The student career construction inventory: validation with Portuguese university students

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Abstract

The Student Career Construction Inventory measures students' adapting behaviors. The present study validates this inventory in a sample of 314 Portuguese college students. Measurement confirmatory factorial analysis indicates better fit for the 18-items measurement model, comparing to the 25-items model. Reliability and criterion-related analyses evidence the inventory validity and use. Structural model path analysis shows significant relations between measures of adaptability, adapting behaviors, and vocational identity results. This indicates that self-regulatory resources may drive career decidedness. While further longitudinal studies are needed to test the inventory and model's predictive validity, our results provide developments to the literature on career measurements.

Keywords Adapting · Career construction model · Measurement · University students · Validation

Résumé

L'Inventaire de la Construction de la Carrière de l'Etudiant·e (SCCI) : validation auprès d'étudiantès universitaires portugaisès Le Student Career Construction Inventory mesure les comportements d'adaptation des étudiants. La présente étude valide cet inventaire auprès d'un échantillon de 314 étudiantès universitaires

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Introduction

Global markets and accelerated technological developments affect employment structure worldwide (e.g., Duarte et al., 2019; Hirschi, 2018; World Economic Forum, WEF, 2018). Hierarchical and long-term careers are now more competitive and flexible, increased by part-time and temporary jobs (e.g., Pabollet et al., 2019; Savickas, 2011; WEF, 2018). Job transitions are not only more frequent across the life span, but they are also harder (Hirschi, 2018; Hood & Creed, 2019). Furthermore, softer skills and competencies as creativity, problem-solving or communication are expected from individuals (e.g., Pabollet et al., 2019; Hood & Creed, 2019; WEF, 2018). The age of information requires lifelong learners, who can create their career opportunities and manage different life roles without losing their self-identity (e.g., Hirschi, 2018; Hood & Creed, 2019; Savickas, 2021; WEF, 2018). Efforts to help people manage their careers in a globalized and multicultural environment led to theoretical and practical advances in vocational psychology (Brown & Lent, 2013, 2021; Savickas, 2011). Currently, some of the most cited career frameworks include the social cognitive theory (SCCT; Lent & Brown, 2013; Lent et al., 1994), the psychology of working theory (PWT; Blustein, 2006; Blustein & Duffy, 2021), the career construction model (CCM; Savickas, 2013, 2021), and the protean and boundaryless career theory (Arthur, 2014; Hall, 2004).

CCM presents a dynamic and developmental perspective (Rudolph et al., 2019) addressing the current socio-economic scenario, which is useful to understand self-career management among university students. Specifically, this model considers interpersonal and interpretative processes, through which individuals make meaning of their careers and direct vocational behaviors to face career transitions (e.g., school-school, school-work, work-work, work-retirement) and/or traumas (e.g., involuntary unemployment) (Savickas, 2013, 2021). During higher education entry and adaptation phases, university students may face numerous challenges (e.g., heterogeneity, emotional, vocational, academic), as well as retention and exit (e.g., Carreira & Lopes, 2019; Mestan, 2016; Ricks & Warren, 2021). CCM posits that a better adaptation to academic challenges may be achieved by students' career adaptivity, adaptability, adapting, and adaptation (Savickas, 2013, 2021; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). Career adaptivity, the first component, refers to individuals' personality traits of willingness to cope with career transitions and/or traumas. Career adaptability, the second component, refers to individuals' career self-regulation competencies. Specifically, this component includes four psychosocial resources: concern (i.e., anticipating one's future role as a worker); control (i.e., influencing the environment for personal goals achievement); curiosity (i.e., exploring future work scenarios and possible selves); and confidence (i.e., believe in one's capabilities to pursue career and life aspirations). Career adapting, the third component, refers to individuals' adaptative behaviors performed in response to environmental career challenges. These include behaviors like planning, exploring, deciding, skilling, transitions managing, among others (e.g., Hirschi et al., 2015; Lent & Brown, 2013). Career