to an even better 2022. To start my year on a high with confirmed gigs is a blessing. It's gonna be more demanding but I am ready for it all.

It took being a subject on one incredible woman's PHD research for me to truly believe in myself. [Ronel Kleynhans](#) I can never thank you enough. I thought I was helping you....little did I know I needed you more than you needed me. That session we had....I will never forget. I mean how could I when I'm busy reaping the rewards? May God continue to bless you and to bless others through you ❤️

In the last sub-theme, participants envisaged short-term goals focused on two areas. Firstly, they aimed to improve their emotional well-being by searching for a therapist, nurturing their inner child, and pacing themselves to live a more balanced lifestyle. Secondly, they were more purpose-driven in their actions as they aimed at stepping out of their comfort zone more frequently, thus challenging themselves more and aligning their actions and what they say yes to with their vision. Lastly, they indicated an increased focus on improving their skill set, whether in their chosen specialisation area within the performing arts or within business.

Table 4.11

Research findings relating to Theme 5: The transformative process leading to forward movement

THEME 5: THE TRANSFORMATIVE PROCESS LEADING TO FORWARD MOVEMENT	
Sub-theme	Description
5.1 EXPERIENCE OF THE LIFE-DESIGN INTERVENTION	Refers to individuals' experience of the life-design intervention and accompanying meta-reflections.
5.1.1 ENJOYMENT	Refers to positive experiences during individuals' meta-reflections, portrayed on a cognitive, affective and behavioural level.
Comments and examples from participants depict the enjoyment of the meta-reflections in the intervention as part of the transformative process leading to forward movement.	
<p>(#1;B;324): <i>“This was very insightful, and it’s, it’s, cool to realise that in being open and honest, that there is consistency.”</i></p> <p>(#8;B;341): <i>“Dis vir my lekker om uhm, om te delf dieper oor goeters, en dan net die beaming van, ek voel ek is nou, om te praat en terug te dink, op watse lekker plek ek nou is en dat wat ek nou doen moet ek net aangaan mee, because it’s really, the amount of joy forward is divine. Dis so awesome, jy weet. My lewetjie,my variasie, my dit en dit is so fokken beautiful. Ek love dit.”</i></p> <p><i>“It’s nice for me to delve deeper into things, and then just the confirmation of, I feel I’m now, to talk and think back, at what a nice place I am at now and that what I’m doing now I just have to continue with, because it’s really, the amount of joy forward is divine. It’s so awesome, you know. My little life, my variation, my this and this is so fucking beautiful. I love it.”</i></p> <p>Participants enjoyed reflecting on the intervention and their reflections (meta-reflections), which occurred on three levels. Firstly, they enjoyed analysing their experiences, constructs, and insights from the intervention on a cognitive level. On an affective level, they enjoyed the process, experiencing delight and contentment with their life and the process itself. Lastly, they were pushed forward in their actions (behaviour) through the enjoyment and the intervention itself.</p>	
5.1.2 PERSEVERANCE	Refers to persevering with the intervention and meta-reflections despite hardships, reflected on a cognitive, affective and behavioural level.
Comments and examples from participants depict their perseverance throughout the intervention and meta-reflections as part of the transformative process leading to forward movement.	

(#7;B;311): “...maar voor ek elke vraag geantwoord het, het ek so bietjie weggestap, sigaret in my mond gesit, asem gehaal, gechannel en dan terug gekom na die antwoord toe. Ek moes dit doen. Soos wat ek deur die survey gegaan het, het ek begin pluk aan sekere snare. En ek het gesê dis now or never, if you don't do this...it's now or never. Dan gaan jy nie ontslae raak van daai nie.”

“... but before I answered every question, I walked away a little, put a cigarette in my mouth, took a breath, gasped, and then came back to the answer. I had to do this. As I went through the survey, I started picking on certain strings. And I said it's now or never, if you don't do this... it's now or never. Then you're not going to get rid of that.”

(#9;B;583&585&589&593&603): *“It was an emotional experience because...now it is making me emotional again. Because it's... it's very important to dig deep. But it is very difficult for me because I'm always scared of what's inside... and I cry because I'm proud of myself for being so open you know and uh...Even though I'm doing it with tears but I'm still doing it. Pushing through it you know. Um... I feel like I am in the right place, I feel like I am on the right track. I feel like... I've been saying I am wanting to face my fears, I've been saying I'm afraid to be vulnerable but I realised today that I did face my fears. I was vulnerable today (laughs). Yeah but, um I'm glad I did because I feel so much better. I feel liberated.”*

It was challenging for participants to look inside the proverbial mirror and face their fears, weaknesses and other personal dark areas they would rather hide. Still, they were determined, courageous and they persevered through the process, experiencing personal triumphs and freedom.

5.2 INCREASED SELF-AWARENESS AND KNOWLEDGE Becoming aware of aspects within the 'self' and thus answering the question, "Who am I?", leading to increased self-knowledge (Maree, 2017c).

Comments and examples from participants depict their increased self-awareness and knowledge as part of the transformative process leading to forward movement.

(#7;A;19): *“I have learnt so much about my shortcomings, the shadows in the cracks of my wall. The unspoken anger that haunts me on a daily basis...Uncertainty about life and those that dwell with me in it.”*

(#15;B;725&729): *“I feel like I just went through a therapy session and I wasn't even prepared...one thing that I'm so glad about is that it didn't even, it didn't hurt. It felt more liberating, it, it really, it was a great conversation... 'cause instead of, of, speaking about what really happened and the bad memories, we actually talked about what I learned from those memories and how do I see those things that happened...it actually gave me hope, you know. Cause I didn't even think that I was healing from some of the things, but for me to even speak about them without so much as shedding a tear or feeling sad about them. It means a lot to me. Because I used to really feel like it was pointless, what I went through cause I didn't think there were lessons in what I went through. I just felt damaged. But now, I legit see.”*

Participants experienced increased self-awareness and self-knowledge as they discovered and rediscovered their self- and career during the intervention. Furthermore, they reported having increased self-confidence and experienced emotional healing in a non-threatening and gentle way. Thus, the intervention assisted them to integrate diverse aspects of their identity and adaptability into coherent life themes, thus assisting participants by giving them a clear "life script" to follow.

5.3 CHANGED BEHAVIOUR Refers to positive behavioural changes resulting from the life-design intervention.

5.3.1 INCREASED SELF-EFFICACY Refers to individuals' self-narrative and viewing themselves more positively, indicating increased self-efficacy.

Comments and examples from participants depict an improved positive self-view resulting from the transformative process leading to forward movement.

(#6;B;369&371): *"I've been insecure and always looking for affirmation from others, but doing this, I'm like, I actually have that affirmation myself, I just didn't know it, because from what I said, you could put it in such beautiful ways that I'm like, I'm worthy."*

(#15;B;707): *"I'm only realising now that life is, life is actually so beautiful because everything that you go through, builds you up for the next moment. I'm on a journey and I shouldn't even have it figured out, right now. I should just enjoy the ongoing process, because for me it has always been about reaching a goal, but now it's more about living the goal."*

From an analysis of the data it is clear that participants experienced a change in their focus, increasing their positive self-talk as they started affirming, believing and accepting themselves much more than before, thus leading to increased self-efficacy. They also started appreciating their lives and the journey they're on, acknowledging that they do not have to have everything figured out, and that they can enjoy the growth they have already experienced and can enjoy the rest of the journey.

5.3.2 INCREASED RISK-TAKING Refers to individuals who are willing to take more risks than before.

Comments and examples from participants depict increased risk-taking behaviour resulting from the transformative process leading to forward movement.

(#17;C;150-151): *"I started taking more chances. I have applied for everything that I find artistically interesting. I am actively taking myself out of my comfort zone in order to start achieving my goals."*

The participant indicated increased risk-taking behaviour as she is taking more chances and is now actively taking herself out of her comfort zone to apply for opportunities she finds artistically interesting, thus being more goal-orientated.

5.3.3 INCREASED ASSERTIVENESS Refers to individuals who act more assertively than before.

Comments and examples from participants depict increased assertiveness resulting from the transformative process leading to forward movement.

(#17;C;154): *"I have been speaking out for myself, and also speaking up for my ideas, and not apologising for taking up space in one-on-one and group settings."*

The participant is much more assertive, speaking up for her ideas and being more assertive in who she is and what she stands for.

5.3.4 INCREASED RESILIENCE Refers to individuals who are more resilient than before.

Comments and examples from participants depict increased resiliency resulting from the transformative process leading to forward movement.

(#17;C;151): *"My friend noticed the changes and said, "WOW, I love the new you; she is so resilient."*

The intervention resulted in the participant portraying increased resiliency, and others noticed it.

5.4 ENVISAGED SHORT-TERM GOALS	Refers to goals individuals aim to accomplish soon, thus feeding into their action plans.
5.4.1 IMPROVING EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING	Refers to specific action steps for improving individuals' emotional well-being.

Comments and examples from participants depict envisaged short-term goals that focus on improving their emotional well-being.

(#8;C;131): *“My next goal is to learn to pace myself. I tend to have extreme lifestyles. When I am so busy, I can't breathe to where I have too much time. My theme for the rest of the year is ‘Pace yourself’.”*
 (#17;C;152): *“I have been actively looking for a therapist to start dealing with all of myself. I still haven't found one, but I won't give up.”*

Participants commented on setting goals to improve their emotional well-being, such as seeing a therapist, nurturing their inner child, and pacing themselves to live a more balanced lifestyle.

5.4.2 INCREASED PURPOSE-DRIVEN ACTIONS	Refers to individuals being more purpose-driven in their career, with a specific focus on their craft and business-related actions.
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Comments and examples from participants depict an increase in their envisaged purpose-driven actions with specific reference to their craft and the business thereof.

(#18;C;113-117): *“Keep honing my craft. Try to step out of my comfort zone more frequently. Streamline my life more and start to say yes to the things that align with my vision and no to the things that do not. Expand my own home studio and get acquainted with online work such as Fiver to start to work with international creators.”*

Participants seem to be more focused and purpose-driven by stepping out of their comfort zone more frequently, thus setting themselves more challenges and aligning their actions and what they say yes to with their vision. Participants' short-term goals also reflect this focus as they indicated an increased focus on the continuous improvement of their skill set, whether in their chosen specialisation area within the performing arts or the business thereof.

4.10 CONCLUSION AND CRITICAL REFLECTION

This chapter reported on the qualitative data obtained during my research by analysing numerous data sources. The data sources included the Career Interest Profile (CIP), career construction interview (CCI), CCI worksheets, candidate feedback, researcher reflections on candidates, informal documents available in the public domain and my reflective journal/diary.

I attempted to illustrate rejection's significant impact on participants' lives and how they aimed to address it. Furthermore, I focused on how participants constructed their career choice and career development trajectories. I also focused on participants' use of their creative urge to convert trauma into creative expression. Lastly, I looked at the transformative journey as part of participants' role in

the process and their envisaged way forward while keeping in mind the aim of answering the research questions.

In Chapter Five, the qualitative data is linked to critically relate this to the theoretical framework and the literature reviewed in previous chapters.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF MY FINDINGS AND RELATING MY FINDINGS TO EXISTING LITERATURE ON THE CAREER CONSTRUCTION OF PERFORMING ARTISTS



(Holy Mountain Monastery, 2022)

5.1 INTRODUCTION

From the above painting by the painter Octavia Ocampo (1998) and the accompanying words from the Talmud, each person perceives their uniqueness in the way “they” are. Therein lies the “superpower” of qualitative research to value the deep meaning of people’s lives, representing their views and perspectives (Yin, 2011). The emphasis therefore fell on developing and building inductively based new interpretations and theories of descriptions of events as they evolved from the lives of performing artists (Babby & Mouton, 2001; Tracy, 2020). I followed an interpretivist perspective, thus assisting me in answering the research question by developing a nuanced, in-depth

understanding of the experiences and meanings inherent in the creation of the career path of performing artists (Henning et al., 2004; Johnson et al., 2020; Maree, 2012a; Tracy, 2020).

The main aim of the current chapter is to answer the question, what does it all mean? (Saldana & Omasta, 2016), relating my findings to the research questions and previous research studies. It is thus the first attempt to answer Maree's (2017b) plea for more research on CCT in diverse settings (such as that of performing artists)¹⁰⁸ in the South African context. My discussion of the existing literature deals with the relevant deductive a priori and inductively identified additional themes, sub-themes, and sub-sub-themes derived from the research data. My goal in comparing my findings with existing literature was to either substantiate similarities or emphasise differences between my results and that found in existing research. I also kept in mind that my study could discover new findings that previous studies had not reported. The chapter furthermore attempts to identify and expand on new and emerging trends, keeping in mind that limited research has previously been conducted on the career construction of performing artists.

5.2 DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS IN RELATION TO PREVIOUS STUDIES

In this section, I discuss the results obtained from the data analysis. The research findings are discussed based on the themes, sub-themes, sub-sub-themes, and sub-sub-sub-themes¹⁰⁹ and then related to the research questions.

5.2.1 Theme 1: Rejection

The first theme that naturally emerged from the data was rejection, defined as the intense feeling of being wrong, unimportant, and unvalued. Skaggs' statement (2019) that a career in the arts is not beholden to clearly delineated categories of success or failure but is instead a series of potential opportunities characterised by a high volume of rejection, even for established and successful artists, is substantiated by the first theme. Two sub-themes emerged under the central theme of rejection,

¹⁰⁸ Author's own insertion.

¹⁰⁹ Refer to Chapter 4, Table 4.3 for a summary of the themes, sub-themes, sub-sub-themes and sub-sub-sub-themes.

referring to three rejection levels and how participants dealt with rejection on each level, as highlighted in the following sections.

5.2.1.1 *Levels of rejection*¹¹⁰

Most participants experienced rejection, in various degrees, on an intrapersonal, micro- and macro-societal level. The following sections discuss findings relating to the three rejection levels and are linked to relevant literature.

➤ *Rejection on an intrapersonal level*

The majority of participants experienced rejection on an *intrapersonal level* reflected in their thinking (cognitive level), feelings (affective level) and behaviour. Participants perceived themselves as “not belonging”, being excluded and alone, accompanied by negative feelings of being judged, guilty, scared, anxious or depressed, resulting in participants procrastinating and adjusting their behaviour to fit the societal expectation. DeWall and Bushman’s (2011) study highlights people’s fundamental need for social acceptance and belonging and the positive impact thereof on well-being. However, they also mention that on the flip side, being rejected thwarts a core human need, negatively impacting emotions, cognitions, behaviours, and biological processes, further impacting self-esteem and self-worth. My findings thus align with their research as nearly all participants experienced rejection affecting their self-esteem, self-concept, and identity, influencing their thoughts, emotions and behaviour throughout their lives.

A negative emotion relating specifically to performing artists is what Bascomb (2019, p. 8) refers to as performance anxiety, defined as “the fear of a negative reaction or evaluation by observers of one’s performance by others”. The definition corresponds with the study's conceptualisation of rejection experienced by participants and is often associated with shame and a loss of identity as artists (Hinkamp et al., 2017). Furthermore, Robb and Due’s (2017) research on student actors in

¹¹⁰ Within the context of rejection, bullying and victimisation have the same outcomes and are therefore viewed as synonyms.

professional training highlighted identity destabilisation as a significant influence impacting students' psychological well-being. Arias' (2019) study also highlighted actors' intense training to portray a character's emotions in rehearsal and on stage but emphasised the insufficient support or training to deal with the emotional after-effects of playing intense roles or enacting traumatic themes, thus, leading to identity confusion and conflict (Chen & Jagtiani, 2021).

Erikson's view on 'identity crises' (Maree, 2021) has thus been an integral part of performing artists' identity development as they experienced rejection throughout their lives. Even though the current study did not focus on individual psychosocial phases in participants' early life, one can still make some deductions based on their responses from their earlier lives when comparing the results with Erikson's developmental tasks.¹¹¹ Participants experienced rejection from an early age, impacting their identity and resulting in a *mistrust*¹¹² of others and the belief that others are not looking out for their best interests, which led to *shame and doubt* in themselves and their skills. Brown's (2006, p. 45) definition of shame is: "An intensely painful feeling or experience of believing we are flawed and therefore unworthy of acceptance and belonging." In Brown's (2006) research on shame in women, participants described shame using terms implying being separate from others, rejected and diminished. In defining shame, the participants contrasted shame with guilt, which they described as a feeling resulting from misbehaving. To a certain extent, Brown's (2006) definition of shame resembles my conceptualisation of rejection and how rejection may relate to an identity crisis for performing artists.

Furthermore, my research findings strongly correspond to Brown's (2006) results, as many of my participants expressed shame and guilt for not fitting into the status quo and tried changing their behaviour. Most participants referred to doubting their competence and thus referred to feeling *inferior* – a finding that supports Maree's conclusion in this regard (2021). There was also some role confusion as participants stated that they had tried to keep everyone happy at their (participants') own

¹¹¹ See section 2.3.3.2 and Table 2.8 for an outline of Erikson's stages.

¹¹² Words in italics refer to Erikson's stages.

cost, such as studying something they honestly did not want to. Interesting, Brown's (2006) first component of shame, i.e. the psychological component, corresponds to the intrapersonal elements of rejection.¹¹³ Shame and rejection impact emotions, thoughts, and behaviours, thus negatively impacting the self-concept.

Notably, four of the older participants (aged 52, 56, 62, and 65 years) seemed content regarding their identity in the later life and career phases, as they experienced *intimacy* and *generativity* when they coached, mentored, and shared their wisdom with others. They also experienced *ego integrity* as they reflected on their lives and felt proud of their achievements and how they had grown in themselves, thus corresponding with Erikson's view of the main tasks in this particular life stage.

The research findings concerning rejection being experienced on an intrapersonal level, influencing cognitive, affective and behaviour negatively, thus correspond with previous research such as DeWall and Bushman's (2011) findings focusing on the negative impact of rejection on the total well-being of individuals as reflected in their feelings, thoughts, and behaviours. I did not expect Bascomb's (2019) conceptualisation of performance anxiety to correlate positively with my construct of rejection. Even though my research did not focus on the training of performing artists, the literature (Arias, 2019; Chen & Jagtiani, 2021; Hinkamp et al., 2017; Robb & Due, 2017) provided ample examples of the impact of professional training on identity destabilisation, confusion, and conflict, but which was not explicitly mentioned by participants in my study. I certainly did not expect participants' experience of rejection, being isolated and not belonging to correspond as closely with Brown's (2006) construct of shame, with both these constructs having a negative impact on individuals' feelings, thoughts, and behaviours on an intrapersonal level.¹¹⁴ The findings of identity destabilisation, confusion, conflict, and areas of agreement between the constructs of rejection and shame thus add to the literature, providing an integrated view of rejection and the impact thereof over

¹¹³ As discussed in section 2.2.4.1, the systems theory framework (STF) of Career Development.

¹¹⁴ The intrapersonal level thus corresponds to what Brown (2006) refers to as the psychological component.

time (not only when training or performing) and on performing artists' identity construction as reflected in negative feelings, thoughts, and behaviours.

Lastly, participants' experience of identity formation through the various life and career stages confirmed Erikson's life stages and corresponding life tasks (Maree, 2021), with younger participants experiencing rejection, mistrust, shame, and doubt. In contrast, older individuals experienced more intimacy, generativity, and ego integrity. The finding is significant in the context of performing artists as it seems that achieving these life tasks is an integrated part of self- and career identity construction, remaining content and motivated even amidst the continuous intrapersonal experience of rejection for performing artists.

➤ *Rejection on a micro-societal level*

On a micro-societal level, a few participants experienced rejection from teachers and peers for being different and, in the participants' view, as being wrong. The finding agrees with Rivera's (2012) statement that being different leaves space for various forms of discrimination to persist under the guise of individuals not fitting in. Almost all participants experienced bullying. The finding supports Sweeting and West's (2001) study, which states that being different leads to more bullying and victimisation from others. The majority of participants did indeed experience intense rejection from bullying behaviour from teachers and peers at school, continuing into adulthood.

A few participants explicitly mentioned the bullying behaviour they experienced as adults in the artistic work environment, with the first source of bullying coming from record companies. The finding supports Morrow's (2001) research that recording artists' agreements with recording companies are usually one-sided. Record companies focus on profit, not music, and performing artists receive little royalties. Morrow (2001) further mentions that record deals are designed to take advantage of artists, with record companies filled with people who do not care about artists or music. Participants' experiences coincide with Morrow's (2001) findings as one participant explicitly voiced her negative experiences with recording companies resulting in frustration and anger, while another

stated that she would work independently, producing fewer recorded albums, rather than sign a contract with a record company.

According to Maxwell et al. (2018), bullying is a well-known phenomenon in the artistic work environment, especially among directors in charge of productions. However, such a theme did not emerge within the findings of my study. Only one participant briefly referred to directors' rude behaviour towards actors but laughed about it as if it were nothing serious and accepted it as the norm, therefore not even questioning it.

A few participants experienced rejection from the community (including spouses, family members and friends) for not fitting into the expected societal role of being a conventional mom or wife. Renshaw's (2007) findings confirmed that perceived criticism¹¹⁵ has a powerful impact on individuals, especially when given by somebody you live with, such as family members or a spouse. Again, there seems to be an essential overlap between rejection and Brown's (2006) second component, the cultural component of shame. According to Brown (2006), this shame component refers to cultural expectations¹¹⁶ and the relationship between shame and the actual or perceived failure to meet cultural expectations, which corresponds to participants' experience of rejection for going against the norm and thus not living up to community expectations. Expectations included messages such as that participants needed to get a "real job", referring to an eight to five job with a fixed salary and security - thus, a traditional job. Another participant referred to her husband's expectation that married women should be home at five in the afternoon, even though he knew her working hours before they got married. The conflict eventually led them to divorce. Significantly, the expectations expanded to the artistic environment itself, with a few participants referring to expectations that women in jazz are automatically vocalists or that women are not equally good guitarists when compared to men.

¹¹⁵ Experienced as rejection by participants.

¹¹⁶ Thus, relating the cultural component to the study's micro-societal level.

Rivera's (2012) and Sweeting and West's (2001) findings are confirmed in the current study's findings as being different leads to bullying and victimisation from others, such as recording companies' bullying behaviour toward performing artists (Morrow, 2001). Furthermore, Maxwell et al.'s (2018) study highlighting bullying behaviour from directors toward actors was not confirmed as a theme in the research findings. Interestingly, the results correspond with Brown's (2006) cultural component of shame and Renshaw's (2007) findings, as some participants experienced rejection through actual or perceived failure from not meeting societal expectations. Although the results support findings reported in earlier literature, I did not expect the themes of rejection and bullying to be such relevant themes throughout participants' lives and within different micro-societal contexts. Again, I did not expect a substantial overlap between the construct of rejection and shame on a micro-societal level. Lastly, I did not predict bullying behaviour amongst colleagues in the performing arts.

➤ *Rejection on a macro-societal level*

According to Skaggs (2019), the continuous experience of labour market failure, having one's work rejected, and extreme competitiveness is common in the arts industry. The current research supports the finding of rejection on a macro-societal level as a few participants referred to having experienced intense competitiveness and rejection from the arts industry. Two participants highlighted rejection experienced on a macro-societal level, referring to the direct and indirect messages of the industry's unimportance being communicated from a governance level, with very little administrative and resource support. Hence, this finding confirms Mishan and Prangley's (2014) view of the lack of government support for non-profit arts organisations in South Africa, illustrated by the gross mismanagement of funds by the cultural ministry when R300 million (\$20 million) vanished from the National Arts Council's funds. Brown's (2021) article for Artnet News also highlights the continuous mismanagement of funds by the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture. Brown (2021, n.p.) provides an excerpt of an interviewee's words to reiterate the message of rejection:

“We are tired of being represented by people who are not qualified art practitioners, who only acknowledge and support artists when they receive global recognition or die. It is unacceptable, it’s embarrassing, and it undermines our potential as the arts industry.”

Ismail Mohamed’s social media post (7 December 2021) also supports the disreputable governance of the arts in South Africa when he criticises the National Arts Council of South Africa’s (NAC) announcement of its R50 000 per production decrease in funding grants. He refers to poor art governance, stating that the NAC does not understand the arts' capacity to generate and invigorate an art economy but rather sets people up for failure, thus rejecting the arts as a whole on a macro-societal level.

In summary, the findings confirm Skaggs’ (2019) view of the theme of rejection as the norm in the performing arts community. However, the first sub-theme¹¹⁷ provides an integrated view focusing on rejection on three levels¹¹⁸ and throughout life and career stages,¹¹⁹ impacting the self- and identity construction of performing artists in the uniquely South African landscape.

5.2.1.2 Dealing with rejection

Participants chose various strategies on intrapersonal, micro-, and macro-societal levels in response to rejection. The following sections discuss strategies that participants employed on each level.

➤ *Strategies for dealing with rejection on an intrapersonal level*

On an *intrapersonal level*, participants chose between positive and negative strategies when dealing with rejection, thus supporting Fürst’s (2016) viewpoint of having a choice when interpreting

¹¹⁷ Referring to the experience of rejection on the three systemic levels.

¹¹⁸ Referring to the Systems Level Framework, including the intrapersonal, micro-societal and macro-societal systems.

¹¹⁹ Referring to Erikson’s life stages and the accompanying tasks in each stage.

and framing rejection by either accepting or dismissing the failure and then accepting it or rejecting responsibility for that failure.

The first positive strategy that most participants utilised throughout the early, middle and late life-career stages were *Career Adaptability* strategies, referring to actions on the positive end of the continuum for each of the four Cs.¹²⁰ Most participants were optimistic and hopeful regarding their future, presented by action-orientated behaviour, thus portraying positive *career concerns*. Therefore, the findings support Kim et al.'s (2020) research indicating that performing artists need to be proactive to facilitate the successful enactment of their careers, to grow as artists, and to persevere in a performance career. Building on their positive career concerns, most participants took responsibility for their career development, employing self-discipline, effort, and determination to create alternative solutions and owning up to their career decision, thus presenting high *career control*. Most participants were curious but realistic about what they wanted to do with their futures, being courageous, taking risks, exploring opportunities, and thus portraying high *career confidence*. Lastly, most participants anticipated career success and believed in themselves¹²¹ and their skills, solved problems as they arose and took responsibility for building their networks, thus portraying high *career curiosity*. Overall, most participants were highly adaptable. They exhibited positive coping attitudes and beliefs towards themselves and enacted well-developed competencies regarding their craft and careers that helped them cope positively on an intrapersonal level. The findings strongly support Savickas' (2005; 2010; 2013b) conceptualisation of career adaptability and Coetzee et al.'s (2015) findings stating that self-regulatory capacities underpin individuals' career adaptability,¹²² impacting individuals' employability.

The findings thus support the general view (Hartung & Cadaret, 2017; Maree, 2018c; Savickas, 2005, 2012, 2013b, 2019a) that positively applying attitudes, beliefs and competencies (the ABCs) of career adaptability to the four Cs represents adaptive resources and coping strategies available to

¹²⁰ See section 2.2.4.3.3 for an explanation of the four Cs.

¹²¹ Referring to a positive self-concept.

¹²² Including the four Cs.

individuals for managing and coping with tasks, transitions, and traumas in their lives. The findings also agree with Wei's (2016) research, stating that when performing artists reframe their rejection and failure as a learning experience, they demonstrate a positive attitude and beliefs toward their rejection.¹²³

Elaborating further on the positive use of the ABCs, the current findings support Skaggs' (2019) research stating that artists' positive attitudes and beliefs lead to reframing their perception of the rejection experienced (cognitive element).¹²⁴ Reframing rejection refers to performing artists contextualising rejection in the industry as normal, based on repeated exposure to high volumes of rejection, with little to no feedback as to why their work was rejected, thus changing their perception that rejection does not necessarily have to do with the quality or presentation of their work, but rather whether it was going to address market demands leading to higher profit margins for the company. In summary, the normalisation of rejection resulted in performing artists' professional growth, building their reputation among group members and strategically tailoring their pitch to important stakeholders (Skaggs, 2019). Therefore, the idea is not to internalise rejection but to use it as a motivating factor driving positive strategic behaviour.¹²⁵ By using these strategies, aspirants can reconcile their identities and self-worth with their experiences of rejection (Skaggs, 2019), as was the case with most participants in my own findings.

Another positive strategy that a few participants referred to when dealing with hardships such as rejection was *spirituality* or belief in a higher power. The use of spirituality is also evident in a post made on Facebook by Jo Black, a well-known South-African artist, when he wrote (Black, 2020):

¹²³ Thus, referring to the positive use of the ABCs.

¹²⁴ Author's insertion.

¹²⁵ Referring to all three components of the ABCs assisting in adaptability.



Through everything, everyone's opinions, fears, uncertainties and discouragement. Yesterday, I came to the realisation: in my weakness, His power works fully, when my plans do not work out, it is because He has something better in store.

I just had to realise again, Who is in control. Heard a beautiful thing the other night: "If the Lord doesn't come through this time, it will be the first time."

Maybe somebody else also needed to hear this. He is still in control, and therefore I will rejoice.

A large volume of research confirms the impact of spirituality on people's lives. The research includes spirituality's effect on dealing with sickness (Hamilton et al., 2021) or physical pain (Ferreira-Valente et al., 2020). Jnaneswar and Sulphey (2021) also indicated the impact of spirituality and mindfulness on mental well-being. Furthermore, the findings reported in Lifshitz et al.'s (2019) study are supported by the positive effects of personal spirituality on subjective well-being (associated with lower depression and higher life satisfaction) reported in my study. The research thus supports the impact of spirituality as a positive strategy applied by performing artists when dealing with hardships.

In contrast, the research of Koul (2019) and Smith (2022) focuses on using the performing arts as a means to experience spirituality and coping, while Li (2021) focuses on artists portraying their spirituality through their art. Thus, art and spirituality are integrated entities that coexist in harmony with art, positively influencing spirituality and vice versa. Therefore, my findings are supported in the research when a few participants first applied spirituality to cope and improve their well-being, implying more effortless adaptability. Secondly, they used their art as a vehicle to portray their spirituality.

Not all participants employed positive strategies for coping with rejection. This statement is evidenced by the negative attitudes and beliefs they exhibited. Such beliefs often resulted in

destructive behaviour¹²⁶ towards themselves, their interactions with others, and their careers, causing a disequilibrium within the four Cs of Career Adaptability, portrayed as indifference, indecision, unrealism, and inhibition.¹²⁷ The statement is demonstrated by a participant in her saying (#9;B;81&114&118):¹²⁸

“If I’m confronted with a new challenge, I tend to procrastinate. Because I’m like ‘Will I do my best at it?’ and ‘What if I don’t?’ And then sometimes that voice just gets louder and louder and then is just... I hide...I am scared to hurt people’s feelings. So, I then don’t tell this person that I don’t like what you did or do. I just let it go and hope they don’t do it again? You know... that’s just how I am. I, I avoid confronting situations.”

Another negative strategy a few participants referred to involved their tendency to display mental health issues, such as depression and anxiety, with a few participants reverting to substance abuse and suicide attempts. The finding is in line with Maxwell et al. (2018), in which instances of depression in actors are twice as high as in the general population and alcohol consumption is often used as a coping mechanism to unwind emotionally after a show.

As discussed in the previous sub-theme, few participants experienced bullying, rejection, and victimisation from teachers.¹²⁹ To an extent this finding seems to support Monsvold et al.’s (2011) result, which indicates a correlation between teachers’ bullying behaviour or victimisation and the development of depression or other psychological disorders in adulthood.

Many participants’ tendencies toward depression and anxiety supports the view that a high prevalence of anxiety and depression exists among performing artists. Kegelaers et al.’s (2022) study on the mental health of electronic musicians indicated that around 30% of participants experienced

¹²⁶ Referring to the negative application of the ABC.

¹²⁷ The four concepts refer to the negative or low end of each of the four Cs, i.e. concern, control, curiosity, and confidence.

¹²⁸ Please note that the colours used in direct quotes are consistent with the colour allocated to each participant in Chapter 4, Table 4.4, and are used consistently throughout for continuity.

¹²⁹ As discussed in the previous sub-theme.

symptoms of depression and anxiety. According to Marchant-Haycox and Wilson's (1992) research results, about one-third of actors, dancers, and singers reported suffering from performance anxiety, and 47% of musicians. Van Rens and Heritage's (2021) study indicated that circus artists scored higher on scales of emotion reflecting depression, anxiety, and stress when compared with the scores of a non-clinical population. Thus, there is consensus among studies that performing artists are more likely than their civilian counterparts to suffer from depression, anxiety, and other mental health struggles (Arias, 2019; Berg et al., 2018; Kegelaers et al., 2022; Koops & Kuebel, 2021; Van Winden et al., 2020).

Lee's (2002) findings are supported by the current study's findings that performing artists' performance (and related anxiety) may directly impact their thoughts, which brings a chain of adverse physiological, behavioural, and cognitive reactions. Accordingly, performing artists are fearful, overgeneralising one lousy performance to represent their full capability and making snap judgements about what others might think about their performance. They feel completely powerless and out of control, with shame and guilt being the outcomes, resulting in lowering the levels of the four Cs of Career Adaptability, thus negatively impacting performing artists' attitudes, beliefs, and resulting competencies, and consequently further lowering the Cs (and so the negative spiral continues).

My research findings referring to performing artists' negative attitudes also support Szabó et al.'s (2019) research on actors' negative attitudes, with actors reporting unhealthy attitudes such as 'feeling fat' even though they were of average weight or underweight. The actors' body weight and shape thus impacted their self-worth, leading to behavioural issues. Uriegas et al.'s (2021) study also found that eating disorder risk is highly prevalent among marching band artists and can be attributed to the psychosocial components of eating disorders and pathogenic behaviours, including dieting and excessive exercise to control weight.

According to Kenny and Asher's (2016) research on famous musicians, musicians have a shorter life expectancy than the general population, with mortality rates twice as high as the general population. They also refer to the high mortality rates resulting from violent deaths, such as suicides,

homicides, and accidental deaths through road accidents and drug overdoses. Another aspect of Kenny and Asher's (2016) research was that mortality impacts differed by the specific music genre. There were excess suicides and liver-related diseases in country, metal and rock musicians, and excessive homicides in hip hop and rap musicians. For accidental death, actual deaths significantly exceeded expected deaths for country, folk, jazz, metal, pop, punk, and rock.

Even though I did not focus on the specific music genres, participants in my research covered a wide variety of genres, such as jazz, rock, classical and hip hop. Interestingly, no definite theme relating to the music genre and prevalence of depression and anxiety surfaced. It is, however, noteworthy to mention that two of the candidates passed away during my research, which is high in a pool of 19 candidates. One can only hypothesise that their lifestyles may have contributed to their untimely deaths. Also noteworthy is that a few candidates I approached to participate in the research responded that they are currently not in the right "space" to participate in the study due to the COVID-19 epidemic as they reported merely trying to cope and survive, thus exhibiting inadequate levels of career adaptability and acquisition of adaptive resources and skills. On the other hand, one can perhaps deduce that participants willing to participate in the research had career adaptability and positive strategies to deal with unforeseen circumstances. In short, the literature supports the statement that improved coping attitudes, beliefs, and competencies, as presented in the high levels of all four Cs, lead to better career adaptability in the performing arts.

➤ *Strategies for dealing with rejection on a micro-societal level*

Skaggs' (2019) research shows that artists employed various strategies when dealing with rejection on a *micro-societal level*. Firstly, they would focus on aspects within their control, building their reputation among group members and strategically tailoring their pitch to essential stakeholders. The artists' focus is thus on a heightened level of career control through building social capital. Social capital is also created through appropriate interaction with gatekeepers during media interviews and industry social events, allowing artists to cultivate a professional reputation. Therefore, informal

spaces of socialisation may become necessary for those pursuing work outside of a traditional employment relationship with one employer, a phenomenon that is not limited to the arts¹³⁰ but to everyone following a contingent career¹³¹ (Hall, 1996; Bridgstock, 2005).

Adding to Skaggs' (2019) research, a few participants in my study suggested educating society through open narratives, thus bringing issues to the fore and discussing them in open forums. Therefore, the participants hoped that when communities and stakeholders discussed these topics, perceptions would change, resulting in fewer rejections and more acceptance of who they are as performing artists.

Another noticeable strategy in the literature that artists apply is to rely on collective social strategies to mitigate the uncertainty and challenges posed by their line of work (Skaggs, 2019). An example is equal sharing of the copyright in co-written songs, even if their actual contributions to a piece were disproportionate (De Laat, 2015). Even though some participants collaborated informally for a short period, it did not surface as a strong theme in the research.

➤ *Strategies for dealing with rejection on a macro-societal level*

As discussed in the previous sub-theme¹³² on performing artists' experience of rejection on a macro-societal level, the current arts governance's ineffectiveness, with seemingly weak open discussions and correspondence between stakeholders, leads artists to resort to extreme strategies. Strategies have included gathering in front of the National Arts Council's offices, holding sit-ins, and signing petitions calling for the resignation of the culture minister (Brown, 2021). Still, it seems as if these strategies have made no difference for artists in South Africa.

Two participants, however, were highly outspoken and passionate about dealing with the rejection of artists and the perception of the arts industry's unimportance on a *macro-societal level*. The participants referred to two strategies, the first emphasising the development of integrated

¹³⁰ Referring to the protean career.

¹³¹ Contingent career includes the protean career.

¹³² See section 5.2.1.1 "Levels of Rejection".

creative platforms on a national level. The second strategy mentioned by participants involved calling attention to improved governance of the arts sector in South Africa. Even more specific, one participant referred to employing artistic directors in big arts institutions so that the administrator supports the artistic director and not the other way around, which is currently the case in South Africa. Furthermore, most big arts institutions in South Africa do not have artistic directors who understand the artistic landscape, with institutions managed by people who understand governance but who are not artists themselves. The suggestions made by participants supported Woodward's (2005) finding that board members should be successful in fundraising, planning, and finance but also understand the more profound nature of the art itself - how art is created and who creates it. The risks and rewards of these actions will change how a board fulfils its governance role and works with the artistic director.

In summary, the findings regarding the first theme (rejection) support many of the research findings on rejection reported by various authors in earlier literature. I, therefore, posit that the current results make significant contributions to the literature, proposing an integrated framework for shedding light on performing artists' experience of rejection throughout their life and career stages¹³³ from a systems framework theory¹³⁴ within the unique South African context.

5.2.2 Theme 2: The idiosyncratic journey towards constructing a career choice

The second theme that emerged was “The idiosyncratic journey towards constructing a career choice”, naturally linking the theme to the previously identified metaphor¹³⁵ of individuals travelling through a changing landscape on an ever-changing road (Inkson, 2002) and the idea of movement that is present throughout. Participants (actors in life)¹³⁶ interacted with multiple audiences shaping their career choices. Their identity, and more specifically their career identity, crystallised as their self-concept, ability, and interests emerged through their interactions, giving rise to the second sub-

¹³³ As proposed by Erikson (Maree, 2021)

¹³⁴ Refers to the intrapersonal, inter-, and macro-societal levels of Patton and McMahon's (1999; 2015) systems theory framework (STF).

¹³⁵ See section 2.1.

¹³⁶ See section 2.1.

theme; internal influences on participants' journey towards constructing a career choice. In the following sections, the spotlight will be on the impact of external and internal influences on the participants' journey toward constructing their career choice, i.e. to be a performing artist.

5.2.2.1 *External influences*

Three distinct external influences impacted participants' choices in following a career in the performing arts. The first external influence refers to significant others, the second to educators, and the third to specific situations that impacted the career choice of participants. In the following sections, each external influence will be discussed and linked to relevant literature.

➤ *Significant others*

Significant others, including *parents, family, and the community*, were some of the first influences impacting participants' perceptions regarding career development, choice, and the world of work. The finding coincides with the general view of developmental career theories depicting career development in childhood as a period where children, through observation of the adults and world around them, begin to recognise that work is a part of life, to develop work habits with a future focus; all of which help to influence children's perceptions regarding career options, choices and aspirations and thus helping them to imagine themselves in adult and work roles (Akosah-Twumasi, 2021; Archer et al., 2014; Liu & McMahon, 2016; Maree, 2020d).

In contrast to Maree's (2020e) study, where learners were strongly influenced by their *parents'* ideas and conceptualisations of careers and inspired to follow similar goals as their parents' occupations, most participants in my study did not follow the career trends (including parental qualifications) of either parent, with only one participant's mother and family members being musicians and music teachers. The finding is in line with Kogan and Kangas' (2006) findings on performing artists, as a substantial minority of parents in their sample had committed themselves to a career in the performing arts. Furthermore, a large proportion of their sample (38%) reported discouragement from parents concerning pursuing a career in the dramatic arts. My findings also

support their finding that some participants' parents actively discouraged them from pursuing a career in the performing arts, calling it an unstable career choice with no structure or security and, therefore, not a "real" job (as in a traditional job).

However, even though the performing arts may not have been the participants' parents' primary career and parents may even have actively discouraged most participants from following a career in the performing arts, there was a distinct, positive, and supportive attitude and general exposure toward performing arts from parents, family, and the community, whether formally or informally. Interestingly, these significant others seem to have positively influenced performing artists, possibly counteracting the negative experiences, such as rejection, alluded to in Theme 1. One participant's words encapsulated her *community's* support for the performing arts when she said (#9;B;26):

"I grew up in a family of singers. That is what we did for fun; that is what we did ALL the time. Family reunions, we're singing. At church, we're singing."

The particular quotation also highlights the African culture's collective nature, encapsulated by the following African proverbs, "It takes a village to raise a child" and the notion of "ubuntu" (Maree, 2017c).

Therefore, the westernised concepts of parents¹³⁷ and family¹³⁸ being viewed as separate entities are contrary to the African perspective, where the parents, family, and community are intimately involved in individuals' lives, career development, and choice, referring to the micro-societal system. Whiston and Keller (2004) support this notion, stating that children are embedded in family systems.

According to Albien and Naidoo (2017), the majority of South African families are fragmented, with extended family members acting as caregivers. Due to the low-paying jobs visible in the informal economies in township contexts, parents seem non-supportive of their children's career development.

¹³⁷ Usually referring to the nuclear family.

¹³⁸ Usually referring to the extended family.

Thus, there appears to be a lack of role models, job-shadowing opportunities, and there are severe financial restraints hindering career exploration (Akhurst & Mkhize, 2006; Seabi et al., 2010). The micro-societal system's impact on participants' career choices was displayed, supporting Maree's (2017c) view of the influence of context when individuals make career choices.

Furthermore, findings highlight the impact of happenstance on participants' career choices. However, this is in stark contrast with traditional performance psychology trends presented by various researchers such as Bloom (1985) and Côté (1999), in which parents have specific familial developmental tasks to perform in three distinct phases of talent development, from the early or sampling years, the middle or specialisation years, and the late or investment years (ranging over a period from approximate ages 6 to 15 years and beyond).¹³⁹

In summary, most participants did not follow their parents' primary career trajectory (in contrast to most career development theories). They did not have specific pre-planned exposure and tasks initiated by parents (as presented in performance psychology). Nevertheless, participants received exposure and positive feedback, support and encouragement from the micro-societal systems (parents, family, and community) to follow their dreams, albeit in the performing arts or not.

➤ *Educators*

Educators are viewed as significant development agents playing a pivotal role in students' career choices (Cheung & Arnold, 2014). Therefore, they are worth discussing as a separate external influence on participants' career choices. They reinforce specific talents that may have been overlooked (Schultheiss et al., 2005). Half of the participants bear witness to this as they refer to the support and encouragement received from teachers towards the performing arts, whether in music, drama or theatre. Exposure to teachers' passion and inclination toward the performing arts provided participants with a clear message of interest and support for the performing arts. Teachers motivated and provided participants with opportunities and believed in them before they did so themselves.

¹³⁹ See section 2.3.3.2 for an outline of tasks associated with each phase.

In support of this, Watters (2010) mentions that teachers observe learners holistically and are in the ideal situation for guiding learners towards specific career aspirations. Therefore, teachers' influence on learners' career choices cannot be overstated, whether positive, as in the current theme, or harmful, as in the previous theme.¹⁴⁰

➤ *Specific situations*

According to Maree (2020b), specific experiences significantly influence how individuals interpret, react and make meaning of the world around them, how they think about careers, and how they make decisions regarding future careers, thus clearly exemplifying McMahon's systems theory and the micro- and macro-societal systems impacting on career choice. Exposing individuals to career-related activities early on has a powerful influence on their lifelong career trajectories (Savickas et al., 2009; Nota et al., 2015).

Never has this rung more true than in participants' responses as they referred to the impact of a one-time or continuous exposure to an event or situation and its effect on their career choice in the performing arts, as exemplified in the following quote (#16;B;100):

“I was in primary school when I saw Tobie Cronje for the first time on TV, and I was thinking, ‘Oh, that’s what I am supposed to do if I want to be all of those things’So it was like, oh my soul, there’s a brown child as small as I am. And he’s on TV, so I can definitely do it.”

The first sub-theme thus recognises the powerful influence that different role players, be it a parent, family member, educator, or specific situations, had on participants' choice to follow and remain in a performing arts career throughout various life and career phases.

However, most studies mentioned in support of the current study's findings refer to the impact of external influences on young individuals' career exploration and choice, therefore neglecting the effect that these influences have on the early, middle and even late career phases, as mentioned by

¹⁴⁰ Referring to Theme 1, where participants experienced rejection from teachers for being different.

many participants in this study. Even though there are studies, such as that by Coetzee et al. (2016) and Maree (2020a), highlighting the impact of external factors and experiences on individuals' career choices throughout their lives, the current study focuses on the effects of three specific external influences, i.e. significant others (parents, family, and the community), educators and specific situations, not only on the initial career choice of performing artists but their continuous influence on sustaining a career in the performing arts, even up to the last phases of their careers. In so doing it makes a valuable contribution to career development literature. The following words reflect the continuous impact of, for example, a significant other, throughout the participant's career and up until his late career phase (#12;B;117):

“And then our refrigerator was empty...and there's a verse that talks about any man who cannot support or supply his family are worse than a scoundrel...And she¹⁴¹ said, 'No, you're not. We will eat tea and bread until we get something, and, and she stuck with me and tea and bread. And then I could not draw...my fingers refused to take instructions from my head; she did the drawing for me...So, when I got my degree, rightfully, it is our degree. In the end, I took eight, nine years or so, studying with her, next to me, keeping the home fires burning. So, yes, man. She's my pillar.”

5.2.2.2 Internal influences: Career identity

Performing artists' identities and career paths are greatly influenced by the feedback received and the hardships experienced in their social context (Blaine, 2012). Participants' experiences of the world around them directly impacted how they viewed themselves (their self-concept) within the career context. Career theory confirms this by stating that career development and the construction of career identity is a social process based on experiences (Erikson, 1963; Liu & McMahon, 2016; Maree, 2020a; Weidhorn, 2004; Zamir, 2012).

¹⁴¹ Referring to his wife.

Furthermore, there was a reciprocal interaction between self-concept, perceived ability, and interest in participants' responses, contributing to their career identity (the second sub-theme). Maree's (2020e) research confirms this when she states that through career-related experiences, individuals identify their interests, perceived capacities, abilities, and talents, impacting how they make meaning of the world around them and how they think about careers. In the following sections, each of the internal influences, including the development of the self-concept, ability and interests' impact on the idiosyncratic journey toward constructing a career in the performing arts, will be highlighted.

➤ *Self-concept ("Sense of being an artist")*

Self-concept relates to participants' self-view while answering questions, such as "Who am I?" (Maree, 2017c) and "What is important to me?" (Baumeister, 1999), with meaning-making being central to this process (Nazar & Van der Heijden, 2012; Symington, 2015). Central to participants' self-concept is a core value that the performing arts is not only a career choice, an add-on to other life roles, but rather relates to their core life values of 'who they are', encapsulating their whole being, relating to their core life values. The following words of a participant rendering the words of his wife illustrate the sentiment beautifully (#12;B;117): *"This this is you. It's not something you like. This, this IS YOU".¹⁴²*

The current findings coincide with Maxwell et al.'s (2018, p. 154) research study on actors, as can be seen in the following quotes from a research participant,

"Yes, I am an actor. Until my last breath, I am an actor. I am proud of my work, experience, and integrity in this industry. It's something that can never be taken from me. It may not mean anything to anyone, but it matters to ME. And that's all that counts."

¹⁴² Capital letters refer to words that received extra emphasis.

According to both Maxwell et al. (2018) and Kerr and McKay (2013), choosing a career in the performing arts is not simply a question of embarking upon a career in the arts but of devoting one's life to the pursuit, being driven by core values and answering a higher calling. My research supported their finding as participants made it clear that they did not have a choice in deciding to follow a career in the performing arts but that the performing arts chose them. All they could do was simply "obey" if they wanted to be authentic to their inner values and happiness. The same theme is repeated among performing artists across various genres. For example, Martha Graham, a dancer (1991, p. 5 in Tomson & Jaque, 2016, p. 16), states the following: "People have asked me why I chose to be a dancer. I did not choose. I was chosen to be a dancer; with that, you live all your life." Similarly, one of the participants in Maxwell et al.'s study (2018, p. 170) expresses the sentiment with the following words:

"Sometimes, however, the alternative to acting was worse. I took a break to try and persuade myself to study for another career – this ultimately made me even more depressed, and I returned to pursuing an acting career".

The finding corresponds to what Engler (2014), Erikson (1995), and Mundley (1975) refer to as participants' identity and the field of performance as being inseparable, where performing artists are their art ("being"), and their art is who they are. There seems to be a linkage between the idea of not having a choice but to obey, and what Duffy and Dik (2013) introduce as 'living out one's calling in the context of work'. The "calling" refers to Dik and Duffy's (2009) first component of a calling, referring to the notion of an external summons. The 'caller' may come from an external source (such as God), an internal source (such as one's interests, skills, values, and passions), and some that may fall in the overlap of internal and external, such as a sense of destiny, referring to what one is meant to do (Duffy & Dik, 2013), as was the case for most participants in my study. The construct of a calling also corresponds to Hocking's (2019) fifth element of performing artists' career development. It seems that performing artists who view their career "as a calling" have a stronger tendency to ignore

the discouraging career-related advice of trusted mentors and thus keep their focus on their purpose and the deep meaning of their career (Dobrow & Tosti-Kharas, 2012), as was the case in some of the participants' reactions to discouraging advice from significant others.

In summary, it is worth mentioning that living such a value-driven life seems to correspond to what various authors (Hall, 1996, 2013; Hall & Mirvis, 1996; Hall & Moss, 1998; Bigham, 2013) have referred to as an extreme form of the protean career,¹⁴³ driven by meta-competencies such as identity, adaptability, values and self-directedness in adapting to the performing arts career.

➤ *Ability*

One cannot follow a career in the arts without innate artistic talent (Kogan, 2002). The decision to pursue a career in the arts is almost always the result of successful engagement with an artistic activity (Bennett, 2009). Such an experience, together with positive feedback within the intrapersonal¹⁴⁴ and micro-societal environment,¹⁴⁵ impacted participants' self-view (self-concept) and self-confidence as *being* performing artists who have the required talent (ability).

Furthermore, participants' abilities naturally flowed through various creative endeavours, ranging from creating to executing art and applying it to multiple contexts on and off-stage, again using the notion of '*being*' and not only '*doing*' a craft.

➤ *Interest*

As expected, participants indicated a preference for activities fitting into artistic and social themes, with a strong dislike for activities fitting into conventional and realistic themes.¹⁴⁶ The finding corresponds to Holland's theory as the preferred career themes were in the opposite direction of the minor preferred career themes. Creativity is core to the artistic themes. Therefore, my findings align with Nielsen et al. (2018), in which creativity was a recurring theme among graduates in the

¹⁴³ See section 2.3.3 for a discussion of the protean career.

¹⁴⁴ Participants realise that they have natural talents and really are 'good'.

¹⁴⁵ Such as parents, family, teachers, friends and audiences.

¹⁴⁶ See section 2.2.1.2 for an outline of Holland's theory.

performing arts. Thus, creativity is an essential resource in human development, education, and adaptation¹⁴⁷ (Valverde et al., 2020).

Furthermore, there was a fit between participants' talents, interests, and the career environment they work in, such as the theatre and teaching (Coetzee et al., 2016). Participants thus indicated a preference for ambiguous, free, unsystematic activities. Therefore, the nature of artistic preferences fits into the heart of the protean career and the rapidly changing world of work, again linking to the characteristics of following a protean career path.¹⁴⁸

One aspect of the discussion above is the study's value in terms of its longitudinal focus on the various influences on participants' choice to follow a career in the performing arts. The following theme naturally moved from the current theme as Theme 3 focuses on the Career Development Trajectory of Performing Artists and thus provided a longer-term perspective on performing artists' careers.

5.2.3 Theme 3: The career development trajectory

After analysing the data, the third theme, "The career development trajectory" and two sub-themes emerged. The first sub-theme I identified relates to essential aspects influencing participants' 'perceived' personal and career success or 'failure'. The second sub-theme centred on the career survival skill set of participants. In the following sections, consideration is given to each sub-theme and the related sub-sub-themes.

5.2.3.1 Aspects impacting perceived personal and career success or failure

Participants valued certain aspects as significant to their perceived personal and career success or failure within the performing arts. Factors of importance included education, craft competence and the business of performing arts. Before discussing each sub-sub-theme, it is crucial to stress the word 'perceived personal and career success or failure.' Terms such as 'failure' have no place in post-

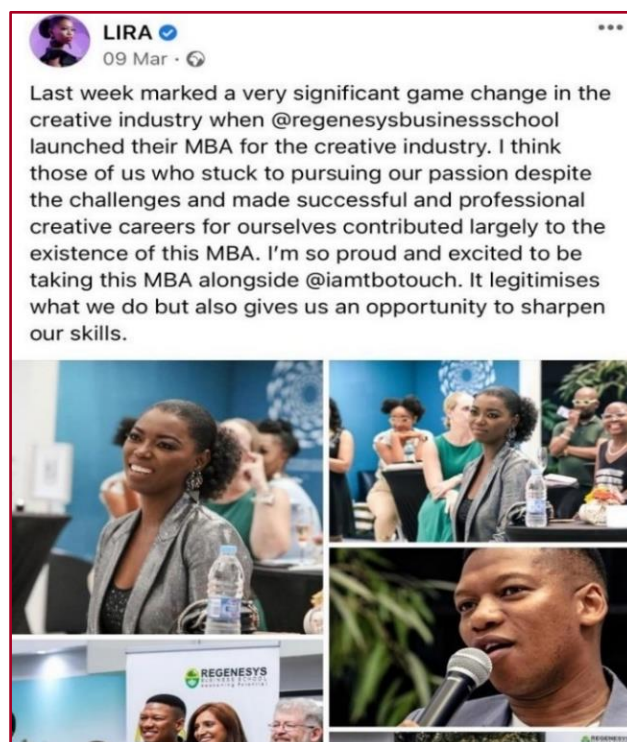
¹⁴⁷ The construct of adaptation, or adaptability, as it is described in this study, is elaborated on in the following sub-sub-theme, i.e. 5.2.3.2. "Career survival skill set".

¹⁴⁸ See section 2.3.3. for a discussion of the protean career.

modern society. They should therefore be replaced with, e.g. ‘perceived or experienced inadequate achievement’ as ‘a lot depends on how achievement (or the lack thereof) is perceived (or perceived to be perceived) by significant others’ (Maree, 2021, p. 40). Maree’s (2021) words were especially notable in how participants expressed the impact of education on their perceived personal and career success.

➤ *Education*

The perceived importance of receiving an education seems complex, whether in the performing arts or another field. According to Bille and Jensen (2018), the general view in the literature is that artistic education has little or no impact on artists’ income and their career in the arts. Even though there may be more salient reasons, the participants explicitly mentioned two reasons for obtaining an education in the performing arts. Firstly, a formal qualification brought success to some of the participants as it served as an external acknowledgement of their chosen career path and thus provided them with a perceived status in the community - an essential aspect of securing life and career success. Lira, a national and international acclaimed performing artist, supported this sentiment with the following Facebook post (Liramusic, 2022):



Only one participant raised the second reason for obtaining an education in the performing arts. The participant, however, is an acclaimed performer in his late life and career stage and highlighted that education assisted individuals in acquiring the knowledge, skill, depth, discipline, and a safe space in which to experiment and get valuable feedback to develop and grow, which is, according to him, of paramount importance if one wants to succeed in the performing arts. His view strongly echoes Nielsen et al.'s (2018) research findings that the value that a creative arts higher education can, and does, offer graduates, particularly in preparing them for labour markets, is often overlooked. Accordingly, higher education creative arts training provides a space for graduates to develop creative skills and prepare for creative work. Bille and Jensen (2018) also support this thought pattern in their findings, indicating the significant positive impact of arts education on staying in the arts professions and that arts education has a significant impact on artists' survival in arts occupations.

On the downside, a participant mentioned that not having a formal qualification made her perceive herself as a 'failure' in the academic arena, even though she and a few other participants viewed obtaining a qualification as unnecessary to succeed in the performing arts, thus agreeing with the general view in the literature that one does not need a qualification to succeed in the arts (Bille & Jensen, 2018). One participant was also unsure of what qualification she would need to study that would encapsulate the skills and competencies she uses in her daily life as a performing artist, as, in her opinion, such a qualification does not exist.

Participants mentioning the impact of education on their self-concept were all in the early- to early-middle adulthood career stage, thus corresponding with Super (1957), Super et al. (1996) and Savickas' (2002) findings concerning the critical features of the early life and career stage.¹⁴⁹ A specific feature of the career stage is making occupational choices in line with your self-concept and implementing the self-concept to bring about the integration of self and values in society. Educational attainment marks social status at the beginning of adulthood, functioning as the main bridge between

¹⁴⁹ See section 2.2.2.1 for an outline of the various life and career stages.

the status of one generation and the next and as the main avenue of upward mobility, thus forming a unique dimension of social status (Mirowsky & Ross, 2017). It thus corresponds with participants' need for affirmation, which is provided to them through obtaining their degree and the perceived improvement in their standing in the community.

Lastly, two participants mentioned that obtaining a qualification within the creative and performing arts may be thwarted with challenges as the product may be subjectively evaluated based on the personal preference of the evaluator and not really on the competency of the artists, thus complicating whether the performing artist even finishes the qualification, which in her case was true (i.e. she did not complete it). Her view thus corresponds with various literature findings. For example, Daniel and Daniel (2013), Kogan (2002) and Moyle (2019) refer to the final decision of evaluators, which can boil down to personal preferences and thus includes a subjective evaluation based on criteria like creativity, the interpretation of a role, or a preference for a particular type of look or artistic expression.

Furthermore, Robb and Due's findings (2017) indicate how feedback can affect students, noting that students felt emotionally vulnerable, especially in an environment of ongoing criticism, and that the fear of both positive and negative evaluation increased the students' anxiety. Innes (2021) highlights the disproportionate power balance between lecturer and student, as well as a strong trend of favouritism in the higher education creative environment. Prior (2012) suggests that while many actor trainers exhibited an embodied understanding of methodology ("how to act"), they demonstrated less of a sense of pedagogy ("knowing how to teach"). Even though Innes (2021) referred to the emotional and psychological challenges that training methodologies might pose for acting students (e.g. an incident where a student was asked to imagine "her mother hanging from a noose" [p. 256]), which was quite upsetting for the student, the latter theme was not present in my research findings.

What is essential to notice is that even though participants voiced various opinions on the importance of obtaining an education, with only one participant actively vouching for higher

education, 13 of the 19 participants either had a bachelors, honours, or Master's degree in the creative arts, of which 11 qualifications were specifically in the performing arts. Thus, participants tend to gravitate towards the view that performing artists should have a formal higher education qualification. I was a bit surprised by the finding on the importance of higher education in the performing arts. From my subjective view, I thought it was all about talent and execution, forgetting the meta-competencies needed to survive in the 21st-century protean world of work. An aspect of importance to the life and career success of performing artists that is not as controversial as education, is that of craft competency and its impact on perceived personal and career success, which constitutes the next sub-sub-theme.

➤ *Craft competency*

According to Alper and Wassall (2000) as well as Withers (1980), many artists are self-taught, with indefinable features such as individual artistic talent and artistic creativity making a larger contribution to success or higher pay than education and training. Allen et al. (2013) and Towse (2006) also highlight on-the-job training and practical experience as being highly valued in creative labour markets. In contrast, Ericsson and Pool (2016) note that it is a combination of nature (talent) and nurture (deliberate practice), together with other interacting factors such as parental influences, which are essential determinants of elite performances, enhancing performing artists' chances to attain successful careers. Evidently, literature has diverse viewpoints on the importance of training on craft competence. The sentiment was mirrored by participants' training, or lack thereof, with one participant solely relying on her talent and creativity through being able to write a song in a few minutes, whilst her highest qualification was that of grade ten. In contrast, another participant had obtained a Master's degree in the performing arts and had also received professional coaching.

An aspect in the literature and among participants which is non-debatable, is the general view that a thriving, successful performing arts career is determined by performing artists' ability to deliver continuous flawless performances in a highly demanding and flexible protean work environment

(Daniel & Daniel, 2013; Ericsson et al., 1993; Hays, 2012; Moyle, 2019; Sternberg & Ericsson, 1996). Therefore, all participants agreed that performing artists should have a skill set and a certain level of competence to deliver flawless performances. The quest for perfect execution is legitimised, encouraged, and even revered by performing artists and stakeholders, such as the audience (Hill et al., 2015).

For many performing artists, perfectionism is an emotional experience of all or nothing (a perfect performance or a total failure), dwelling on errors made in the performance and assuming that anything less than what they consider a ‘perfect’ performance is a failure. They are therefore self-critical, and there is a belief that their self-worth is inextricably tied to perfect performances, impacting performers’ self-confidence and furthering the fear and anxiety of not being perfect on stage (Hays, 2017; Hall & Hill, 2012; Hill et al., 2015; Nagel, 2017; Stoeber & Eismann, 2007), thus creating a negative spiral between delivering a perfect performance and increased anxiety on and off-stage.¹⁵⁰ Therefore, even though perfectionism can be a powerful driving force, it can also underpin dysfunctional cognition and negative affect, leading to psychological debilitation and dysfunctional achievement behaviour (Flett & Hewitt, 2002; Hall, 2006).

A few participants voiced experiences that correspond to the literature findings mentioned above, with self-doubt about their craft and perfectionism surfacing, leading them to procrastinate and focus on external sources for affirmation. Therefore, they did not take on new opportunities as often as they should, impacting their career success trajectory and thus becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy of the fear of not getting new “gigs”. The finding is in line with Maree’s (2021) remark that individuals are primarily guided by their perceptions of their skills and confidence in achieving success in a given field of study and its associated career. This tendency was especially the case for participants in their early career and life stage, again confirming Super (1957), Super et al. (1996) and Savickas’ (2002) findings concerning the critical features of the early life and career stage.¹⁵¹

¹⁵⁰ See section 5.2.1.2 for a discussion of anxiety as a strategy participants used when dealing with rejection on an intrapersonal level.

¹⁵¹ See section 2.2.2.1 for an outline of the various life and career stages.

Lastly, it is noteworthy that most participants mentioned specific perceived success criteria as proof of their craft competency. Criteria included aspects such as the number of shows participated in (e.g. having appeared in 50 shows), whether they were part of national or international performances, if they had shared the stage with acclaimed performers, whether they had produced artistic products (such as albums or videos distributed nationally or internationally), or had been members of prestigious organisations or guilds. The need for external validation might be explained by the performing arts field, in which participants are always subject to external evaluation by mentors, critics, audiences, and the performer's peers. Therefore, external validation, e.g. receiving awards or being a member of a prestigious organisation or guild, may serve as external "proof" of participants' perceived success. Performing artists, however, need not only highly developed competencies associated with performance art itself, but also well-developed entrepreneurial skills for successfully enacting their protean career within the performing arts (Bennett, 2009; Wyszomirski & Chang, 2017).

➤ *The business of the performing arts*

As performing artists enter the creative workforce, they automatically need entrepreneurial skills¹⁵² to select and combine multiple components to develop and increase their skills and value in the workforce, and ultimately to have a successful protean career (Bridgstock, 2012; Wyszomirski & Chang, 2017). Key entrepreneurial competencies include creating opportunities, recombining available resources, and adjusting to varying contexts to construct a career portfolio (Wyszomirski & Chang, 2017). The "Business of the Performing Arts" refers to entrepreneurial acumen, such as is found in obtaining resources and managing performing arts as a business - albeit a one-person freelancer or an entrepreneur continuously seeking new business ventures.¹⁵³ Bridgstock (2012)

¹⁵² Refer back to the Facebook entry of Lira in section 5.2.3.1, under the sub-theme Education, which is also very relevant in the current sub-theme of the business of performing artists.

¹⁵³ Noteworthy, even though it is not within the study's scope, is the distinction Godin (1998) makes between freelancing (including the numerous work arrangements in the 21st century discussed earlier) and entrepreneurship. Godin (1998, p. 5) defines an entrepreneur as someone working to build a business bigger than themselves, with significant financial risks and numerous employees. On the other hand, a freelancer is looking for the freedom and profit that come from being on your own, without the headaches that come from building a significant venture.

highlights the need for higher education institutions to develop field-specific entrepreneurial capabilities among performing artists and to develop their entrepreneurial identities.

The findings suggest that performing artists generally do not have a natural inclination toward the business aspect of the performing arts, as only three participants indicated a natural tendency towards this as a natural progression of their craft. The three participants aimed to address the typical hindrances experienced in the performing arts by either starting production-, event- or marketing companies, creating festivals and brands, and thus improving the industry. Importantly, not one of these business ventures has yet been economically successful. Even though most participants did not have a natural inclination toward the business aspect of the performing arts, many participants mentioned that they could not financially support their dreams as performing artists and were unable to leave a financial legacy. Therefore, they are forced to participate in other income-generating activities to support themselves financially,¹⁵⁴ or to start thinking in a more business-like manner to obtain a stable income.

In summary, the literature supports and encourages the need for performing artists to develop their entrepreneurial skill set if they want to attain success in the performing arts. However, the literature seems to miss the natural aversion of performing artists for entrepreneurial activities. As discussed in Theme 2, most participants reported a natural inclination towards social and artistic activities, disliking conventional and realistic activities, which is encapsulated in a dislike towards activities including management and planning of finances, managing their careers as a business, and other management functions involved in being a producer for productions or a business manager. Therefore, any successful entrepreneurial competency development programme for performing artists needs to take cognizance of this fact and adapt their programme in order to, first, get the buy-in and thus motivation from performing artists before any success can be attained.

¹⁵⁴ Refer to Table 4.2 for an outline of income-generating activities.

Throughout the discussion, it was clear that certain aspects, such as education, craft competency and the business of the performing arts, were significant to participants' perceived personal and career success or 'failure' within the performing arts, with the operative word being "perceived". The following sub-theme will focus on the career survival skill set, which participants apply when trying to survive and thrive throughout the career development trajectory in a highly demanding world of work.

5.2.3.2 Career survival skill set

From participants' responses, certain features emerged that were allocated to one of the four Cs of Career Adaptability. Participants highlighted that the features served as critical factors for surviving as performing artists. Noteworthy is the overlap of the four Cs of Career Adaptability, not only as a positive strategy to deal with a negative experience, such as rejection, but also the use thereof as participants navigate their career development trajectory.¹⁵⁵ In the following section, the four sub-sub-themes, referring to the four Cs of Career Adaptability, will be discussed.

➤ *Career Concern*

According to McLennan et al. (2017), career concern refers to people's awareness of their involvement in and active planning for their future, thus answering the question, "Do I have a future?". Participants' responses correlated with McLennan et al.'s (2017) description of career concerns, as a few participants seemed to enjoy and even sought challenges in addressing their future career concerns. Perhaps this can be linked to Shein's career anchor of Pure Challenge, where individuals get the most significant job satisfaction out of trying to solve seemingly unsolvable problems and coping with the most challenging tasks (Coetzee & Schreuder, 2021).

Most participants highlighted the importance of continuous innovation and proactive action while being optimistic about the future. According to Maree (2020a), today, probably more than ever, a sense of hope and purpose needs to be rekindled in a world where many people have lost hope in

¹⁵⁵ To avoid repetition, I will only focus on aspects not elaborated on within Theme 1, section 5.2.1.2.

the future, with people needing to rediscover a sense of purpose and meaning. In contrast, many participants displayed optimism and hope for the future even while the interviews took place amid a worldwide epidemic, with performing artists not being allowed to perform and with no “holding” environment, such as the backing of an organisation.

➤ *Career Control*

In an attempt to exert control and answer the question “Who owns my future?” (McLennan et al., 2017), the majority of participants firstly portrayed high levels of self-responsibility and secondly aimed at being prepared, perhaps even being overly prepared, for performance through trying to control every aspect thereof. The high value placed on self-responsibility is reflected in the following statement (#8;B;446-449):

“Al my sukses en happiness kan net nie kom van...ander mense nie. Dis te erg vir my. Daai power moet myne wees. Making things happen for myself has been incredibly empowering.”

“All my success and happiness cannot come from...other people. It’s too much for me. That power should be mine. Making things happen for myself, has been incredibly empowering.”

Participants' high levels of self-responsibility may reflect the fourth element of Hocking’s (2019) identity development process for performing artists, referring to constructing an identity, which is about taking ownership of the identity, especially when sacrifices regarding your identity are required. In doing this, participants naturally answered Cray’s (2012) call for individuals in the new world of work to take responsibility for their careers and not depend as much on external bodies to regulate them.

Lastly, many participants indicated an inner drive and perseverance amidst various personal and career challenges. The overlap between participants' inner drive, perseverance, and career resilience is noteworthy. Furthermore, Masten (2014, p. 6) describes career resilience as “the capacity

of a dynamic system to adapt successfully to disturbances that threaten system function, viability, or development". Thus, there seems to be a clear link between resilience and adaptability. Savickas (2006b) refers to adaptability, resilience, and creativity¹⁵⁶ as core competencies in the ever-changing world of work. From the findings of my study, many participants thus displayed all three meta-competencies. Valverde et al. (2020) also indicate the relationship between adaptability and creativity, while Ibert and Schmidt (2014) and Oakland et al. (2012) add resiliency as a crucial competency needed to promote artists' employability. They maintain that adaptability and resilience will support their chance to survive and flourish in a highly demanding and competitive market, and to manage a protean career path.

➤ *Career Curiosity*

As career curiosity attempts to answer the question, "What do I want to do with my future?" (McLennan et al., 2017), most participants indicated shaping their future by creating opportunities within and outside the creative industry. Activities within the creative industries include directing, writing, teaching, having a sound and recording studio, public speaking or graphic design. In contrast, aspects outside the creative industries refer to activities such as running a guesthouse, conference venue, and book publishing.¹⁵⁷ From the activities there thus seems to be a distinction between what might constitute freelancing activities in a gig economy and entrepreneurship.¹⁵⁸

Also, a significant value evident to participants, especially in the mid-to-late career stages, was the importance of continuously reinventing themselves, re-creating their careers and re-creating themselves. One participant (#6;B;35-36) echoes the sentiment with the words, *'I'm incorporating other artworks as in the poetry, the um, using film, the visuals. So that's something I really wanna develop; Yes, I need to develop this even further.'* The finding supports Ibert and Schmidt (2014) as well as Oakland et al.'s statement (2012), which underlines the importance of adaptability to the

¹⁵⁶ See section 5.2.2.2. Internal Influences- Career Identity, the sub-sub-sub-theme of "interest" for an introduction to creativity.

¹⁵⁷ Refer to Table 4.2 for a detailed outline of the activities.

¹⁵⁸ Refer to footnote 46 where I briefly distinguish between the two terms.

demands of the markets and adaptability to opportunities. Eager to become employable, people must continuously reinvent themselves (Baruch & Vardi, 2016). Hall and Mirvis (2013) elaborate on this concept when they state that integrated identity development is crucial as people live and work through the self-construction required by a protean career. The finding correlates with self-construction (Guichard, 2009) and career construction (Savickas, 2012), whereby most participants aim at developing within the craft (depth) and expanding their skill set (width) and, in doing so, create opportunities within and outside the creative industries, whilst having a crystallised career identity.¹⁵⁹

➤ *Career Confidence*

Lastly, a few participants portrayed a positive self-view, high self-confidence, and a high level of independence, preferring an autonomous work environment. Participants' need for an independent and autonomous work environment may be linked to Schein's career anchor of Autonomy and Independence (Coetzee & Schreuder, 2021). Their high Career Confidence also leads them to take risks¹⁶⁰ that other individuals might not be willing to accept. One participant's words portray these risk-taking behaviours when she says (#8;A;9): "*I took major chances because I really had no fear.*" Rodrigues et al. (2019) emphasise the need for performing artists to have a positive self-concept to cope with uncertainty, instability and ambiguity, and to develop and sustain their protean career path. The findings revealed various meta-competencies that assist participants in remaining employable as they navigate the different intrapersonal and contextual career challenges in constructing a protean career path (Rodrigues et al., 2019).¹⁶¹

In summary, the first three themes focused on the rejection participants experienced from a young age throughout their lives on an intrapersonal, micro- and macro-societal level. From there,

¹⁵⁹ See section 5.2.2.2 for an overview of Career Identity.

¹⁶⁰ From the participants' responses, I have decided to put risk-taking behaviour under Career Confidence. I acknowledge the view of some that may differ from my choice and who would instead put risk-taking behaviour under Career Curiosity. However, a debate on this matter does not fall within the scope of the study, and I respect any view that might differ from mine.

¹⁶¹ See section 5.3 for an elaboration on the various meta-competencies identified throughout the current chapter and linking the competencies to employability, adaptability and the protean career.

the second theme mapped out the unique journey and the various influences on that journey that influenced participants' choice to follow a career in the performing arts. Theme 3 focused on participants' career development trajectory, particularly on aspects impacting their perceived personal and career success or 'failure' and the four Cs of Career Adaptability in their career survival skill set. In the following section (Theme 4), the spotlight will turn to a core value of participants that emerged, namely creativity, and how participants utilise their creativity to convert their trauma into creative expression, hope and social contributions becoming their purpose.

5.2.4 Theme 4: The creative urge to convert pain into creative expression, hope, social contributions and purpose

Throughout Themes 2 and 3, the notion of creativity made an appearance. Creativity made its debut appearance in Theme 2, under the sub-sub-theme of interest.¹⁶² Here, creativity emerged as an integral part of all participants' interest in careers within the artistic fields, thus confirming Holland's person-environment fit theory. Creativity briefly made a second appearance in Theme 3,¹⁶³ under the sub-sub-sub-theme, Craft Competency,¹⁶⁴ and the second and third sub-sub-sub-theme, Career Control and Career Curiosity. In this section, the interaction between creativity, perseverance¹⁶⁵ and adaptability emerged, thus referring to various meta-competencies leading to performing artists' employability as they follow a protean career path.

It would seem as if creativity had reached a grand finale in Theme 4, "The creative urge to convert pain into creative expression," as the first sub-theme puts the spotlight on participants' healing through creative expression. The second sub-theme focuses on actively mastering passive suffering and converting pain into personal hope, social contributions and a purpose, focusing on contributions on the micro- and macro-societal levels, interpreted as participants' purpose. The

¹⁶² See section 5.2.2.2. Internal Influences- Career Identity, the third sub-sub-theme, Interest.

¹⁶³ See section 5.2.3.1 Aspects impacting perceived personal and career success or failure, the second sub-sub-theme, Craft Competency.

¹⁶⁴ See section 5.2.3.2 Career Survival skills set, the second and third sub-sub-themes.

¹⁶⁵ For example, a participant mentioned her gift of songwriting.

¹⁶⁶ In the study, perseverance and resilience are perceived as synonyms.

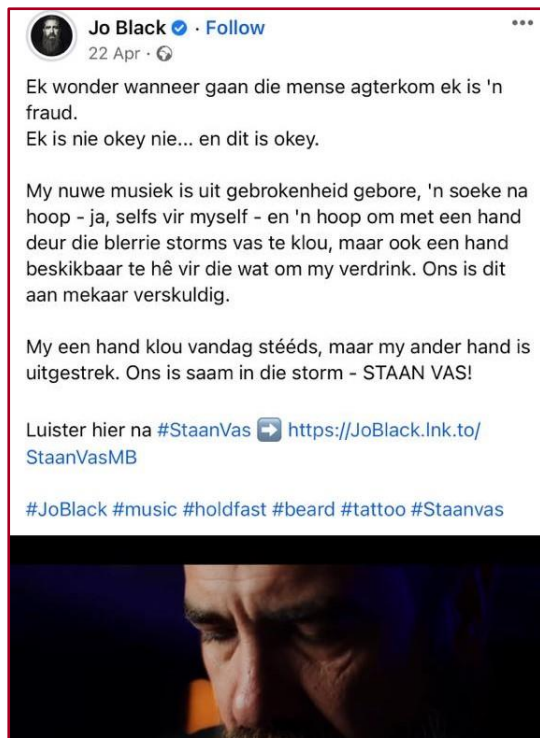
progression from intrapersonal, to micro- and macro-societal levels, therefore, confirms Maree's (2020a) view that individual systems are embedded in interconnected systems that relate to many other influences, including unique environmental and social systems.

5.2.4.1 Healing through creative expression

“Performers are both the creative person and the creative product” (Thomson & Jaque, 2016, p. xv). Never have the words of Thomson and Jaque (2016) rung more true than in the emergence of the first sub-theme, ‘Healing through creative expression.’ Almost all the participants elaborated on their emotional healing experiences as they created, engaged and delivered their artwork. Participants, as the creative person, thus intensely engage with the artwork through creating, reflecting, and emerging themselves with the artwork to obtain a deeper interpretation thereof and then delivering the artwork through vocalising, playing an instrument or portraying a character. The healing process is displayed in the words of a participant when she says (#17;B;147):

“I was molested growing up, and I tried to hide away all the emotions that came from that trauma. And I grew up in a home where I didn't feel safe to express myself, so finding entertainment really influenced me and my healing process...entertainment became my voice.”

The finding corresponds with Thomson and Jaque's (2016, p. xv) view when they highlight, “Expression is manifested via performers' bodies; they produce sound and movement for artistic expression.” The Facebook post of Jo Black, a well-known Afrikaans writer and musician, also supports the sentiment (Black, 2022):



"I wonder when people are going to realise I am a fraud.

I am not okay...and that is okay.

My new music is born out of brokenness, a search for hope- yes, even for myself- and a hope of clinging through the bloody storms with one hand, but also to have one hand available to those drowning around me. We owe it to each other.

One hand still clings today, but my other hand is outstretched. We're in the storm together- stand firm!

Listen here to #StandFirm."

Thus, it would seem as if movement flows from the performing artist to the creative product, and participants create and engage with the product and, in doing so, experience healing. The view is clearly illustrated in one of the participant's words when she explains the process she uses when she needs to portray a particular emotion, such as crying, in character (#6;B;199):

"You either really believe in what the character is going through and you automatically cry, or you use your own experiences... So I would use that emotion for this show until I became numb to it. Until I became desensitised towards it. And that really helped me, you know, cause I couldn't tell anybody about the experience, but through the show, I could take out the pain, and in that way, I got healed."

In contrast, movement can also flow from the created product to performing artists as the artwork may shed light on issues that participants had been unaware of or may have hidden away. One participant highlighted this as she told the story of playing a character who was raped, and it was

only then that she realised that she had been raped and violated. The play gave her the realisation and a safe space to voice her pain without feeling too vulnerable or exposed.

It is challenging, if not impossible, to separate the creative person and the creative product. The creative process seems to not only lead to an end-product, such as a song, play or score, but the process of creative expression itself, whether it is private (such as writing in private) or public (the performance itself), becomes an avenue of healing for participants.

The therapeutic value of the creative arts is well-known as these therapies offer a non-threatening way for clients to access and express their trauma (Perryman et al., 2019). In a study by Kanyako (2015), the arts became a channel through which performers, who had, directly and indirectly, experienced the tragedies of the war, learned about themselves and the world around them. Through this journey of self-discovery, the performers found their voices, a tool by which they were empowered, as well as an outlet for their pent-up emotions of anger, passion, and disappointment. Thomson and Jaque (2016) also note that listening to music directly affects health and well-being. Listening to and making music induces emotional states by initiating changes in the distribution of neurochemicals that can generate positive moods and causes heightened arousal, which may, in turn, increase the rate of change in the brain, speeding rehabilitation. Some evidence suggests that musical training may enhance a suite of cognitive functions, including listening, linguistics, focus and memory, along with spatial, motor and mathematical skills (Thompson & Schlaug, 2015).

The first sub-theme suggests that participants experience healing from pain and trauma through creative expression. The result is strongly supported in the literature, whereby the arts serve as a tool for reflection, expressing views, establishing safety, and expressing a wide range of human emotions. Therefore, artistic performances can act as a cathartic tool in coping with trauma and healing its wounds, exploring identities at both intrapersonal and micro- and macro-societal levels (Kanyako, 2015).

5.2.4.2 Active mastery of passive suffering-pain converted into personal hope, and social contributions become purpose

From an analysis of the findings, a second sub-theme emerged, highlighting the active mastery of passive suffering-pain converted into personal hope and social contributions become purpose. The findings confirm Maree's (2020a) statement about external trauma and suffering being converted into motivations for growth and development. Movement is evident from the previously discussed sub-theme emphasising intrapersonal healing to the current sub-theme, where participants moved beyond pain and trauma to hope and social contributions.¹⁶⁶ The two sub-sub-themes emerging from the second sub-theme focus on the collective and interactive experiences of performing artists and audiences, and the interactive experiences between performing artists as mentors and mentees as these artists turn their pain into personal hope and their social contributions become purpose.

➤ *Collective and interactive experiences between performing artists and audiences*

From my findings, it was clear that many participants referred to various collective and interactive experiences and the reciprocal impact between themselves as performing artists and their audiences. The findings coincide with Hocking's (2019) sixth element of the development process of performing artists, i.e. collaboration, bringing with it issues of authorship and ownership. Almost all participants referred to their art product as a collaboration, interaction and dependency between themselves, as performing artists, and the audience, with both parties influencing each other. Part of the reciprocal influences that many participants voiced concerned their doubts and insecurities before going onstage and during performances, experiencing the fear of rejection from audiences with various backgrounds and frameworks, and also experiencing acceptance, motivation, and support from their audiences.¹⁶⁷ My finding thus corresponds to Chen and Jagtiani (2021) and Thomson and Jaque's (2016) view of the performing arts as a collaborative art form; a product that is dependent on the expressivity of the creators, interpreters, performers as well as the receptivity of the audience - it

¹⁶⁶ Refers to the micro-societal level.

¹⁶⁷ See section 4.3 for verbatim quotes relating to each of the above-mentioned aspects.

is an interactive experience that involves person, process and product. Therefore, the performer and audience share an experience that is enriching and aesthetically rewarding (Foreman-Wernet & Dervin, 2011). In great performances, the audience and the performers are acutely aware that they share in creating an illusion, a shadow of reality. Nevertheless, the illusion is also an experience that is vibrantly alive and real (Thomson & Jaque, 2016).

A few participants' references to the theatre space as a platform to heal, teach, learn and mentor are noteworthy. Usually, the theatre space refers to the physical area where rehearsals and performances occur, containing equipment for performances, such as props, lighting, and sound, in order to enable the artists to perform in front of an audience.¹⁶⁸ However, in the words of Tompkins (2013, p. 537), "Theatre can succeed without lights, props, and even, in Samuel Beckett's 1969 play, *Breath*, an actor, but it cannot exist without space. There must be a location, a venue of some sort in which theatre can take 'place'." Theatre provides that space for performers to draw audiences into their world and to allow both participants and audiences to be vulnerable and reflect on their lives. Accordingly, the theatre space protects and exposes audiences' vulnerability by offering painful insight into a world of shared imagination. Within that space, audiences find the courage to reflect on aspects that would otherwise have been disguised (Grainger, 2014). The following words of one of the participants encapsulates this thought (#3;C;78): "*Die wisselwerking wat dit tussen my en my gehoor bring, bring genesing vir beide my en my gehoor.*" (***The interaction that it brings between me and my audience brings healing for both myself and my audience***).

Although aesthetic appreciation in the performing arts occurs in time and place, many performance works transcend time and place in the audiences' lived experiences as performing artists do more than interpret a script, a score, or choreography; they add their statement and vision (Thomson & Jaque, 2016). One participant explained her social contributions, her purpose, as follows

¹⁶⁸ For an excellent overview of theatre, I would recommend the following book by the director and co-founder of the Royal Shakespeare Company: Brook, P. (1996). *The empty space: A book about the theatre: Deadly, holy, rough, immediate*, 11. Simon and Schuster.

(#9;B;166): *“That's my purpose. Whatever message that I think I am here on earth to share, I think I'm here to share it through music.”* Another participant commented (#16;B;134):

“And I think maybe that's why I also enjoy theatre, want teater gee mos 'n lekker mirror reflection van wat in society aangaan”. (“And I think maybe that’s why I also enjoy theatre because theatre gives you a nice mirror reflection of what's going on in society”).

Thus, in the interaction and collaboration between the person,¹⁶⁹ process¹⁷⁰ and product,¹⁷¹ participants move from pain into personal hope, and their social contributions become purpose as they become agents of change. Their hurt portrayed through their art form becomes a vehicle for healing. A study by Kanyako (2015) researching the impact of Peacelinks, a theatre group addressing war crimes in an African country, demonstrates that the arts, as a multidimensional communication tool, can act as a powerful vehicle to entertain, educate, and inspire people to engage in dialogue and reconciliation, offering a journey of forgiveness and healing for performers and their audiences. Participants then make social contributions that give them a specific life purpose and are a blessing in other people’s lives. The arts provided the outlet through which individuals and groups could engage in social action and mobilisation to bring about change. The music became the vehicle to unite, empower, and heal.

The discussion focused on the collective and interactive experiences between performing artists and audiences, and the hope, social contributions, and purpose served within that space. However, the social contributions and purpose were not limited to the performance and the interaction between the performing artists and audiences, but transcended to other areas and roles within the participants’ life and careers.

¹⁶⁹ Performing artists

¹⁷⁰ Performing within a ‘space’ that transforms pain to purpose and thus the active mastery of passive suffering.

¹⁷¹ The composition, the play, the song that is sung, etc.

➤ *Performing artists as mentors as part of their social contributions and purpose*

According to Coetzee et al. (2016), it is imperative that performing artists continuously reconstruct their identity, which may lead to an adaptation of their primary role as performers moving into other roles, such as mentors, where their years of wisdom and experience are shared to the advantage of younger and more inexperienced upcoming performers. The relationship focuses on career or skills development (formal and informal) and can expand to other areas (Ragims & Kram, 2007).

Coetzee et al. (2016) and Ragims and Kram's (2007) conceptualisations of mentorship were strongly confirmed in my findings as five participants specifically mentioned their mentoring roles within and outside the performing arts. The five participants provided mentoring either within the performing arts domain in a formal setting¹⁷² (e.g. vocal or drama coaching), or in an informal setting when an actor shares "tips" on better portraying a character on set. The participants also acted as mentors outside of the performing arts, in an informal setting, as they shared their wisdom on life issues with their students and provided emotional support and encouragement to students. One participant also acted as a mentor in a formal structure as she volunteered her services to a non-profit organisation.

Interestingly, the five participants¹⁷³ mentioning their mentoring roles were the 'older' participants of the study, of which four participants were in middle adulthood to retirement (i.e. the maintenance career stage) and one participant was in the retirement transition (i.e. the disengagement career stage).¹⁷⁴ The five participants focused on tasks within the maintenance stage, such as renewal, updating and innovating. The tasks correspond with the tasks of individuals high in Career Curiosity.¹⁷⁵ The disengagement stage's main tasks include adjusting to declining energy, delegating to others, withdrawing, retiring, and organising a new life structure in which paid work is not central.

¹⁷² Refer to Table 4.2.

¹⁷³ Refer to Table 4.1 for an outline of the participants' profiles according to career stages.

¹⁷⁴ Refer to Table 2.1 for an outline of the life and career stages according to Savickas (2002), Super (1957) and Super et al. (1996).

¹⁷⁵ See sections 5.2.1.1 and 5.2.3.2 for a discussion of participants' career curiosity.

However, not one participant was involved in tasks coupled with the disengagement stage, such as retiring or even scaling down. On the contrary, the five participants told me about new projects they were embarking on, such as publishing their books or new ideas for performances involving their singing school. Notably, the five participants were also involved in tasks in the exploration and establishment phases as they followed a protean career path.

Referring to Erikson's (1994 in Maree, 2021) developmental stages, the five participants involved in mentoring were in the 'adulthood' (40 to 65 years) stage. Accordingly, participants had to deal with the polarities of generativity versus stagnation. During this stage, individuals need to acquire the ability to care for others. In resolving the polarities, they typically experience a sense of meaning and purpose in their lives and a deep need to create a living legacy (Maree, 2021). It is noteworthy that many participants, not only those in the current "adulthood" stage, experienced the need to turn their pain into purpose¹⁷⁶ in their lives. However, it seemed as if the need to leave a legacy was significant to participants in the maturity stage, as one participant within that stage specifically mentioned his need to leave not only a relationship legacy based on his mentorship in people's lives, but also a financial legacy for his family, which was reported to be a challenge. Usually, individuals in the maturity career and life phase (65+) have to resolve the polarity between ego integrity and despair and are mainly confronted with the idea of their mortality, typically reflecting on whether their lives have been successful or not. Even though this may be the case, it was not very salient in the findings.

Again, referring to Hocking's (2019) six elements of performing artists' development, the sixth and final stage is that of the "outsider", referring to a particular "art bubble" within which performing artists live, which excludes them from the outside world. Accordingly, performing artists need to develop their identities outside their specific art form, leading to a complete self, increased career resilience, and a readiness to face career disruptions (Middleton & Middleton, 2017; Moyle, 2019;

¹⁷⁶ Refer to the discussion of the previous sub-sub-theme.

Oakland et al., 2013). However, the outsider stage was irrelevant to participants as they had already incorporated various aspects of career adaptability throughout their lives and thus did not wait for the last stage of their lives to attend to it. Throughout participants' lives, they were already adaptable and portrayed an “integrated identity” as they had to fulfil various roles in order to be resilient, survive, and thrive as performing artists.

The current results thus agree with Savickas (2002), Super (1957) and Super et al.'s (1996) views on the importance of mentorship in the later career- and life stages, specifically in the maintenance stage. However, the participant in the disengagement stage still mentors formally and informally within and outside the performing arts domain. Notably, the participant is 65 years old, indicating he is on the border between the maintenance and disengagement stage. The findings thus agree with Watson and Stead's (2017) perspective that even though there is some flexibility in the stages, Super's (1996) theory still provides a comprehensive framework that explains the process of career development.

In summary, the critical values of the life-design counselling intervention¹⁷⁷ assist individuals in actively mastering passive suffering and thus converting their pain into personal hope, with social contributions becoming purpose (Maree, 2015b, 2018d; Maree, 2020c; Savickas, 2016a). The findings align perfectly with Maree's (2020a, p. 237) discussion of the life of Dolly Parton when he states that, “by actively living out the principle of actively mastering what she¹⁷⁸ has passively suffered, she inspires countless others to draw on their sense of creativity and imagination to do likewise”. From the findings and reference to the life of Dolly Parton as performing artist, it seems as if the process that usually occurs formally with the life-design intervention occurred somewhat naturally as participants experience healing and transformation through creative expression, sharing their stories and themselves; a tool that is consistently used in various types of creative therapies. The finding is highlighted in the following words of Maree (2020a, p. 31): “I have long maintained that

¹⁷⁷ See section 2.2.4.3.4 for an outline of the life-design counselling intervention.

¹⁷⁸ Referring to Dolly Parton.

career counseling was inspired and practiced by artists and entertainers long before we started building our theory from such practice.” This then supports Mark Savickas’ (2019) stance that practice precedes theory and not the other way around. Much of what we theorise about in career counselling has thus already been practised by artists and entertainers, namely how counselling for self- and career construction theory is built on practice (Maree, 2020a). Tom Hiddleston’s (in Thomson & Jaque, 2016, p. 163) quote below shares the same sentiment:

“Artists of any stripe, are inspired by their curiosity, by their desire to explore all quarters of life, in light and in dark, and reflect what they find in their work. Artists instinctively want to reflect humanity, their own and each other, in all its intermittent virtue and vitality, frailty and fallibility.”

However, as participants engaged in the life-design counselling intervention and engaged with their life stories, they made meaning of their lives through the construction, deconstruction, reconstruction and co-construction of their stories and consequently found a sense of hope and purpose. The finding supports Maree’s (2020a) view that elicitation of life stories sets in motion the dynamic process of construction, deconstruction, reconstruction, and co-construction of the stories to help people make meaning of their lives (i.e. choose and construct meaningful careers and lives), find a sense of purpose, and (re-)kindle a sense of hope for the future. The findings also support Di Fabio and Maree (2012), Savickas et al. (2009) and Symington’s (2015) view that individuals construct and co-construct their identity and life through their work¹⁷⁹ which happens within their context¹⁸⁰ and through the process, their understanding is further enhanced, promoting reflection, reflexivity, and forward movement. The finding also supports Maree’s (2020a) view of the self- and career construction perspective, that movement portrayed by individuals signifies that people’s pain can and

¹⁷⁹ For example, the performing arts.

¹⁸⁰ Referring to individuals’ particular society in which they live and work.

should be linked to their future careers in healing others and themselves. The current theme is concluded with the words of Thomson and Jaque (2016, p. 66):

“The creative process is a rich opportunity for performers. They have the opportunity to derive meaning and purpose that can be expressed in their careers and their lives.”

5.2.5 Theme 5: The transformative process leading to forward movement

Even though the research study's aim was not to determine the influence of the life-design counselling intervention on participants, it inevitably played a role. This gave rise to the emergence of the fifth and final theme, “The transformative process leading to forward movement,” which occurred as a natural next step following the counselling intervention in participants’ lives. As highlighted in the previous theme, participants’ engagement with the life-design counselling intervention enhanced their understanding through reflection and reflexivity, leading to forward movement. Thus, the finding corresponds to Guichard’s (2009) perspective that life-design counselling leads to psychologically healthier ways of self-construction. The findings also agree with Savickas’ (Savickas, 2015a, 2015b) theory of life-design counselling’s influence on improved future career construction.

From analysing the data, four sub-themes emerged, with the first sub-theme calling attention to participants’ experiences of the intervention.¹⁸¹ The second sub-theme portrays participants’ increased self-awareness and knowledge, whereafter the third sub-theme focuses on participants’ changed behaviour. The last sub-theme highlights participants’ planned, envisaged short-term goals.

5.2.5.1 Experience of the life-design intervention

The first sub-theme emerging from the data focused on participants’ meta-reflections as they reflected on their overall experiences of the life-design counselling process. Their responses related

¹⁸¹ When referring to “the intervention” I am referring to life-design counselling.

to two sub-sub-themes, namely their enjoyment of the process and participants' perseverance despite the process being a taxing one. Participants' self-narrative and other strategies, such as taking a deep breath or walking away before attempting a question, allowed them to persevere. The following two quotes reflect the sub-sub-themes.

(#9;B;583&585&589&593&603): *“It was an emotional experience because...now it is making me emotional again. It's very important to dig deep. But it is very difficult for me because I'm always scared of what's inside... and I cry because I'm proud of myself for being so open you know and uh...Even though I'm doing it with tears, but I'm still doing it. Pushing through it, you know. Um... I feel like I am in the right place. I feel like I am on the right track. I feel like... I've been saying I am wanting to face my fears, I've been saying I'm afraid to be vulnerable, but I realised today that I did face my fears. I was vulnerable today (laughs). Yeah, but, um I'm glad I did because I feel so much better. I feel liberated.”*

(#7;B;311): *“...maar voor ek elke vraag geantwoord het, het ek so bietjie weggestap, 'n sigaret in my mond gesit, asem gehaal, gechannel en dan terug gekom na die antwoord toe. Ek moes dit doen. Soos wat ek deur die survey gegaan het, het ek begin pluk aan sekere snare. En ek het gesê dis now or never, if you don't do this...it's now or never. Dan gaan jy nie ontslae raak van daai nie.”*

“... but before I answered every question, I walked away a little, put a cigarette in my mouth, took a breath, gasped, and then came back to the answer. I had to do this. As I went through the survey, I started picking on certain strings. And I said it's now or never, if you don't do this... it's now or never. Then you're not going to get rid of that.”

From the quotes it is thus clear that participants enjoyed reflecting on the intervention and their reflections,¹⁸² which took place on two levels. On the cognitive level, they enjoyed analysing their experiences, constructs, and insights. On an affective level, they enjoyed the process, experiencing delight and contentment with their life and the process itself. Lastly, the intervention enhanced the action and forward movement of some of the participants.

In the sentiment of Del Corso (2017) and Maree (2020a), I acted as a reflective audience for participants, granting them a safe holding environment. Thereby, I aided them in becoming mindful of their emotions, thoughts and feelings¹⁸³ as participants told their stories, which in turn assisted in enhancing their understanding, promoting reflection, reflexivity, and forward movement (Maree, 2020a).¹⁸⁴ Life-design counselling thus influenced individuals' interlinked thoughts, feelings and emotions (Drabik-Podgóma, 2017; Peila-Shuster, 2017; Venter, 2019). My research findings thus illustrate participants' ability to persist and adjust their thoughts, behaviours and feelings to adapt to environmental changes, which lies at the core of adaptability (Maree, 2020a).¹⁸⁵

5.2.5.2 Increased self-awareness and knowledge

Hartung and Cadaret (2017) as well as Maree (2020a) emphasise the importance of life-design counselling in personal growth and improved self-awareness. Maree (2020a) maintains that the counselling intervention helps people connect what they know about themselves consciously, with what they are aware of subconsciously, thus creating an increased self-awareness and knowledge, helping them to make meaning of their career lives, to find a sense of purpose, and to (re-)discover a sense of hope for the future. Two participants mentioned their discovery and re-discovery of aspects of themselves and their careers that they were either unaware of or had forgotten, thus confirming the stance taken by the authors mentioned above. Participants increased their self-awareness and

¹⁸² Referred to as meta-reflections.

¹⁸³ An aspect central to career construction. Also see section 4.9.5 for the description of both enjoyment and perseverance of the study, including cognitive, affective and behavioural components.

¹⁸⁴ See sections 5.2.5.2 and 5.2.5.3 for a discussion on participants' increased self-awareness, knowledge, changed behaviour and forward movement as depicted in their envisaged short-term goals.

¹⁸⁵ See sections 5.2.1.2 and 5.2.3.2 for various discussions of the use of Adaptability amongst participants as intrapersonal skills when dealing with Rejection and part of their Career Survival Skill Set.

knowledge, thus answering the question, “Who am I?” (Maree, 2017c), as is clearly illustrated by the following two quotes.

(#7;A;19): *"I have learnt so much of my shortcomings, the shadows in the cracks of my wall. The unspoken anger that haunts me on a daily basis...uncertainty about life and those that dwell with me in it."*

(#15;B;729): *"Instead of, of, speaking about what really happened and the bad memories, we actually talked about what I learned from those memories and how do I see those things that happened...it actually gave me hope, you know."*

The quotes also indicate that participants' increased self-awareness and knowledge led to increased optimism,¹⁸⁶ coping with trauma in life and healing (Maree, 2020a; Venter, 2019). My findings thus support Savickas' (2011c) position that advancing people's self-awareness, promoting critical self-reflection, and reflexivity helps them refine their sense of self and identity. The process thus assisted participants in obtaining new insights into themselves and their careers, experiencing breakthroughs and liberation in certain areas of their lives, and demonstrating progress in their lives (Maree, 2020a).¹⁸⁷

The results of my study thus generally agree with that of former research (Del Corso, 2017; Drabik-Podgóma, 2017; Peila-Shuster, 2017; Venter, 2019) in that the findings emphasise the importance of life-design counselling in assisting participants to gain improved self-awareness, knowledge and to obtain new insights, allowing them to reconstruct their thoughts, feelings and emotions. Therefore, the findings support the aim of career counselling which is to bring about change in clients by facilitating progress in meaning-making within them as they gain self-awareness and understanding, helping them to retain the momentum needed to bring about change in their behaviour

¹⁸⁶ See section 5.2.5.3 for a discussion of improved optimism in participants as part of self-efficacy.

¹⁸⁷ Refer to the following two sections.

and progress in their career lives (Maree, 2020a). In the process, their well-being, too, is bolstered (McAdams & Olson, 2010).

5.2.5.3 *Changed behaviour*

Three participants voiced different aspects of behavioural changes due to the intervention. The first aspect voiced by two participants was their *increased self-efficacy*, portrayed as increased positive self-talk, self-belief and self-acceptance, and an increased appreciation, enjoyment and optimism for their lives and career journey, as clearly demonstrated by the following quote (#6;B;369&371): *“I've been insecure and always looking for affirmation from others, but doing this, I'm like, I actually have that affirmation myself.”* According to Gross (2017), optimism is commonly defined as hopefulness and/or confidence about the future, thus clearly describing the two participants' behaviour. Venter's (2019) research confirms the link between optimism and hope concerning individuals' future narratives and self-efficacy, portrayed as a general sense of confidence in their ability to achieve their goals. According to Bandura's (1986) definition, self-efficacy significantly influences what individuals do, their sense of who they are, their control over matters, and their self-agency. Therefore, self-efficacy refers to people's management and control of their emotions, thoughts and actions (Bandura, 1986), their perceived capabilities to achieve particular goals (Savickas, 1997a), and their perception of their ability to perform certain kinds of actions efficiently (Maree, 2020a, 2020b). Thus, the counselling process assisted participants in actively mastering what they passively suffered, thus giving them a sense of hope for the future portrayed in their increased self-efficacy.

One participant mentioned four aspects of change in her behaviour: higher self-efficacy, more assertiveness, higher resiliency and more risk-taking behaviour, as is evident in the following quote (#17;C;150-151&154):

“I started taking more chances. I have applied for everything that I find artistically interesting. I am actively taking myself out of my comfort zone in

order to start achieving my goals. I have been speaking out for myself, and also speaking up for my ideas, and not apologising for taking up space in one-on-one and group settings.”

My findings mirror that of Venter’s (2019) research, where optimism and self-efficacy were directly linked to resilience. Masten (2014; 2019) defines career resilience as the process of successful adaptation despite challenging circumstances, thus linking optimism, self-efficacy, and resilience to adaptability. The above finding aligns with Maree’s (2017; 2018b; 2020a) research on the importance of an individual’s ability to change subjective beliefs, thoughts and perceptions to enhance their career resilience as individuals turn growth areas into strengths, thus referring to their improved adaptability. Hartung and Cadaret (2017) as well as Maree (2017b) support the importance of personal growth (changing beliefs, emotions and thoughts) in the process of developing a better sense of self and enhancing career resilience. Lastly, Lyons et al. (2015) state that higher levels of risk-taking are associated with higher levels of career resilience and assert that risk-taking involves “fear of failure, need security, and tolerance of uncertainty and ambiguity” (p. 366), also illustrated in the above quote.

Even though the above findings are based on only three candidates’ responses, with one participant reflecting all four of the constructs, the findings still contribute to the above literature, supporting the influence that the counselling intervention had on an array of interrelated constructs, such as self-efficacy, hope, optimism, resilience, assertiveness and risk-taking behaviours. It is also noteworthy that one participant portrayed all the characteristics, thus supporting the literature mentioned above on the interrelatedness of the various constructs.

5.2.5.4 Envisaged short-term goals

Advancing people’s self-awareness, promoting critical self-reflection, and bolstering their reflexivity helps them shape and fine-tune their sense of self and identity, which empowers them to approach the future with a clear, proven plan of action (Maree, 2020a; Savickas, 2011c). The findings mirror the sentiment of approaching the future with a clear plan of action, as three participants

mentioned their newly envisaged short-term goals resulting from the intervention, focusing on *improved emotional well-being* and *increased purpose-driven actions*. Two participants aimed at improving their emotional well-being by searching for a therapist, nurturing their inner child, and pacing themselves to live a more balanced lifestyle, as is reflected in the following quotes (#17;C;152): *“I have been actively looking for a therapist, to start dealing with all of myself.”* (#8;C;131): *“My theme for the rest of the year is ‘Pace yourself.’”*

Additionally, one participant referred to her goal of being more purpose-driven in her actions as she aimed at stepping out of her comfort zone more frequently, thus challenging herself more and aligning her actions with her vision. She also indicated an increased focus on improving her skill set, whether in the chosen specialisation area within the performing arts or business. The findings support Guichard (2009) and Savickas’ (2015a; 2015b) perspective that individuals’ reflection and reflexivity uncovers psychologically healthier ways of self-construction and future career construction. Again, the current theme was based on only three candidates' responses, but even so, they correspond to the literature of Guichard (2009), Maree (2020a) and Savickas (2011c; 2015a; 2015b). The following quote by Martha Graham (in Thomson and Jaque, 2016, p. 81) beautifully portrays the idea of taking action when she says:

“There is a vitality, a life force, an energy, a quickening that is translated through you into action, and because there is only one of you in all time, this expression is unique. And if you block it, it will never exist through any other medium and will be lost.”

5.3 SUMMARISED COMMENTS: QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

In the following sections, I will briefly summarise the themes and sub-themes previously highlighted. After that, I will provide the rationale for not including a summary of pre- and post-themes.

5.3.1 Summarised discussion of identified themes and sub-themes

Five themes and their related sub-themes¹⁸⁸ emerged from the data analysis which in turn could be related to the study's objectives. The themes emerging from the various data sources indicated that constructs such as rejection and strategies employed in dealing with rejection on the various levels,¹⁸⁹ together with internal and external influences (e.g. creativity), are strongly associated with self- and career construction. Even though the focus of the study was not specifically on the impact of the life-design process, participants' feedback indicated that participants had had a positive experience of the process. Theme 5 specifically illustrates three participants' experiences of the process, with their increased self-awareness, changed behaviour and the impact of the transformative process on their forward movement as they experienced improved emotional well-being and purpose-driven actions.

5.3.2 Rationale for not including a summary of pre- and post-themes

From the previous discussion, it is clear that the life-design process positively impacted most participants in the study. Importantly the focus of the study was not on the impact of the intervention on participants' future self- and career construction, but instead on the construction of participants' self and of their careers throughout their lives, as experienced by the time of data gathering. As indicated in my data-gathering plan,¹⁹⁰ I started data gathering with participants completing the Career Interest Profile (*CIP*), whereafter I conducted the interviews. Thereafter I sent participants the transcribed interviews and the summarised worksheet to confirm¹⁹¹ from the candidates that the information captured by me was accurately recorded. However, even though I did not focus on pre- and post-themes, Theme 5 clearly indicated a natural positive progression of the intervention on some participants, bringing about a forward movement in their future self- and career construction.

¹⁸⁸ Including sub-themes up to four levels.

¹⁸⁹ Referring to the intrapersonal, micro-, and macro-soecietal levels.

¹⁹⁰ Refer to Table 3.2 on page 140-141 for the data-gathering plan.

¹⁹¹ Refer to Appendix C.

5.4 CRITICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE CHAPTER

The current chapter outlines my research findings by comparing my results to that of other studies. My goal was to validate my findings or to emphasise the differences between my results and that of existing research. I did this by discussing the five identified themes, sub-themes and sub-sub-themes to compare my findings to the existing literature.

When reflecting on the overall chapter and the development of the five themes, it is noteworthy to mention the unfolding of the five themes concerning people who are the key protagonists (social actors, motivated agents, and autobiographical authors)¹⁹² in their life stories (Maree, 2020a). In support of Maree (2020a), participants were thus the autobiographical authors of their career identity (p. 77), with adaptability, resilience, and creativity as paramount in the process of career counselling (or “counselling for (self- and) career construction”, self-construction, and life-design). Maree’s (2020a) viewpoints were evident throughout the emergence of the five themes as part of the process of self-making and career construction, which naturally occurred during childhood, adolescence, and adulthood (Savickas, 2013a).

Participants thus started their self-construction as *social actors* consisting of various representations of traits,¹⁹³ social roles, and features such as rejection¹⁹⁴ affecting their career identity,¹⁹⁵ having resulted in and from repeated performances on the social stage of life (e.g. their interactions with family members). The participants' role as *motivated agents* was evident in how they dealt with rejection¹⁹⁶ and how they made their life and career choices.¹⁹⁷ When making the choices, they were influenced not only by their home environment but also by educators and important other people, such as their spouse. Within Themes 3,¹⁹⁸ 4¹⁹⁹ and 5,²⁰⁰ participants acted as

¹⁹² See section 2.2.4.3.2 for a discussion on the three concepts.

¹⁹³ See section 5.2.2.2.

¹⁹⁴ Refer to Theme 1.1.

¹⁹⁵ Refer to Theme 2.2.

¹⁹⁶ Refer to Theme 1.2.

¹⁹⁷ Refer to Theme 2.

¹⁹⁸ Referring to the Career Development Trajectory of participants.

¹⁹⁹ Referring to the creative urge to convert trauma into creative expression and active mastery of passive suffering turned into hope, social contributions and purpose.

²⁰⁰ Referring to the transformative process leading to forward movement.

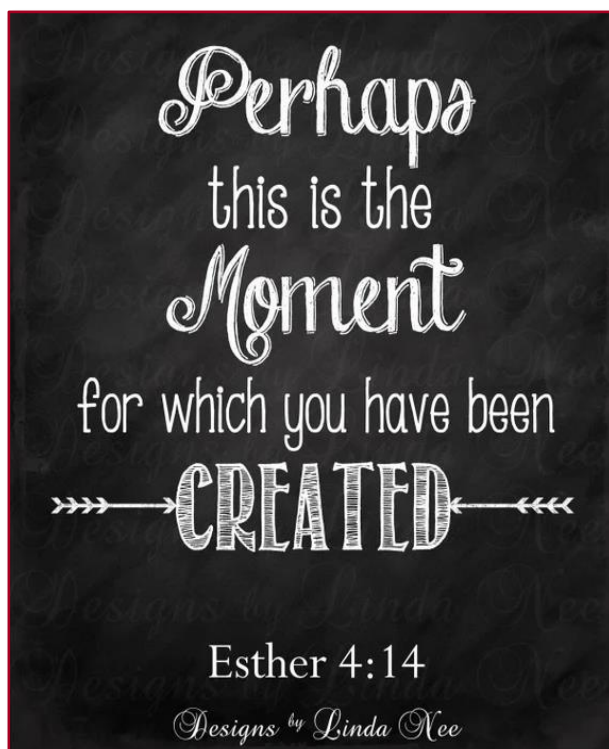
their own storytellers, thus referring to their roles as *autobiographical authors* integrating their life stories into a coherent whole through explaining their life and career experiences to themselves and others, and planning their way forward.

In conclusion, I achieved my initial goal, i.e. to determine the career-life experiences of performing artists as a protean career type, specifically musicians, singers and actors in their early, middle and late career and life stages, as well as identified within the framework of career construction. I could relate all findings in my study to existing research, thus suggesting that all themes, sub-themes, and sub-sub-themes were related to performing artists' life experiences from the career construction framework. I believe that my research was not only able to support existing themes but also identified how these themes presented themselves in different ways in the participants' lives.

In the following and last chapter, I shall attempt to summarise my research by reconsidering my research questions and communicating my final findings and recommendations. Lastly, I will provide a thorough overview of my research study and some pertinent concluding remarks. Accordingly, the following quote from a participant seems to capture the main sentiment of the research findings (#14;F;5-6):

“We share our stories to heal not only others but also ourselves. We laugh, we live, but most of all, we love. We were born to make manifest the Glory of God that is within us, and as we let our light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. This is our own journey, and we gonna embrace it.”

CHAPTER 6: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

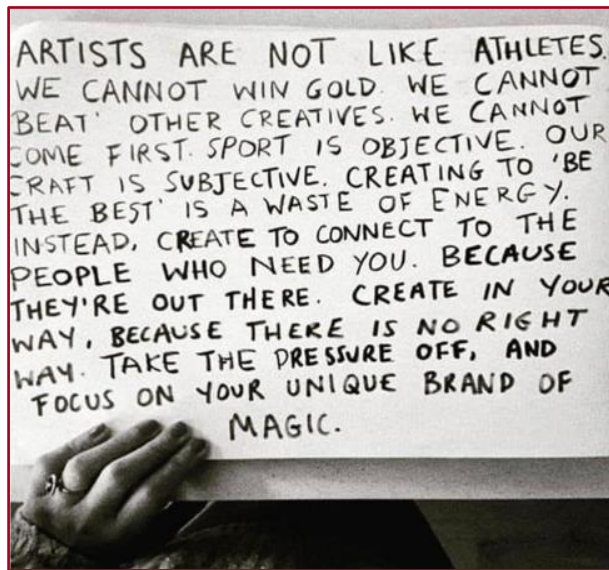


(Nee, 2022)

6.1 INTRODUCTION

I start the final chapter by reflecting on two quotes encapsulating the core of my study. The first quote is by William Shakespeare, from his famous play Hamlet and spoken by Polonius in Act 1, Scene III: "To thine own self be true." Another quote that seems to echo this sentiment is found in the words of Amie McNee,²⁰¹ as posted on Facebook by Anna Davel (Davel, 2021), a well-known performing artist in South Africa:

²⁰¹ Find her at <https://www.amiemcnee.com/merchandise/p/artists-are-not-like-athletes-print>



Both quotes reflect the core message that each person is authentically unique with their own brand of specialness. Only through authentic living²⁰² can performing artists construct their unique career trajectories. Living their stories allows them to connect to people, make social contributions through the various spheres of influence, and to live their purpose. The process was revealed in the purpose statement of the study and the literature review, which showed a definite need to investigate the career experiences of performing artists in the South African context. I continually strove to present my research findings as accurately as possible to provide as much insight into the career-life experiences of performing artists within the framework of career construction. Through analysis of the data, different constructs and themes emerged, shedding light on how participants' unique life experiences, self- and career construction influenced their career identities, adaptability, and life themes.²⁰³

In this final chapter, I attempt to connect and answer my research questions in view of my findings. Furthermore, I revisit the ethical considerations as outlined previously, after which I reflect

²⁰² Including your identity, adaptability and unique life themes as portrayed by your narratives.

²⁰³ See section 2.2.4.3.3 Core pillars in the Construction of a Career on pages 65-74 for a discussion on the three constructs, career identity, career adaptability and life themes.

on the strengths and limitations of the study. Recommendations for further studies follow, whereafter I share personal reflections before concluding the thesis.

6.2 REVISITING THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

My primary research question was formulated as follows:

What life-career experiences of performing artists, as a protean career type, including musicians, singers and actors in their early, middle and late life-career stages can be identified within the framework of career construction?

The primary research question was divided into descriptive and exploratory sub-questions to answer the main research question as comprehensively as possible. The three sub-questions are as follow:

Descriptive questions:

The descriptive research questions of the study include:

- What life-career experiences influence the career trajectory of performing artists, including musicians, singers and actors in their early, middle and late life-career stages in South Africa?
- How does the identity construction (the what) of performing artists in the South African context occur?
- How does the career adaptability (the how) of performing artists in the South African context occur?
- What are some of the life themes (the why) related to performing artists within the South African context?

Exploratory question:

The exploratory research questions of the study include:

- How does knowledge of performing artists' life-career experiences (relevant to the current study, such as their identity construction, career adaptability and life themes) assist in understanding the

career construction of performing artists' life-career stages within the South African context as a protean career type?

I will now attempt to answer the above questions by drawing on the data obtained from my qualitative research study.

6.2.1 Descriptive questions²⁰⁴

I will answer each descriptive question by linking the particular question to the findings obtained and highlighted in Chapters Four and Five.

6.2.1.1 What life-career experiences influence the career trajectory of performing artists, including musicians, singers and actors in their early, middle and late life-career stages in South Africa?

From an analysis of the findings, the diverse experiences with which participants are confronted from a young age, continuing throughout their life-career²⁰⁵ stages on various levels,²⁰⁶ emerged, affecting their career choice and trajectory as performing artists. One such facet is participants'²⁰⁷ experience of rejection as portrayed through their thoughts, emotions, and behaviours²⁰⁸ starting at an early age and continuing to the late life-career stage. Participants also experienced rejection on a micro-societal level while still at school from their peers and educators, and as adults²⁰⁹ through, for example, recording companies demonstrating bullying behaviour. Performance anxiety also presented itself, as participants experienced fear of being rejected by the audience. On a micro-societal level, participants experienced rejection for not fitting into societal roles and expectations within and outside the performing arts sphere. Additionally, the performing arts sector does not

²⁰⁴ Even though I discuss the descriptive questions, one at a time, linking the findings to each one in an attempt to answer the initial research questions, it is important to note that the constructs are not separate entities. There is interconnectedness between constructs, for example, life and career experiences impact career adaptability and identity construction or a certain life theme emerging as a result of individual life and career experiences.

²⁰⁵ Refer to page 13, the 9th footnote, for a brief explanation of the use of the term “life-career stages.”

²⁰⁶ Referring to the intrapersonal, micro- and macro-societal levels.

²⁰⁷ Each time I use the word “participants”, I directly refer to the individuals that were part of the research study and the findings directly relating to them.

²⁰⁸ Refer to Table 4.7 on pages 178-179 for verbatim quotes on the impact that rejection had on participants on a cognitive, affective and behavioural level.

²⁰⁹ Including the early, middle and late life- and career stages.

receive the needed government support and acceptance, as portrayed in the lack of funding or maintenance of theatres, leading to participants experiencing rejection on a macro-societal South African level.

Additionally, participants' experiences and interactions with external influences shaped their choice of following a performing arts career. Interestingly, most participants did not follow the career trajectory of significant others and, at times, even experienced active discouragement from these influences²¹⁰ concerning pursuing a performing arts career. What is meaningful, though, is that participants did experience support and encouragement from at least one important person in their life²¹¹ to follow their dream, irrespective of the career field, thereby possibly counteracting the negative experiences of rejection. The importance of participants' experiences with educators, albeit negative²¹² or positive,²¹³ on their career trajectories cannot be overstated. Noteworthy is the happenstance of experiences in participants' choices to follow a performing arts career, whether as one-time encounters²¹⁴ or through continuous exposure to the performing arts.²¹⁵ Cognizance should also be taken of the uniquely South African landscape in which experiences within the larger family and community²¹⁶ cannot be ignored when deciding on a performing arts career. Additionally, participants' experiences of emotional and instrumental support from external influences not only influenced their initial career choice, but also assisted in maintaining their performing arts career until participants' later life-career stages.

Creativity permeates the participants' life and career experiences as they engage in a protean career trajectory while converting their suffering and pain into creative expressions, leading them to hope and a purpose through which they then contribute socially. The findings revealed that

²¹⁰ For example, parents, family or the community.

²¹¹ For example, a parent or teacher.

²¹² For example, when they are bullied, thus experiencing rejection.

²¹³ For example, receiving emotional and instrumental support.

²¹⁴ Such as viewing a well-known coloured actor on television and thereby experiencing a 'turning point' that I, as a coloured man, can also be an actor.

²¹⁵ Either formally, as participants had formal lessons or informally, as part of our culture.

²¹⁶ As part of important others.

participants, as creative individuals,²¹⁷ create, reflect on, and immerse themselves in the artwork and, in the process, experience healing. As participants creatively engage with the created art product, affective, psychological and physical movement²¹⁸ occurs, leading to intrapersonal healing for participants. In contrast, movement is also reflected from created products towards the participants as the artworks²¹⁹ shed light on hidden pain and unresolved trauma, whilst participants can ‘hide’ behind the artwork without feeling too vulnerable or exposed in the transformation process. The reciprocal relationship between the creative person and the creative product is so intertwined that it is challenging, if not impossible, to distinguish one from the other. The relationship extends even further as a collaboration, interaction and interdependency between the participants, the created artwork and the audience. The findings revealed that participants are ‘painfully’ aware of their perceived or actual experiences as they try to impress and please audiences while simultaneously being inspired by and valuing their support. Therefore, participants share their stories,²²⁰ experiencing a transformation from pain to purpose, while leaving their audiences with hope, thus making a social contribution.

Noteworthy is the participants’ positive experience of the theatre as a holding space where all parties can be vulnerable, reflect on, and debate controversial societal issues. Theatre thus provides them with a space to heal, teach, learn and mentor.²²¹ In summary, participants’ life-career experiences on intrapersonal, micro-societal and macro-societal levels throughout their life-career stages directly shaped their identity construction, naturally leading the discussion to the following descriptive research question.

²¹⁷ The statement is based on the participants’ interest profile and will be discussed in more detail in section 6.3.1.2.

²¹⁸ For the purpose of the study, and more specifically the chapter, movement is defined as a dynamic force urging forward movement in terms of volition, adaptability and development for the individual.

²¹⁹ For example, a play on a particular topic such as rape.

²²⁰ Either directly or indirectly.

²²¹ I elaborate on mentoring in section 6.2.1.3 when I discuss the third descriptive research question.

6.2.1.2 How does the identity construction (the what) of performing artists in the South African context occur?

The experiences and external influences discussed in the first descriptive research question directly influenced participants' self-concept and identity construction, while the self- and career identity continuously evolve in the dynamic, ever-changing protean career. The finding is especially relevant to early and middle life-career participants. Compared to Erikson's framework of developmental tasks (Maree, 2021), participants experienced rejection from an early age, resulting in mistrust of others and the belief that others are not looking out for their best interests. Therefore, they try to change their behaviour to try and fit into the status quo. The rejection they experience leads directly to role confusion and identity crises as they experience shame, guilt and a loss of identity as performing artists.

In contrast, older participants seemed more content regarding their self- and career identity while experiencing intimacy and generativity as they coached, mentored, and shared their wisdom with others. Older participants also experienced ego integrity as they reflected on their lives and felt proud of their achievements and how they had grown in themselves. Participants' experience of identity formation through the different life and career stages is thus in line with Erikson's life stages and corresponding life tasks (Maree, 2021). In the early and middle life-career stages, participants experience rejection, mistrust, shame, and doubt, while those in the mid-to-late life and career stage experience more intimacy, generativity, and ego integrity.

Importantly, participants' identities as 'performing artists' and activities within the performing arts field are intertwined, impacting each other in a reciprocal relationship. Central to participants' self-concept is a core value that the performing arts is not only a career but encapsulates their self-concept and identity construction. The concept is closely associated with Dik and Duffy's (2009) and Duffy and Dik's (2013) concept of 'living out one's calling,' as participants highlighted that they had no choice but to 'obey' the calling in their life. In a similar vein, participants' natural abilities flowed

through various creative endeavours, ranging from creating to executing art as they applied their creativity to multiple contexts, thus living the notion of ‘being’ and not only ‘doing’ a craft.

Participants’ interest in the creative and performing arts as well as positive feedback²²² influenced their self-view (self-concept) and self-confidence as performing artists with the required talent.²²³ Participants collectively agreed that performing artists should have a particular skill set on a particular level of competence in order to deliver flawless performances. Furthermore, participants were primarily guided by their perceptions of their skills and confidence in achieving success. Amidst ‘perceived career success’, participants still experienced self-doubt regarding their craft and felt inferior and overcritical of their abilities; findings that correspond with those in the literature.

Participants’ interest in creativity corresponds to Holland’s (1997) artistic theme, as they preferred creative, ambiguous, free, and unsystematic activities. Participants also preferred social themes and intensely disliked activities fitting into conventional and realistic themes. Noteworthy is participants’ general dislike of entrepreneurial activities such as the management and planning of finances, managing their careers as a business, and other management functions often referred to as the business of the performing arts. It is worth noting that three features affected participants’ ‘perceived’ personal and career success or ‘failure’, shaping their self-concept and identity. The first feature refers to participants’ ‘perceived’ craft competency, while the second feature points to their inclination or aversion toward the business of performing arts. A third feature influencing participants’ perceived success or failure is whether they had obtained a formal qualification or not. Even though most participants agreed that they do not need qualifications to succeed in the performing arts, they supported the notion that obtaining a qualification influenced their ‘perceived’ success and improved their self-concept as their status in the community improved. In contrast, not obtaining a qualification led to ‘perceived failure’ and thus a negative self-concept relating to

²²² Positive feedback was received from all three levels, i.e. the intrapersonal (self-awareness that the participant has talent in a particular creative endeavour), micro-societal level (from important other educators and audiences) and macro-societal level (such as receiving awards).

²²³ Synonym for ability.

academics. Even though one participant in the late life-career stage mentioned the importance of education for growth and development, the influence of education on participants' self-concept²²⁴ was especially relevant in the early- to early-middle adulthood life-career stage, corresponding to the critical features of the early life-career stage.²²⁵

Overall, the findings thus indicate a reciprocal relationship between living a value-driven life,²²⁶ self-concept, perceived ability and interest in creative and artistic fields. Contributing to these factors are the distinct experiences²²⁷ that performing artists encounter. The interaction of the two sets of factors - innate and environmental-situational factors - add to performing artists' self- and career identity and construction.

6.2.1.3 How does the career adaptability (the how) of performing artists in the South African context occur?

As highlighted in the previous discussions, life-career experiences directly influence participants' self- and career construction, influencing 'how' they navigate their way through the protean career. Significantly, participants had their 'career survival skill set' in place as they applied positive career adaptability strategies throughout the early, middle and late life-career stages. The positive end of the continuum refers to participants' tendency to display higher levels of all four Cs of Career Adaptability. Firstly, participants displayed positive *career concerns* as they were optimistic and hopeful regarding their future, and sought out and even enjoyed challenges related to their future career concerns. Their behaviour portrayed innovation and proactive action while continuously being optimistic about the future, even amidst challenges and hardships such as a worldwide epidemic. Additionally, participants displayed high levels of responsibility for their career development, employing self-discipline, effort, inner drive and perseverance to create alternative solutions whilst owning up to their career decision, therefore presenting with high *career control*.

²²⁴ And related 'perceived' career success or failure.

²²⁵ See section 2.2.2.1 for Super (1957), Super et al. (1996) and Savickas' (2002) outline of the various life and career stages.

²²⁶ Being called to a life in the arts and thereby not being able to ignore the call if one wants to be happy.

²²⁷ Negative and positive, together with one-time or continuous experiences.

Participants also displayed high *career curiosity* as they were inquisitive yet realistic about their future goals whilst being courageous, taking risks, and exploring and creating opportunities within and outside the creative industry. Furthermore, participants, especially in the mid-to-late life-career stages, reiterated the importance of continuous self- and career reconstruction, thereby acknowledging their need for continuous innovation and redesigning of the self and career. Noteworthy is that the older participants, who should be involved in tasks coupled with the disengagement stage,²²⁸ were busy with new projects and endeavours. Thus the older participants were involved in tasks related to the exploration and establishment phases as they followed a protean career path, displaying high career curiosity.

Lastly, most participants indicated high levels of *career confidence* as they anticipated career success, displayed a positive self-concept through belief in themselves and their skills, solved problems as they arose, took responsibility for building their networks, and took risks. Thus, they portrayed higher levels of self-efficacy. They also preferred working independently in an autonomous work environment.

Consequently, participants positively applied their attitudes, beliefs and competencies (ABCs) to the four Cs of Career Adaptability as representative of the adaptive resources and coping strategies available to them in managing and coping with tasks, transitions, and traumas in their lives. They exhibited positive coping attitudes and beliefs towards themselves and enacted well-developed competencies regarding their craft and careers that helped them cope on an intrapersonal level, thereby positively impacting their employability. A practical example is when participants' positive attitudes and beliefs led them to reframe their rejection²²⁹ as a learning experience, thereby portraying positive attitudes and beliefs, reconciling the 'rejection' with their identity and self-worth. The process assists participants not to internalise rejection but to employ it as a motivating factor that

²²⁸ Refer to Super et al.'s (1996) theory in Chapter 2.

²²⁹ Or any other 'perceived' failure.

drives positive strategic behaviour, such as continuously adapting to a highly competitive, flexible industry whilst strategically building networks.

As discussed in the previous descriptive question, it seems as if participants tended to gravitate toward obtaining a higher education qualification as a strategy for not only influencing their self-concept, but also for adapting to the performing arts sector. Obtaining a qualification also assisted individuals in acquiring the knowledge, skill, depth, discipline, and a safe space to experiment and get valuable feedback to develop and grow, which, according to the participants, is vital if one wants to succeed and adapt in the South African performing arts sphere.

Participants also employed spirituality²³⁰ to cope with challenges and improve their well-being, implying more effortless adaptability. Significantly, the arts and spirituality are perceived as integrated entities that coexist harmoniously, with art positively influencing spirituality and vice versa.

Participants also called for various positive strategies employed on micro- and macro-societal levels. On a *micro-societal level*, they lobbied to educate society through open narratives, thereby discussing issues in open forums and consequently dealing with issues head-on. On a *macro-societal level*, participants employed two positive strategies, with the first emphasising the development of integrated creative platforms on a national level and the second improved governance of the arts sector locally and nationally. Notably, the suggested strategies on both the micro- and macro-societal level demonstrate high values on all four the Cs of Career Adaptability, i.e. concern, control, curiosity and confidence, thereby assisting participants to effectively adapt not only on an intrapersonal level but also on a micro- and macro-societal level.

In contrast to the positive use of career adaptability and the accompanying strategies, some participants exhibited negative attitudes and beliefs, often resulting in destructive behaviour towards themselves, their interactions with others, and their careers. The result is a disequilibrium within the

²³⁰ A belief in a higher power.

four Cs of Career Adaptability, portrayed as indifference, indecision, unrealism and inhibition. A negative spiral continues as low levels of the Cs lead to negative attitudes, behaviours and competencies (ABC), which in turn lead to lower levels of the four Cs and so forth. One of the first negative strategies participants referred to was a tendency to display mental health issues, such as depression and anxiety,²³¹ with some participants reverting to substance abuse and suicide attempts. They displayed the negative continuum of the ABCs as they engaged in self-criticism, negative self-narratives and perfectionism, which resulted in participants feeling powerless and out of control as they experienced shame and guilt for not executing what they considered a ‘perfect’ performance. A few participants voiced self-doubt regarding their craft, leading them to procrastinate, continuously feeding the negative self-narrative and consequently causing them not to take advantage of opportunities. This in turn negatively impacts their career success trajectory and causes them to live a negative self-fulfilling prophecy which encompasses the fear of not getting new “gigs”.

Importantly, two candidates passed away during the research. One can only hypothesise that their lifestyles, i.e. wanting to socialise and possibly not wanting to adhere to restrictions, or not taking COVID-19 prevention measures, may have contributed to their untimely deaths. Also noteworthy is that potential candidates had responded to my invitation to participate in the research, saying that they were not in the right “space” to participate due to the COVID-19 epidemic and were instead trying to cope and survive, which may be linked to inadequate levels of career adaptability and acquisition of adaptive resources and skills.

In summary, participants continuously incorporated career adaptability strategies throughout their lives to cope with and address various changes in their protean careers. Therefore, they participated in self- and career construction by persisting and by adjusting their thoughts, behaviours and feelings as they adapted to environmental changes, which, according to Maree (2020a), lies at the core of career adaptability.

²³¹ Including performance anxiety.

6.2.1.4 What are some of the life themes (the why) related to performing artists within the South African context?

Various life themes emerged as participants applied their self- and career identity to their life structures through career adaptability strategies. Life themes reflect participants' subjective motivation (the why), which activates and propels forward movement. For participants as performing artists, one of the first life themes to emerge was their creative urge to convert trauma and pain experienced into creative expression. As creative individuals, performing artists experience emotional healing as they engage with their artwork through creating, reflecting and delivering it to an audience. Notably, the direction of movement does not only appear from the artist to the product but also vice versa, as the artwork²³² sheds light on issues participants were either unaware of or may have subverted. The creative person, process²³³ and product are thus intertwined and act as an avenue of healing for participants.

In the second life theme, movement extends to the micro-societal system referring to the collaboration, interaction and dependency between performing artists and audiences, with both parties influencing each other²³⁴ within the theatre space as a safe holding environment. As such, participants experience healing while transforming their pain to hope and a purpose through which they contribute on a societal level. Participants, therefore, become agents of change, making social contributions extending to other areas and roles within their lives and careers.

A social contribution worth mentioning is participants' engagement in formal and informal mentoring roles within and outside the performing arts domain. Mentoring was especially evident in reports by participants in the middle adulthood to late life-career stages.²³⁵ Accordingly, participants had to deal with the polarities of generativity versus stagnation.²³⁶ In resolving the polarities, participants typically experience a sense of meaning and purpose in their lives and a deep need to

²³² Such as a playwright.

²³³ Whether the expression is private, such as writing in private or public, performing in front of an audience.

²³⁴ The finding coincides with Hocking's (2019) sixth element of the identity development process of performing artists, collaboration.

²³⁵ Refer to Super's life-span, life-space theory in Chapter 2, section 2.2.2.1.

²³⁶ Refer to Erikson's developmental framework in Chapter 2, section 2.4.2.1.

create a living legacy regarding their relationships and finances. Worth noting is the flexibility of the life-career stages, as evidenced by a participant on the brink of the disengagement stage, who was still mentoring and thus sharing their wisdom²³⁷ formally and informally within and outside the performing arts domain and being generally involved in various creative endeavours. As participants engaged with their life stories, the construction, deconstruction, reconstruction and co-construction of these stories, whether through their creative endeavours or in life-design counselling, they found meaning in their lives and careers, which filled them with a sense of hope and purpose.

As the idea of motion ran like a golden thread throughout performing artists' life themes, it is not surprising that the last life theme points to the transformative healing process that propels participants towards a more purpose-driven future. Overall, participants enjoyed their meta-reflections²³⁸ as they became mindful of their thoughts and feelings while enhancing their understanding through reflection and reflexivity. As a result, participants connected their conscious self-knowledge with subconscious self-knowledge. Their increased self-awareness and knowledge assisted them in redefining their identity, as they made sense of their career lives, found a sense of purpose, and (re-)discovered a sense of hope for the future while experiencing healing and liberation in certain areas of their lives through the reconstruction of their thoughts and emotions. The process thus assisted participants in actively mastering passive suffering, providing the momentum needed to change their behaviour and to progress in their careers. Behavioural changes included increased self-efficacy, portrayed as increased positive self-talk, self-belief and self-acceptance as well as an increased appreciation, enjoyment and optimism for their lives and career journeys. Changed behaviour also included higher resiliency, increased assertiveness, and risk-taking. As participants experienced personal growth,²³⁹ their resiliency increased, consequently growing their adaptability and ability to deal with ambiguities.

²³⁷ As part of Erikson's last psychosocial stage, ego integrity vs despair, with ego strength referring to wisdom. Refer to Chapter 2, Table 2.8, for a brief outline of the stages.

²³⁸ Occurring on cognitive and affective levels.

²³⁹ Through changing their subjective beliefs and emotions.

The forward movement ultimately crystallises in participants outlining their future goals, including increased purpose-driven actions²⁴⁰ and focus on emotional well-being.²⁴¹ Overall, individuals' reflection and reflexivity uncovered psychologically healthier ways of future self- and career construction.

6.2.2 Exploratory question

The following section highlights findings as they relate to the study's exploratory question, namely:

How does knowledge of performing artists' life-career experiences (relevant to the current study, such as their identity construction, career adaptability and life themes) assist in understanding the career construction of performing artists' life-career stages within the South African context as a protean career type?

From the above discussion, certain aspects such as career identity, career adaptability and life themes have come to the fore. The findings are especially relevant as South African performing artists'²⁴² context differs from that in other countries. Additionally, I discovered some overlap with Hocking's (2019) identity development process. The elements of overlap have specifically included Hocking's (2019) fourth element, which refers to the identity construction of 'being' a performing artist, whereas the fifth element refers to the following of a performing arts career as a calling in one's life. The sixth element refers to the collaboration between performing artists and others, such as their audiences, which was also evident in my study. However, my study did not reveal²⁴³ any evidence for Hocking's (2019) first element, the ill-defined artist, which allows for a protean, shifting and flexible self-characterisation that keeps avenues of expression open. I also did not find support for the second element, i.e. becoming, which involves the transitioning from amateur to professional, and

²⁴⁰ For example, stepping out of their comfort zone and challenging themselves more, aligning their actions with a personal vision, and improving their skill sets in the performing arts and field of business.

²⁴¹ For example, searching for a therapist and pacing themselves to live a more balanced lifestyle.

²⁴² When I refer to performing artists, I refer to all performing artists in South Africa and not only the participants in the study.

²⁴³ Importantly, these elements might be present but were not identified as relevant themes from the findings.

thus starting to self-identify as an artist. Hockings' (2019) third element, i.e. mixing identities, such as being an artist, a mother and a friend, also was not evident in my findings, and lastly, the outsider element, referring to a particular "art bubble" within which the performing artists live, was also not supported in my findings. Throughout the life-career stages, participants had to adapt²⁴⁴ and exhibit resilience to survive and thrive as performing artists, portraying an "integrated identity," thus making Hocking's (2019)²⁴⁵ final stage of identity development, i.e. that of the "outsider," irrelevant. One reason for the above findings might be that most performing artists in South Africa do not follow the career trajectory of performing artists proposed by Bloom (1985) and Côté (1999), where parents have a specific influence on performing artists' careers from an early age.²⁴⁶

On the contrary, none of the participants in my study had a pre-determined career trajectory, such as joining a music or art school or a paid theatre company, but had to construct their own career trajectories in a protean environment. Participants had to practice their performing arts as an extramural activity, mostly seen as an add-on between other activities. Therefore, they automatically had to develop their career identities outside of their particular art form, leading to an integrated self, increased career resilience, and a readiness to face career disruptions in adulthood, integrating their identity into a self-constructed meta-career identity.

Despite the various challenges starting from the early career stage, the current study's research participants viewed their 'being' performing artists as core to their value system and career identity. They also indicated an interest and ability in the performing arts field and that they had to obey the "calling" if they wanted to live fulfilled lives, thus living an extreme form of a value-driven life, referred to as the protean career. Notably, one individual²⁴⁷ supported participants to follow their dream, whether within or outside the performing arts sphere. On a micro-societal level, many of the

²⁴⁴ I will elaborate more on the career adaptability of performing artists in the following exploratory research question.

²⁴⁵ Refer to Hocking's (2019) identity development process for performing artists in Chapter 2, section 2.4.4.3.

²⁴⁶ See section 2.4.2.2 on pages 103-107 for a discussion of parental influence on the career development trajectory of performing artists.

²⁴⁷ Many times an educator.

study's participants were exposed to the performing arts, even if they were not actively encouraged to follow such a career path. Therefore, the context is paramount in their career choice.

Furthermore, the research participants functioning in the South African context employ strategies driven by meta-competencies, such as identity, adaptability, being value-driven and self-directed in adapting to the performing arts career. In doing so, they adapt and thrive as they actively master what they passively suffer, making social contributions while having a purpose-driven plan for the future.

6.2.3 Revisiting the primary research question

In the final section, I will highlight the main findings in an attempt to answer the primary research question:

What life-career experiences of performing artists, as a protean career type, including musicians, singers and actors in their early, middle and late life-career stages can be identified within the framework of career construction?

One of the main contributions of my findings is shedding light on the lifelong experiences of participants, as performing artists, experienced intrapersonally in their immediate and national environments. In doing this, the findings have illuminated the experiences of performing artists, in general, as they shape their identity and career construction throughout their life-career stages. From the findings, it was evident that participants' identities, together with the nature of their artistic preferences and abilities, fit into the heart of the protean career in a fluid environment. The findings correspond to the CCT, explicitly focusing on the self and career identity. At the core of participants' identity are their life values, self-concept, interests and talents, intertwined with constructing their career identity as a 'performing artist'.

Furthermore, participants experienced rejection and bullying on various intrapersonal, micro- and societal levels, causing them to feel unimportant and undervalued. However, external influences, significant others, educators and specific situations positively impacted participants, possibly

diminishing the effect of negative experiences. Even though most participants did not follow the careers of their parents or significant others, the impact of even one person believing in and supporting them to follow their dream, whether within or outside the performing arts, cannot be overstated. The importance of others' influence was not only evident in participants' initial career choices, but also in their ongoing support, thereby assisting participants in sustaining a career in the arts.

The findings thus shed some light on the interplay between participants' identity development and contextual factors. The findings also offer insight into the complexity and nature of the changes and challenges faced by participants and how they dealt with them, thereby improving their self-awareness and confidence. The overlap between participants' adaptability, perseverance,²⁴⁸ and creativity thus links to Savickas' (2006b) view of these meta-competencies as core competencies in the ever-changing world of work, leading to performing artists' employability as they follow a protean career path.

As part of their career adaptability skill set, participants portrayed higher levels of career concern, control, curiosity and confidence, together with spirituality, as a means to address the challenges faced. However, one should not dismiss negative coping strategies leading to low levels of all four the Cs of Career Adaptability and thus pessimism and missed opportunities, confusion, career indecision, unrealism, and career inhibition, coupled with substance abuse and even suicide attempts.

The importance of creativity cannot be ignored as it seems to function as a core value for participants as seen in their artistic interests. Creativity also serves as a meta-competency assisting participants in dealing with tasks, changes and traumas as they apply creativity to the four Cs²⁴⁹ of Career Adaptability. Thus, creativity seems to be a driving force aiding participants in converting their pain and trauma into hope and collaborating with others on and off-stage while they actively master what they passively suffer. Lastly, the theme of movement,²⁵⁰ portrayed throughout the

²⁴⁸ Viewed as a synonym for resilience.

²⁴⁹ The four Cs include career concern, control, curiosity and confidence.

²⁵⁰ Please refer to footnote 212 for the definition of movement for the purpose of the chapter.

findings, seems to have led a few participants to increased self-awareness, knowledge and positive changes in their behaviour, propelling them to action.

6.3 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

I confirm that the following ethical considerations, as referred to in Chapter Three, were adhered to during the research:

- Before gathering the data, I applied for and obtained ethical clearance from the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences Research Ethics Committee at the University of the Free State (Ethical clearance number: UFS-HSD2018/1182).
- As the primary researcher, I contacted all participants directly and explained to them the exact nature of the study and how the results would be used (Appendix A).
- After this, I obtained informed consent from participants using signed consent forms (Appendix B) which explained the participants' right to withdraw from the project at any time (Allan, 2008) while acknowledging that they would not receive any benefits for participating in the study. Furthermore, participants also had to provide consent to continue completing the online qualitative assessment.
- I ensured confidentiality and the right to privacy of all participants (Baez, 2002) by using pseudonyms and adjusting identifying data. I facilitated anonymity and confidentiality by ensuring that no individual's identity could be traced based on the data and maintained this practice in the communication of the results.
- Transcribed interviews and results were communicated to the participants for verification purposes and to ensure that there were no misinterpretations throughout the research process.
- Lastly, I ensured that participants' best interests were served at all times and that they were protected from any harm that could have been caused through the study.

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

After practising self-reflection on the positive aspects of the study and perhaps those that were not as beneficial, I make some recommendations for the improvement of practice and future research. I will also highlight some recommendations for theory building in Career Psychology and for policymakers.

6.4.1 Recommendations for the improvement of practice

The value of life-design-based counselling as a means of influencing the career construction of performing artists should be considered in future career counselling practices of the kind referred to in the current study. Therefore, I would recommend the following for the improvement of practice.

Firstly, I recommend applying life-design counselling as a promising process in assisting performing artists in their self- and career construction. The storied approach works exceptionally well with performing artists as creatives. Therefore, counsellors should facilitate the narratability, encouraging (auto)biographicity, and self-authoring of performing artists' career-life story while employing their earliest memories. Firstly, performing arts clients complete the Career Interest Profile (*CIP*), whereafter the counsellor employs the three-act career construction process.²⁵¹ Throughout the process, counsellors should be aware of specific aspects impacting performing artists' career identity,²⁵² career adaptability²⁵³ and life themes.²⁵⁴ The process will assist performing artists in the early life-career stages to construct future career trajectories that would enable them to reverse some of the adverse effects of rejection and bullying they experienced throughout the developmental stages. Generally, the process will assist performing artists in dealing with challenges and changes at various crossroads in their career.

²⁵¹ The threefold organisation of career construction counselling is outlined in Chapter 2, Table 2.3.

²⁵² Such as “being” performing artists as core to their career identity.

²⁵³ Focusing on positive attitudes, beliefs and competencies (ABC) applied to the four Cs.

²⁵⁴ For example taking extra cognizance of creativity as an avenue in transforming their pain into purpose.

Secondly, it seems significant to educate career counsellors to understand the challenges of performing artists and how such challenges affect their careers. Doing this will assist career counsellors in interceding more effectively on behalf of their clients.

Lastly, I recommend introducing life-design counselling in training institutions for performing artists. Doing so will assist performing artists' self- and career constructing, forward movement and planning for following a protean career in the performing arts.

6.4.2 Recommendations for future research

The recommendations for future research are discussed under two headings, including methodological and conceptual considerations.

6.4.2.1 Methodological considerations

Methodological considerations for future research include the following:

- Transinstitutional, transnational, national, international, transdisciplinary and inter-disciplinary research should be conducted on the career construction of performing artists. Even though Biggs and Karlsson's (2010) work is already more than ten years old, it can still serve as an example of expert researchers trying to find common ground for research in the arts while researchers collaborate across countries. However, more such collaborations are necessary on a continuous basis.
- Longitudinal research is needed to establish performing artists' long-term self- and career construction throughout the life-career stages. The study of Mansour et al. (2018), for example, studied young people's creative and performing arts participation and self-concept within the arts, focusing on the reciprocal effect of these constructs on each other over time.
- Lastly, the study was conducted during a worldwide epidemic. Therefore, I suggest that the study is repeated at a later stage and that the results are compared to the current findings.

6.4.2.2 *Conceptual considerations*

Conceptual considerations for future research include the following:

- Bridgstock (2012) highlights the need for higher education institutions to develop field-specific entrepreneurial capabilities among performing artists and their entrepreneurial identities. However, the literature seems to miss the natural aversion of performing artists toward entrepreneurial activities.²⁵⁵ Therefore, research should be conducted on how the initial buy-in and motivation from performing artists can be obtained and how this motivation can be maintained to enhance the efficiency of such programmes or modules and to ultimately enhance the entrepreneurial career trajectory of performing artists. The study of Schediwy et al. (2018) is perhaps one of the first attempts to investigate students' perceived need for entrepreneurship education and what such education needs to entail.
- The current study revealed distinct variables, such as adaptability, resilience, and creativity interacting together in the lives of performing actors, impacting their career trajectory and success. An in-depth analysis of the interrelation between the constructs was beyond the scope of the current study, and therefore I recommend further research on the matter. As such, I am suggesting a quantitative study investigating the effect of the independent variables, creativity and adaptability, on the dependent variable, resilience. The work of Orkibi (2021) is fascinating in its focusing on creative adaptability as a conceptual framework in times of crisis. Furthermore, Metzl and Morrell's (2008) study investigated the role of creativity in models of resilience, while Thomson and Jaque (2019) focused on creativity, trauma and resilience.
- Maree's (2022) article on the use of integrative career counselling employs an explanatory, mixed-methods research design, combining the Maree Career Matrix (MCM) and the Career Interest Profile (CIP) as an example of an explanatory mixed methods QUALITATIVE-

²⁵⁵ Including conventional and realistic activities and a general dislike for activities such as the management and planning of finances, managing their careers as a business, and other management functions involved in being a producer for productions or a manager of a company.

quantitative design.²⁵⁶ Accordingly, it would be interesting for future research to combine the Maree Career Matrix (MCM) to gather the participants' career interests ("scores") quantitatively, and then the Career Interest Profile (*CIP*) to elicit micro-narratives ("stories") qualitatively in exploring the career construction of performing artists.

6.4.3 Recommendations for theory building in career psychology

I can appreciate my conceptual framework's²⁵⁷ inter-dependency and complementary interactions between the various theories. However, future research in South Africa and internationally should focus on performance psychology and creativity theory and the impact of life-design counselling on the process. There seems to be scant research in South Africa on performance psychology; a field originating in sport psychology. Even though the end-product, which is excellent performance, is the same, there are differences between sports and the performing arts, including the culture of the performing arts, historical roots, the purpose of the activity, resources, and the place of the performance within the larger culture. Accordingly, the field of performance psychology in the performing arts is of interest to academics, practitioners, and performing artists themselves (Hays, 2017).

Furthermore, creativity research can focus on the interaction between the person, process, product and environmental influences on creativity, or they can be explored independently. Creativity's impact on meta-competencies in following a protean career and the impact of life-design counselling on the process can also be investigated. Smith and Smith (2017), experts in creativity theory, appeal for the future of creativity research to focus on the development of individuals with exceptional creative genius and improving creative activity in society in general. Accordingly, research should focus on better understanding the fundamental nature of creativity.

²⁵⁶ Uppercase denoting the bigger weighting given to the qualitative aspect.

²⁵⁷ See Chapter 5, section 2.5.

Furthermore, research on identity destabilisation, conflict, and areas of overlap between these constructs and shame over the performing artist's lifespan²⁵⁸ can add significant value to the literature.²⁵⁹ Brown's (2006; 2017) research on shame is a valuable starting point in this regard. Lastly, career practitioners should conduct collaborative research to build on the evidence that life-design counselling, as a meta-reflective intervention, facilitates individuals in various protean careers' experiences when dealing with transitions and crossroads in their lives. Here, the work of Maree (2020a) adds significant value to the field of Career Psychology.

6.4.4 Recommendations for policymakers

The findings confirmed the lack of governmental support for the performing arts in South Africa. Policymakers should thus firstly consider revising their current management model so that the administrators of arts institutions and theatres support the artistic directors and not the other way around, as is currently the case in most South African theatres. There should also be strict quality control systems for handling and distributing funding and support on a local and national level, with strongly punitive consequences for unethical behaviour at the management level. Furthermore, policymakers should create national network platforms for providing performing artists with instrumental and emotional support. The work done by the arts council in Ireland is an exceptional example of the role that the government can play in the provisioning of funding for individual artists, arts organisations, local authorities, art centres, and festivals, to name but a few, through a range of research, development and policy initiatives (Arts Council of Ireland, 2022).²⁶⁰

Lastly, higher education institutions should consider integrating life-design counselling in their curriculum for prospective performing artists and other students to assist them in actively constructing their future protean careers. The website of the International Centre for Career Development and Public Policy (ICCDPP, 2022) offers a variety of career guidance policy materials that can serve as

²⁵⁸ A lot of current research focuses on rejection while performing artists are either on stage or training.

²⁵⁹ In my view, an outcome of rejection.

²⁶⁰ Refer to Making Great Art Work - Arts Council Strategy (2016–2025) | The Arts Council | An Chomhairle Ealaíon of an outline of the 2016-2025 Arts Council of Ireland strategy.

a starting point for policy developers in higher education to integrate life-design counselling into the various academic programmes, initiated within the performing arts.

6.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

No study is perfect, and my study was no exception. I will briefly highlight the study's main limitations in the following section.

- For the study, I implemented non-probability sampling together with convenience and purposive sampling as I chose the sample from a convenient setting and availability.²⁶¹ Furthermore, the sample consisted of only 19 participants; considered a small group. Therefore, the findings cannot be generalised to the entire population of South African performing artists.
- As previously mentioned,²⁶² the study was conducted during the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, which I had not anticipated during my research planning phase. As known, the pandemic enormously influenced performing artists' lives and careers both locally and internationally. I experienced first-hand resistance from performing artists who were unwilling to participate in the research due to the pandemic. Some participants had also experienced additional trauma, and adverse experiences, such as the loss of family members which directly affected their emotional well-being. The impact of COVID-19 on the outcomes of my study remains undetermined, and there is a real chance that these variables could have negatively influenced my results.
- I only focused on specific performing arts categories, such as musicians, singers and actors. Had I included other performing arts categories, such as dancers,²⁶³ the findings may have differed.
- I knew some participants before starting the study due to my own interest in the performing arts. Therefore, I acknowledge my bias towards performing artists and their unique challenges;

²⁶¹ See section 3.3.1 for an outline of my sampling strategy.

²⁶² See section 3.4.2.

²⁶³ Where the artists have to start practising at a young age in order to be successful in the performing arts field.

a factor that may have influenced me during my study. As such, I took every reasonable step to guard against the halo effect by avoiding making biased judgements as far as possible.

- Lastly, I am aware of the subjective character of my chosen data sources. I established quality control criteria to ensure confirmability, credibility, dependability, transferability, and trustworthiness. However, I acknowledge that the subjectivity of my analysis and interpretations needs to be considered a limitation, as another researcher could have interpreted the findings and resulting themes differently.

6.6 PERSONAL REFLECTIONS ON THE RESEARCH STUDY

In the following sections, I provide an overview of my reflections on the study. I will focus on findings that I anticipated, those that surprised me, those that disappointed me, and unanticipated findings.

6.6.1 Findings that I anticipated

I anticipated that participants would be unaware of the value they stood to receive from participating in the research study. Based on their feedback at the end of the process, this was indeed the case. Secondly, I expected that the storied approach of career construction counselling would fit performing artists' general artistic tendencies and inclinations. I also anticipated that participants would receive value from participating in the study through the emergence of their self- and career construction. Lastly, I anticipated that not all participants would participate in the same manner, gain the same self-awareness and thus receive the same value from the process.

6.6.2 Findings that surprised me

Firstly, I was surprised that some participants were eager to assist me from a place of goodwill for the good of the industry, without expecting anything in return. The highly positive response of some participants, to such an extent that they referred their friends to me, certainly surprised me. Furthermore, I was surprised by the participants' co-operation and honesty concerning their background and sharing sensitive information with someone they had never met. Due to the COVID-

19 pandemic, I had to conduct some of the interviews online, and therefore it surprised me that the online environment did not deter participants from fully engaging in the process.

6.6.3 Findings that disappointed me

Firstly, I was disappointed that some potential participants had agreed to participate in the study and had even returned the informed consent form, but shortly after that would disappear, being non-responsive to any communication. However, my biggest disappointment was the outbreak of the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, which occurred at approximately the same time I started my data gathering. The pandemic influenced my study in various ways. Firstly, two of my participants succumbed due to COVID-19-related complications and there were travel restrictions, meaning that I had to interview participants online while I had been looking forward to meeting them face-to-face. Thirdly, COVID-19 had a direct influence on the economic climate of South Africa and the livelihoods of the performing artists themselves. Therefore, not only was the time frame of the study influenced, but it may have had an impact on the findings.

6.6.4 Unanticipated findings

The first unexpected and saddening finding was being told about the amount of bullying and rejection participants experienced from a young age and continuing in adulthood. I did not expect participants' experience of rejection to correspond as closely as it did with Brown's (2006) construct of shame, with both these internal states negatively impacting individuals' feelings, thoughts, and behaviours on an intrapersonal level²⁶⁴ and a micro-societal level. I also did not expect Bascomb's (2019) conceptualisation of performance anxiety²⁶⁵ to correspond with my conceptualisation of rejection. Furthermore, I was surprised by participants' views on the importance of obtaining a higher education qualification, to learn about the large extent to which academic success influenced their perceived career success or 'failure,' and the importance participants ascribed to continuously

²⁶⁴ The intrapersonal level thus corresponds to what Brown (2006) refers to as the psychological component.

²⁶⁵ Defined as "the fear of a negative reaction or evaluation by observers of one's performance by others" (Bascomb, 2019, p. 8).

developing themselves and their careers. I was also relieved to learn about the positive influence that one person who believed in and supported a participant, had on their career. I was also pleasantly surprised by the confidence, optimism and hope participants voiced towards the future, regardless of past or current experiences and circumstances. Even though I expected career construction counselling to add value to participants' discovery and (re)discovery of their identity and careers, I did not expect the intervention to act as such a powerful force propelling some participants into purpose-driven action and fast-tracking their careers to the extent it has.

6.7 IN RETROSPECT - WHAT I WOULD HAVE DONE DIFFERENTLY

After reflecting, I realised that I would have liked to include a quantitative measure such as the Maree Career Matrix (MCM) to obtain more information on participants' career interests. Even though participants' future planning was not the main focus of the research but rather their current career construction, I should have placed more emphasis on my expectation of participants to submit their feedback regarding their vision and mission statements and intended action plans. If I had done this, I am sure I would have received more participants' feedback that I could incorporate into Theme 5: The transformative process leading to forward movement.

6.8 WHAT THE STUDY HAS MEANT TO ME PERSONALLY

As I end my PhD journey, I am grateful for the growth I have experienced on many levels. I am sure it would take another thesis if I had to include everything written down in my reflection journal. Even though my PhD was part of my professional career development trajectory, it was also a personal journey. I wanted to focus on a topic that would speak to me, engulf me, and integrate my interest in career psychology with the performing arts. As I reflect on my journey, I experienced my own forward movement, personally and professionally, amidst various challenges.²⁶⁶

On a professional level, I have developed immensely. As I engaged with the study, I had to immerse myself in the literature and familiarise myself with many aspects of career theory,

²⁶⁶ For example, COVID-19, the death of my father, and being in a massive car accident, amongst others.

performing artists and protean careers, as well as many related fields such as performance psychology and creativity theory. Furthermore, I had to immerse myself in the qualitative research literature and had to get to grips with the software program ATLAS.ti. I have gained knowledge and skills that I am currently using in the classroom, lecturing undergraduate and postgraduate students, and in my practice as I am already consulting creatives and individuals following protean career paths.

As I mentioned in Chapter One,²⁶⁷ I have always been interested in and fascinated by performing artists' experiences, sense-making processes and how they choose to follow their performing arts careers. However, my interest in performing artists was not only from an academic stance but also from my own inquisitiveness. I have always been intrigued by my reluctance to enter the performing arts full-time, even though I have obtained some successes and recognitions in this realm. Thus, as I end the journey called a PhD, having made sacrifices along the way, putting in a lot of hard work, and dealing with frustrations, uncertainties, and challenges, I have obtained an answer to my initial question. Almost all the study participants echoed the sentiment that the performing arts chose them and that they had to answer that calling if they wanted to live happy and fulfilled lives.²⁶⁸ The participants thus perceived the performing artist identity as a core value. In contrast, I have a purpose and a calling to make a difference in people's lives as I support and assist them in discovering and growing into their purpose, despite the medium²⁶⁹ I employ. I also realised that I do not need to select between careers²⁷⁰ but can integrate them as I live my purpose and make social contributions as part of my own protean career.

I have grown in my insight into myself and into career construction as a field of study, as well as into the hardships that individuals in the performing arts experience. I have also gained respect and an increased appreciation for the manner in which performing artists adapt and navigate themselves as they continue to follow their protean careers despite the challenging, ever-changing career

²⁶⁷ See section 1.3 on page 18, Rationale of the Study.

²⁶⁸ Refer to Chapters Four, Five and Six for discussions on Theme 1, the identity construction of participants.

²⁶⁹ The medium can include being a performing artist through singing or drama, but it can also be facilitating a class or being in practice with clients.

²⁷⁰ Such as being an academic, a performing artist, or a consultant.

landscape. I will forever cherish the role of my supervisors in this study, international experts, as being central to my professional and personal development.

6.9 CONCLUSION

The field of the performing arts is one of the oldest professions and has endured challenges throughout the ages yet continues to survive. What gives performing artists the ability, like the mythical sea creature Proteus in Homer's *Odyssey*, to change form as the situation demands? To shed some light on this question, I have investigated the life-career experiences of performing artists as a protean career type, including musicians, singers and actors in their early, middle and late life-career stages identified within the framework of career construction in the South African context.

To this end, I adopted a qualitative, exploratory, descriptive case study design while using convenience sampling to select 19 performing artists to participate in the study. Furthermore, I used a QUALITATIVE-quantitative narrative data-gathering design, applying the core elements of career construction, whereafter I employed the method of Thematic Analysis to analyse the data.

Some emerging findings included that "being" a performing artist is a core value integrated into participants' self- and career identity. Participants experienced hardships such as bullying and rejection from a young age, which continued throughout their lives on an intrapersonal, micro- and macro-societal level. Even though participants exhibited some negative coping strategies, they were also found to employ positive strategies for dealing with hardships and navigating their careers, such as career adaptability and spirituality. Notably, participants demonstrated the creative urge to convert the pain they have experienced in life into purpose and hope for themselves and others as they contribute to society on and off-stage, thus actively mastering their passive suffering. Lastly, the transformative process led to some participants experiencing forward motion in their actions.

In conclusion, the 21st century increasingly poses new challenges to workers navigating career transitions and employment instability. Thus, the above findings can prove to be a much-needed step

for performing artists and all individuals who need to deal with the tasks, changes and traumas of the protean career type in the new world of work.

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APPENDIX A – INFORMATION LETTER



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16 July 2020

Dear (include the participant's name),

You are invited to form part of an exclusive research study focusing on the *Career Construction of the Performing Artist*. In the following few pages, you will find information regarding the study as well as what it entails for you to make an informed decision regarding your participation in the study.

RESEARCH STUDY INFORMATION LEAFLET AND CONSENT FORM

1. TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

The Career Construction of the Performing Artist

2. DATE OF RESEARCH PROJECT

August 2019-January 2021

3. RESEARCHER(S) NAME(S) AND CONTACT NUMBER(S):

Ronel Kleynhans

Student number: 1993239373

4. STUDY LEADERS' NAMES AND CONTACT NUMBERS:

Prof. Petrus Nel (0852393)

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Prof. K. Maree

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5. WHAT IS THE AIM/PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

Fundamental changes have been experienced in the way work, employment relationships and career paths are structured. The Contextualised Paradigm of Life Designing addresses the needs of workers in the new world of work. It explains the processes through which individuals construct themselves, impose direction on their career behaviour, and make meaning of their careers. This particular theory resonates clearly with those in the performing arts as a protean career type. The protean career type refers to the ability of the performing artist to be adaptable, flexible, and independent, as well as the ability to re-invent themselves to meet the changing circumstances of society. There is a need to research the experiences of performing artists who emerge into a highly competitive industry without clear vocational opportunities, together with several challenges. This is especially true in South Africa



as we are lagging in international trends. The main aim of this research study is thus to explore and describe the performing artists' career experiences within the protean field.

6. WHO IS DOING THE RESEARCH?

I am Ronel Kleynhans, a lecturer at the Department of Industrial Psychology in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences at the University of the Free State. I have two passions, one is the training and development of people for them to live a purposeful life, and the other is the performing arts, which have always been an integral part of my journey. This study is a culmination of these two passions. I trust that through this research (which will focus on your career story), I will be able to assist other individuals in the performing arts in walking their road less travelled.

7. HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICAL APPROVAL?

*This study has received approval from the Research Ethics Committee of the UFS. A copy of the approval letter can be obtained from the researcher.
Approval number: UFS-HSD2018/1182*

8. WHY ARE YOU INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT?

You were chosen and are invited to form part of this research, based on the following criteria:
(a) identified themselves as performing artists (focusing on actors, musicians and singers in any genre);
(b) considered the pursuit and practice of their art to be of significant value and a primary life activity;
(c) currently consider themselves active in their chosen artistic field;
(d) consider their role as performing artists to be their primary career;
(e) regularly perform in front of an audience (even though they may or may not be the creator of the content of the performance); and
(f) have relevant experience in their chosen performing arts field.
The researcher obtained your contact details on either your webpage or a social media page, which was publicly available. The approximate number of participants for this study is 19.

9. WHAT IS THE NATURE OF PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?

The study involves the completion of an online questionnaire (which will take approximately 30 minutes) and an in-depth interview, which will be audio recorded. The type of questions asked will focus on your career story as a performing artist. Each interview will take approximately an hour. The interviews can either be face-to-face or via an online platform.

10. CAN THE PARTICIPANT WITHDRAW FROM THE STUDY?

Participation in this study is voluntary, and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. If you decide to participate, you must sign a written consent form. You are free to withdraw at any time and without providing a reason.

11. WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

The study will contribute on a theoretical as well as practical level to the field of career psychology. On a conceptual level, the current theory of career construction will be applied, confirmed and or adapted for the field of the performing artist. The study will also assist in providing an increased understanding of some of the primary theoretical constructs of Career Construction itself. Furthermore, the study will provide an increased understanding of the development of the protean career type. Lastly, findings may inform the career counselling process when working with performing artists.

12. WHAT IS THE ANTICIPATED INCONVENIENCE OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

The most significant inconvenience of participating in this study is the time it will take you to complete the questionnaire and participate in the interviews.

13. WILL WHAT I SAY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

The researcher will take all possible measures to maintain the confidentiality of the information. Your responses will be given a fictitious code number or a pseudonym, and you will be referred to in this way in the data, publications, or other research-reporting methods such as the research report, conference proceedings, other reports, published books and articles, etc. Individuals who will have access to the data include the researcher, the transcriber, and the study leaders. These individuals will maintain confidentiality by signing a confidentiality agreement. Other people will only have access to the data if you permit the researcher to share the information. Furthermore, information regarding incidents and/or embarrassing experiences will be recorded in a general manner, and identifiers will be removed from the data. As stated, a report of the study may be submitted for publication, but individual participants will not be identifiable in such a report.

14. HOW WILL THE INFORMATION BE STORED AND ULTIMATELY DESTROYED?

The researcher will store hard copies of your answers for a period of five years in a locked cupboard / filing cabinet in the researcher's office for future research or academic purposes; electronic information will be stored on a password-protected external hard drive. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable. All names and other identifiers will be removed from the data, and a coded system will be used. After completion of the study, information on hard drives will be deleted, and hard drives will be formatted. Soft copies of data will be shredded.

15. WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT OR ANY INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY?

Participants will not receive payment or an incentive for participating in the study. The most significant value for the participant is the contribution they are making towards knowledge building as well as assisting possible future performing artists in the community going for career counselling. A potential risk for participants is that they may be identified. To alleviate this risk, the researcher will use pseudonyms, and all identifiers will be removed from the data. If any psychological distress results from the research, the participants may withdraw from the study without any explanation or reason. Furthermore, the researcher will provide the contact details of experts in the necessary fields if the need arises.

16. HOW WILL THE PARTICIPANT BE INFORMED OF THE FINDINGS / RESULTS OF THE STUDY?

If you want to be informed of the final research findings, please contact me, Ronel Kleynhans, at 051 401 2846 or at kleynr@ufs.ac.za. The findings are accessible for one year from the submission date of the study. Feel free to contact the researcher should you require any further information or want to contact the researcher about any aspect of this study. Should you have concerns about how the research has been conducted, you may contact Prof. Petrus Nel at 011 559 2875 or petrusn@uj.ac.za.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

APPENDIX B – PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM



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4 September 2019

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

I, _____ (participant's name), confirm that the person asking for my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understand the study as explained in the information sheet. I have had sufficient opportunities to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable). I am aware that the findings of this study will be anonymously processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings.

I agree to the recording of the completion of the questionnaire and interviews.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Full Name of Participant: _____

Signature of Participant: _____ Date: _____

Full Name of Researcher: Ronel Kleynhans

Signature of Researcher: _____ Date: _____



APPENDIX C – CCI WORKSHEET

APPENDIX C_CCI WORKSHEET (Adapted from My Career Story (MCS), downloaded from <http://vocopher.com> and Maree's, 2017d Career Interest Profile, CIP)

<p>SCENE GOALS: YOUR EXPECTATION OF THE PROCESS?</p>	
<p>SELF ACTOR SET PERSONALITY/WHO ARE YOU (SELF CONCEPT) Role models</p>	<p>ROLE MODELS: When I was young: Role Model 1: (Personal Self-Concept/Identity): Role Model 2: (Personal Goals): Role Model 3: (How to attain your goals/solution): Current Role Models: Role Model 1 (Personal Self-Concept/ Identity): Role Model 2 (Personal Goals): Role Model 3 (How to attain your goals/solution):</p>
<p>SETTINGS MOTIVATED AGENT STAGE INTERESTS Magazines Television Shows Websites Apps</p>	<p>I am interested in: Magazines: Television Shows: Websites: Apps: According to Holland's typology, I am a:</p>
<p>SCRIPT AUTHOR SCRIPT YOUR NEXT MOVE (Favourite story form book or movie or book turned movie)</p>	<p>LIFE SCRIPT (Your next move) BOOK/MOVIE: MAIN THEME: MAIN CHARACTERS: CHALLENGES FACED: DEALT WITH IN THE FOLLOWING WAY (ADVICE TO SELF/SOLUTION): CHARACTER STRENGTH (How they dealt with the challenges/Solutions): AREAS FOR GROWTH:</p>
	<p>*****</p> <p>THE TITLE OF MY LIFE STORY IS: THE CHAPTERS OF MY LIFE STORY ARE: THE MAJOR THEMES/PATTERNS OF MY LIFE STORY ARE:</p>
<p>PREOCCUPATIONS PERSPECTIVE What were the challenges when you were young? What are your earliest recollections?</p>	<p>BIGGEST INFLUENCES IN MY LIFE: Biggest challenges when I was young: (things I do not want others to go through) = MY BIGGEST PAIN BECOMES MY BIGGEST PURPOSE: THREE STORIES: STORY 1 (Crises/Dilemma): Emotions: Heading: Verb: STORY 2: (Crises deepens) Emotions: Heading: Verb: STORY 3: (Solution to the crises/Dilemma) Emotions: Heading: Verb: Combined Heading:</p>
<p>SUCCESS FORMULA Use your self, setting, and script to write a one-sentence mission</p>	<p>IDENTITY/POWER/VALUE STATEMENT: I am...</p>

statement.	MISSION STATEMENT (PERSONAL MEANING): I am/will be happy and successful when I am able to VISION STATEMENT (PURPOSE AND SOCIAL CONTRIBUTION): ...in the process
SELF-ADVICE REHEARSAL SOLUTION Motto	
REFLECTION ON THE PROCESS	ENJOY: NOT ENJOY: Further comments:
ACTION STEPS TO BRING ABOUT ACTION AND FORWARD MOVEMENT	What would you do differently or start doing going forward to be true to your "Success formula"?

APPENDIX D – EXAMPLER OF CODING

<p>24 J: Yes, definitely, definitely.</p> <p>25 R: Is that a passion for you?</p> <p>26 J: Ooh ja! Oooh, don't get me started (<i>big smile; eyes lit up; laughs; very upbeat</i>).</p> <p>27 R: I see your smile and I saw somewhere you also talked about your smile that's the same than your role model.</p> <p>28 J: Oooh yesssss (<i>laughs with a big smile</i>).</p> <p>29 R: But OK, we'll get to that. Alright, then your seven strengths, are I'm resilient, talented, creative, passionate and great at transferring skills, I'm business minded and I'm opportunistic. Now your areas for development, being less one-dimensional?</p> <p>30 J: What I mean by that is, OK, its not that I'm one-dimensional, but you know, when you work with the</p> <p>37 same people all the time, you end up kind of falling into the trap of, for example portraying characters the same, like for example if you work with one director for a longer time, you end up becoming this one-dimensional um, actor, because the director is always happy with you, executing things this way, whereas if I were to work with you and then work with [REDACTED] and then work with whoever, then in that way also grow as an artist.</p> <p>31 R: Alright, so it's more about not getting stuck in a rut?</p> <p>32 J: Yes, yes.</p> <p>33 R: OK. So it's this whole thing of growing.</p> <p>34 J: Growing, ja, ja.</p> <p>35 R: OK. Then, incorporating other art forms in my work? J: I do mostly, well I did mostly storytelling, like you know the one-handlers, the whatever in terms of writing especially. So, write now, I'm incorporating other art works as in the poetry, the um, using film, the visuals, like I think, more visually now, than I would just, initially I would have a lot of words that I need to write down, but now I started seeing images, you know. So that's something I really wanna develop, like seeing images before hear what the person is saying on stage. Um,...also that, that will also help me in terms of directing, 'cause that's also something that I forgot to write. I need, I'm not so passionate about, I wasn't so passionate about directing 'cause I really found it difficult to see images, but now that I'm at a point where I see images, I feel like, Yes, I need to develop this even further.</p> <p>R: Alright, and then be patient as a director...</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; background-color: #e6f2ff; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>24:1</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; background-color: #e6f2ff; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>24:2 I'm re...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal Characte... </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; background-color: #e6f2ff; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>24:3 when you work with the same p...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CAREER ADAPTAB... Career Control Personal Characte... </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; background-color: #e6f2ff; padding: 5px;"> <p>24:4 OK Then incorporating other art forms in my work? I do mostly w...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal Characte... CAREER ADAPTAB... Career Curiosity </div>
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38 J: Oh yes (*speak louder and more passionate*), I directed a
47 show and you know, sometimes I do go to people's
48 shows just, um, as an outsider, and I'm not patient,
49 because, remember I've been in this industry for eight
years, especially as an actor, so I don't understand when

39 R: Duuuh

40 J: Duuurrr, and they, which is kind of getting in the way,
because, I mean, we don't have the same experiences.
We don't have the same kind of imagination, we don't
have the same executions, so I'm a bit impatient, in like
how did you get that wrong? Like its, its, ja (*clap hands
together in frustration*).

41 R: How did you not get it?

42 J: How did you let...why? Why wouldn't you get it? It's so
simple. So as a director, I need to work on that. I wouldn't
say to the person, but inside I'd be boiling, and, and as a
director you have to be very patient, you know.

43 R: So the frustration with the person.

44 J: Frustration, oh, too much, um, I think that's why I'm
not so passionate about directing,

45 cause I'm like, uuuuu (*shows frustration and clap hands
together again*).

R: Then you've got a lot of things around your art form,
your skills, things like the business terms, light design, set
design, then the directing...

J: Ja, ja, ja.

R: Alright, and then the last one, self-motivation?

J: Yees, as much as, you see me ne? You look at [REDACTED]
you think like, [REDACTED] such a, um, an incredible,
confident person, but most of the times I doubt myself, I
doubt my work, it's usually people from the outside who
give me that motivation that, [REDACTED] you are good
enough', um, but then like, behind closed doors, not even
behind closed..., I speak freely about it, I'm like yoh. Like
now, I'm supposed to see that um, thingy with the editor
that I told you about and because it's my project, I'm like,
am I gonna like it? Is it good enough? Did I write enough?
Did I give the actors enough to work with? You know like
the insecurities. So ja (*clap hands and through them in
the air.*) I just need to be my biggest cheerleader.

Personal Characte...
24:6 ause, I mean...

Personal Characte...
24:7 So ...

Personal Characte...
24:8 Then ...

Other people's op...
24:9 You I...
24:84...

Identity (kyk hoe ...
24:85 Is it good ...

50 R: OK. Then others' opinion of me. A strong confident women, but it's now exactly what you said, but I'm shy and insecure.

51 J: Jaaa.

52 R: This I wanna ask, when I'm not being an artist?

55 J: Yeees, so like right now, while chances are I'm like this (*smiles, positive and shows hands to herself*), because we're talking about the arts, but [REDACTED]ne? My true self, I'm actually shy. I know it's hard to believe (*gives a loud laugh*), but I'm actually shy and I'm actually insecure. Like I'd be in a room, um, for example, if I'm in a room full of artists who have been doing this, whose work I admire, and whatever, I start, (*takes a deep breath in and hiss loudly through teeth*), kinda shrinking (*loud breath out*) and asking myself, Am I good enough? And not speaking out as much because I feel like, Ooooh, uh-uh, (*shakes head from sides to sides*), you know, um, I'm gonna be judged or something. So I do have a lot of those moments. But I do cover them with my hey, hey, hey, hey, hey (*clicks fingers and move hand from side to side with attitude*), but you know, I would, I...

R: So can you say that the acting is like a mask?

J: Yeh. Yeh. At times. Jah. Especially at the beginning. Especially in the beginning of the career. I think now, I've gotten to a point where it's better, but especially in the beginning of my career, I would put up a front and would present this very confident women who believes so much in her ideas, but even after presenting the idea, deep down, I would be, Oh my goodness, that sucked so much,

56 are they gonna like it (*laughs*) you know. But then now, I

57 am slowly getting to a point where I do actually believe in myself and this is no longer a facade, but this is [REDACTED]now. Because in it I found strength, you know like, um, I always say, most of the artists we have alter egos. Most of us are so shy, most of us are so nervous before the show, most of us are like, yoh, can I do this? We doubt ourselves, but, then, what you see on stage is a completely different thing (*her speech slows down*). And I think that's why I'm so in love with the arts, because they make me realise so much more about myself that (*short silence after speedy dialogue*), deep down, I don't think I have.

R: OK, OK.

I value my audience and my family.

24:11... Other people's op...
24:12...

24:86 My true self I'm actually shy. I know it's hard to believe (g...
Identity (kyk hoe ...

24:14 So can you say that the acting is like a mask? J: Yeh. Yeh. At times...
CAREER ADAPTAB...
Career Developm...

58 J: I do. Ooooooh, without those people, I'd....

59 R: The audience, you see them as your family?

J: *(loud sigh)* No necessarily. No. That's why I said, AND

61 my family. Um, the audience, there are those people who

62 are so loyal to my work, those people who would drop everything and just come see my shows, and it's usually people that you're not even close with, you know, the Facebook friends, the people you met at the bar, or something. I value them, so much, because um, you know, even though I post things about my work on Facebook or whatever, they motivate me, they always *(deep sigh)*, I think I, um, they, they inspire me more than

63 I inspire them.

64 R: So it's again, that external motivation?

J: Yes, yes, yes. And my family in a sense of um, the

65 motivation you know as well. The motivation, and also the financial side of things, cause without them, I wouldn't be doing this. Like, right now, I can do whatever

66 I want and I know my partner is there to take care of the financial things if I'm not able to. I know I can just...

67 R: So you can relax...

68 J: I can relax. I can relax in a sense, cause they got my back.

R: OK. Now. I wanna get to your role models. Alright, the first one you said Leleti Khumalo? Because she played Sarafina and you also did.

J: Oooh, we also did Sarafina when I was young and I was the Sarafina.

R: Now what about her did you like?

J: You know, as a young girl I think it was a very shallow uh thing. Just seeing her on Sarafina and um me, so we, OK, so in the black community we have this groups that we call Sarafina and um, we, we do this Sarafina dances.

69 We do the tango, different type of dances. So when it

70 came to the Sarafina type of dances I was so good that I was the Sarafina, you know, like I was the center stage of my group and so, that's why I admire her in the beginning. It was just the ooooooh, they see me as you-tya situation, in the beginning.

R: And that made you feel good.

J: Oooh, tooo much *(broad smile and stars in her eyes)* and like the look my father had when he looked at me

CAREER ADAPTAB...

Most important v...

24:15 the audience, there are those peopl...

Most important v...

24:18 family in a sense...

Role model 1: Self...

Self-concept: PA

24:19 we also did Sarafina when I was young and I was the Sarafina. R...

70 dancing...(deep breath) ja (broad confident self-satisfying smile).

71 R: So it's very much your self-concept was based on this picture of what I could be. I could be a Sarafina.

72 J: Exactly, exactly.

R: Alright, and then. Mariah Carey? She performs with emotion.

J: Ooh yeeees, O, not anymore now, but now like she betrayed me. That women betrayed me. That women betrayed me so much, but as a young girl, I would listen to her songs and I will see the emotions in her heart and I think, um, because I wasn't even aware of it then, my insecurities? But there is this song that she sings that I also spoke about later on, "Can't take that away from me.", when she sings that song I feel so revived. You know, when she cries, I can feel her pain, um, but she's telling herself that this is what God gave to me and nobody can take away from me, and whatever. So that's the song that made me fall in love, even more with her. The fact that I always saw her as this (deep breath in with sissing sound), goddess or whatever and I...,but when she sings she can cry, and yes, I feel like she's as human me, you know. She goes through the emotions. When she sings about anger, you can feel it in her voice, you can see it in her eyes, like...yes.

76 R: She's real.

J: She's real. She's, yo, she's real. It's for her, then, now the voice is gone shame, let me stop talking about now, but then, it was not just about the voice. It was the emotion, she was taking you through the journey. You could feel what she was feeling at that moment. Like she could be talking for example, about Philadelphia and you will see it, even though you've never been there, because of her execution. Yes.

77 R: Alright and then the last one is my father. He worked hard and far, but what home every weekend.

J: Every weekend (joy in her voice) and he was home every Friday and I didn't understand, 'cause like you would think maybe he would wanna rest on that day, you know, but like yo, he made an effort. Like e...my father never missed a weekend. He worked in Welkom, we stayed in Botshebelo but he made sure that every weekend he would come and he would leave early hours

24:19

24:20

24:20 Mariah Carey? She performs with emotion. J: Ooh yeeees, O, not anymore...

Role model 2: Goals

24:87

24:87 She's real. She's, yo, she's re...

Career Curiosity

24:21

24:21 my father. He worked hard and fa...

Role model 3: Ho...

- 125 R: Now, um, I quickly wanna ask you something about Cosmo. You said, I love Cosmopolitan, because, how unfiltered they are?
- J: Ja, jaaaa (*deep breath; smiles*). Well, unfiltered not in a sense that they would use swear words or whatever, but it's a female type of magazine and I always wish people could speak like that. They call a vagina, vagina, you know. They talk about sexuality, women sexuality in such a free way that as society we've had it taboo. So, ja, that's what I love about them. They don't hide things, they don't, um, if they talk about, for example, masturbation, they just take you through the journey. Tell you how to do it. This is what happens with the female body, this is what happens when you touch where ever. This is, you know, the emotional side of things, the psychological, like, they,
- 127 they, just, unfiltered. Where else if you find another
- 128 magazine talking about the same, um topic, you won't
- 129 even, understand if you're have an experience, oh,
- 130 they're actually talking about this, cause they hide things
- 131 so much (*becomes quite passionate about this*).
- 132 R: OK
- 133 J: Ja.
- R: It's again the thing about emotion being raw.
- J: Ah-ah. (*Agreeing passionately*).
- 134 R: OK
- J: Definitely
- R: Alright, then. Many of the other things, the home renovations is about the creativity, if I'm right?
- J: Yeeees, the creativity and also because, like you know, I really complemented the house, I looove big spaces; I...it's also my dream, you know, cause right now I feel like oh, we're so cramped. Especially with the twins. It was nice with me and my partner, but now, it's like, you know and then there's the nanny who stays over. It, I feel cramped. So, that's, it's an inspiration of the dream house that we have, the artistic, ooooh it's gonna be so artsy (*big smile*), you're gonna be jealous (*jokingly; deep breath*).
- 135 You know (*excited, smiling and passionate*). You know.
- 136 Like...
- 137 R: The creativity.
- 138 J: The creativity.
- R: The artsy, the visual?
- J: Yeees.

24:27 Now, um, I quickly wanna ask you something about Cosmo. You said I lo...

Holland Type: Soc...

Life Theme/WHY/...

24:29 home renovations is about the creativity. I'm right? ...

Holland Type: Arti...

Social Roles

195 passed on at the wrong time when I was being rebellious,
when I was not showing them love. So I had to go back to
196 where I actually was, you know forget about that
197 moment where I was rebellious, yes I do talk about it, but
before then, what kind of daughter was I? What kind of
love did we show one another? So I had to remind myself
that, yes, they passed on while you hated them, you
know, teenagers hate the parents, but before then, and
that was just a stage you know, the hormones was
something that you not necessarily had control over, even
though you had control over your choices but it doesn't
take away from the great relationship you had with them.
So I had to remind myself. And then...

R: The last one?

J: How can I leave the arts out (*laughs*); how can I leave
the arts out? (*big smile; hear the joy in her voice the
moment she starts speaking about the arts*). I talk about
how I considered, coincidentally got into the arts and
how happy I am, how happy I am in the arts. Um, you
know what? The arts did so much for me (*sighs*). For
example, talking about rape, neh? It was years later, I was
25 years old doing a show at PACOFS called Adjusted. The
theme was rape, and it was only when I did that show
198 that I realised, I had been raped, you know. Like (*give a
deep sigh*), I was 13 when this happened. I had a
boyfriend, sorry, who was like, I think he was 17 then, and
he forced himself on me, but because it was such a
typical thing to happen to girls in my neighborhood, we
felt like we all have to go through that, you understand? It
was alright. Yes, my friend went through it, yoh, yoh, Oh,
that's how you lose...

R: That's how you lose your virginity, that's how...

J: Ja, that's how you lose your virginity. That's how you
show a man you love them. That's the man, like the guy
beating you up, is actually a sign of love. Like we would
literally get together and talked about, Yoh, he beat me
up today and smile about it and, how much did he beat
you up, Oh, he loves you, like stupid things. Why?
Because our parents don't feel comfortable talking about
that. And I do understand now, because I had to have a
sex talk with my sister's son the other time. Well it was
really awkward, but I was so proud of myself after doing
it. And I'm like OK, so this is what our parents have been

24:44

24:46 The arts did...

24:48 I had been raped, you know. Like (*give a deep sigh*), I was 13 w...

CAREER ADAPTAB...

Biggest challenge...

199 feeling, and I don't blame them because their parents never had that talk with them, so it was a generational thing, that I'm trying to just, you know, throw away now. It's not working, it's not working. Um, so that's when I realised, what that guy did to me...cause I remember we were sitting after rehearsal and I'm like guys, I've actually been raped. And their like, Oh [REDACTED] ka, ka, ka. Cause nobody takes me seriously, but I don't blame them, like No, I'm serious, I have been raped. This is what happened to me and its only now, that I'm doing this show that I realise, I've been violated, you know. Um, and I would also use my emotions for the same show because...for example when you have to cry, either you really believe in what the character is going through and you automatically cry or you use your own experiences. And I always used this experience that I felt so guilty all the time. Cause the day my mom passed on, um (*deep sigh*), I was in the bedroom with her. She couldn't speak, she couldn't eat, she couldn't, like it was bad. She looked, yoh, and I remember being next to her and just crying and I lied to her and I was like, yoh um, is it prima stove, you know what prima... I was like, oooh, they, they lit it now the flames are like, you know, I was lying to her, I was like, this is why I'm crying, but she could see through me. And I remember walking out of that room and she's going m, m, m, as if she didn't wanted me to leave. But I was so weak that I didn't wanted her to see me like that, that I walked out and that was the last time I saw her alive, because a few hours later she passed on. And I felt like, I left her at her most vulnerable state. Maybe she wanted to say good buy, or something (*very emotional; crying; choking in her words from being emotional*). So I would use that emotion, um (*voice quivering*) for this show um, until I became numbed to it. Until I became desensitized towards it (*crying*) And that really helped me, you know, cause I.....I couldn't tell anybody about the experience, cause I felt like such a horrible person, but through the show I could take out the pain and in that way, I got healed, you know. And...I don't know why I'm feeling so emotional today (*gives a faint giggle*); maybe it's because I'm leaving my kids next week. But for a long time after that, I would be able to speak about the story without crying (*says it very softly as if she is trying to keep*

2449 I remember we were sitting...

Biggest challenge...

CAREER ADAPTAB...

2447 Um, and I would also use my emotions for the same show because for e...

2450 I would also use my emotions for the same show because for example w...

Biggest challenge...

199 *herself from crying again*). Um, but I think it's also, I'm crying now cause I'm looking at how far I've come and what the art did to me, you know...

200 R: It was part of your healing process.

J: It was part of my healing process. So yes, um, and after the whole experience you know, when my sister passed on, I knew I needed to speak about this in an artistic way, cause there's some thankful feeling about me telling you my story and you speaking out about the issues that you always felt, I can't, I can't, I can't, you know. That's why I did the show, called [REDACTED] which is a Psalm that...

202
203
204 There was a time when I was going through so much spiritual turmoil, emotional, psychological, everything. I couldn't pray anymore and I was like, God, why have you forsaken me? Just give me answers. Like why is this happening to me? Cause so many bad things were happening to me, that um, you know, when you go to a church and getting a prophecy is like you have a demon and whatever and you know like, yoh, so many, I'll send you a chapter of what happened, and so many things happened, afterwards. But, I was like, God, reveal to me what's happening and every time I opened the Bible, cause I would like, OK, I'm praying now, even though I don't feel like praying, and whatever. And like, give me answers, I demand answers, this [REDACTED] will always come up. For some weird reasons, and one day I was like, "Let me read this. What is it? Cause I thought maybe there was um, you know a marking or whatever in there. That's why it always comes up, but then I looked at the Bible. The Bible was perfect. There's no way it would go to one page every time, and I read the [REDACTED] and it felt like it was talking about me. Cause it's a prayer for a person, about a person in misery, you know, like safe me, Oh Lord, I'm in this mud that I cannot get out of, like people are judging me, I'm going through so much. I don't believe in You anymore. Why is this happening? So it felt like, whoever wrote that, was [REDACTED] at some point and ja, that's why I titled the show [REDACTED] cause it's like, that's when I re-connected with God, cause I felt like, I can see myself.

R: He gets you.

J: He gets me. Yes.

R: Alright. Again, resiliency, hope, failure, love, passion.

24:51 U...
CAREER ADAPTAB...
My success_perso...

24:52 after the whole experience you know when my sister passed on, I knew...
Biggest challenge...
CAREER ADAPTAB...

APPENDIX E – THEMES

		Code Groups								
o Artistic Type	Holland type/interest		Career Identity: Interest	Individual	WHAT					
o Being different/odd/outsider/misunderstood/not conform	Biggest challenges/problems		Identity	Individual	WHAT (pain)					
o Biggest challenges: Academics	Biggest challenges/problems		Identity/ Adaptability	Individual/ Social System/Political-Environment	WHAT		HOW			
o Biggest challenges: Bullying/abuse	Biggest challenges/problems		Identity	Individual	WHAT					
o Biggest challenges: Finance	Biggest challenges/problems		Identity/Adaptability	Individual/ Social System/Political-Environment	WHAT		HOW			
o Biggest challenges: Health	Biggest challenges/problems		Identity/Adaptability	Individual/ Social System/Political-Environment	WHAT		HOW			
o Biggest challenges: Interpersonal	Biggest challenges/problems		Identity	Individual	WHAT					
o Biggest challenges: Intrapersonal	Biggest challenges/problems		Identity	Individual	WHAT					
o Biggest challenges: Loss	Biggest challenges/problems		Identity	Individual	WHAT					
o Biggest challenges: Mentorship	Biggest challenges/problems		Interpersonal/adaptability		WHAT		HOW			
o Biggest influences: People	Biggest influences		Background to career choice		WHAT					
o Biggest influences: Situation and events	Biggest influences		Background to career choice							
o Career Adaptability (CCCC): Career concern	Career Adaptability		Career Adaptability		HOW					
o Career Adaptability (CCCC): Career confidence	Career Adaptability		Career Adaptability							
o Career Adaptability (CCCC): Career control	Career Adaptability		Career Adaptability							
o Career Adaptability (CCCC): Career curiosity	Career Adaptability		Career Adaptability							
o Career Developmental Path			Career Path		HOW					
o Current: Role model 1: Self-concept	Role Models Role model 1: Self-concept		Self-concept development		Link the self-concept with identity in other sections?					WHAT
o Current: Role model 2: Goals	Role Models Role model 2: Goals (Young		Goals development		Link the goals with goals in other sections?					HOW
o Current: Role model 3: How to attain the goals	Role Models Role model 3: How to attain		How to attain goals/strategies		Link these strategies with strategies in other sections?					HOW
o Entrepreneurial Type	Holland type/interest		Career Identity: Interest		WHAT					
o Failure_career/craft	Personal failures		Career Adaptability of Identity		HOW		of	WHAT		
o Failure_finances	Personal failures									

o Failures_academics	Personal failures									
o failures_environmental-social system	Personal failures									
o failures_general skills	Personal failures									
o Failures_interpersonal relationships	Personal failures									
o failures_intrapersonal	Personal failures									
o Family trends	Career background	Background to career choice		WHAT						
o favourite book/movie: character challenges	Favourite book/movie	Link to bigger themes and challenges/problems			WHAT					
o favourite book/movie: character growth areas	Favourite book/movie	Link to personal growth areas			WHAT					
o favourite book/movie: character strength	Favourite book/movie	Is hierdie noodwendig strengths wat ek het of wat ek na streef?						WHAT		
o favourite book/movie: theme	Favourite book/movie	Link to life theme						WHY		
o Favourite book/movie: title	Favourite book/movie	If possible link to Life theme/metaphor i.e. Titanic						WHY		
o favourite book/movie:how character dealt with the challenges	Favourite book/movie	Advise to self/link to mottoes?						HOW		
o GROWTH: PAIN TO PURPOSE		Theme						WHY		
o I help others with...coaching in creative industry	I help others	Link to self-concept/identity???						WHY		
o I help others with...emotional issues (intra and interpersonal)	I help others	and Vision/mission???						WHY		
o I help others with...practical things/finances/accommodation	I help others							WHY		
o Identity Formation: I do not enjoy now	Identity formation: Enjoy/not People's opinion of me	Self-concept/identity						WHAT		
o Identity formation: I enjoy	Identity formation: Enjoy/not People's opinion of me							WHAT		
o Investigative type	Holland type/interest	Interest						WHAT		
o Leader I want to be	Leadership	Self-concept/identity						HOW		
o Leadership positions throughout	Leadership							WHAT		
o Life Story		Theme/why/motivation						WHY		
o Metaphor		Theme/why/motivation						WHY		
o Most important value		Self-concept/identity						WHY		

o	Mottoes/quotations/self-advice		Self-advice					HOW		
o	My dream career		Goals					HOW		
o	My success_academics	My success	Self-concept/identity OF			HOW		OR	WHAT	
o	My success_career/craft	My success	Adaptability							
o	My success_Close interpersonal	My success								
o	My success_entrepreneurship	My success								
o	My success_financially	My success								
o	My success_personal growth path	My success								
o	My success_social environment	My success								
o	My talents and skills		Self-concept and identity						WHAT	
o	Negative attitude regarding academics/school		Adaptability						HOW	
o	Other people's opinion of me_negative	People's opinion of me	Self-concept and identity						HOW	
o	Other people's opinion of me_positive	People's opinion of me	Self-concept and identity						HOW	
o	Parental and teacher's advice on career path	Career background	Background to career choice						WHAT	
o	Parent's qualification	Career background	Background to career choice						WHAT	
o	Personal Characteristics: Negative/developmental areas	Personal characteristics	Self-concept and identity						WHAT	
o	Personal Characteristics: Positive/strength	Personal characteristics								
o	Process need/expectation: Focus on other/researcher	Process Needs/expectations	Initial need/expectation of process						WHAT	
o	Process need/expectation: Focus on self	Process Needs/expectations	There wasn't much info- therefore I divided it into the two subcategories						WHAT	
o	Protean career									
o	Realistic type	Holland type/interest	Interest						WHAT	
o	Social and environment/social system/PA landscape								SOCIO-ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE	
o	Social Roles		Adaptability						HOW	
o	Social type	Holland type/interest	Interest						WHAT	

o Strategies for dealing with challenges		Career Adaptability					HOW		
o Young: Role model 1: Self-concept	Role Models Role model 1: Self-concept	Self-concept/identity					WHAT		
o Young: Role model 2: Goals	Role Models Role model 2: Goals (Young	Career Adaptability					HOW		
o Young: Role model 3: How to attain the goals	Role Models Role model 3: How to attain	Career Adaptability					HOW		
Career not liked	Career preference	Self-concept and identity					WHAT		
Careers liked most	Careers preference	Self-concept and identity							
Careers phases	Career Phases	Self-concept and identity							
Father's qualification	Career/family background	Self-concept and identity							
Favourite subjects learning areas	Subject preference	Self concept and identity							
Least favourite subjects learning areas	Subject preference	Self concept and identity							
Leas preferred career categories	Career preference	Self concept and identity							
Most preferred career categories	Career preference	Self concept and identity							
Mother's qualifications	Career/family background	Self concept and identity							
Life stories	Theme					WHY			