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## Career choice Anxiety, Psychological Well-Being and Career Self-Efficacy of Adolescents: A Theoretical Framework

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**Problem statement:** The influence of COVID-19 has not been fully realized, nevertheless it is hypothesized that the pandemic increased the anxiety response in adolescents. Also, an unintended consequence was the impact thereof on the world of work. Ambiguity relating to unemployment, career opportunities and expectations could exacerbate perceived anxiety labelled career choice anxiety. The research explored the theoretical link between career choice anxiety, psychological well-being and career self-efficacy to recommend a conceptual framework that could be applied as theoretical underpinning for the development of a psychometric stable measuring instrument. Psychological well-being has emerged as a public health concern especially for adolescents as some mental health problems have an early onset around the age of 14. While anxiety has been identified as prevalent in the age group. Moreover, career self-efficacy theoretically moderates the link between career choice anxiety and psychological well-being.

**Theoretical orientation:** Two theoretical perspectives could be utilized, namely a hedonic approach that emphasize constructs such as happiness, positive effect, low negative effect and life satisfaction or a eudemonic theory highlighting psychological functioning and human development through challenges, growth and life purpose. Last mentioned stance was adopted, namely psychological well-being as optimal psychological functioning and impetus to develop intrinsic career-related potential.

**Findings:** Assessment and possible interventions are pivotal in the context of COVID-19 as the intensity of anxiety have increased in an already at-risk age group with adverse consequences.

**Conclusion and significance:** Ascribed to the dearth of empirical evidence relating to career choice anxiety and psychological well-being the proposed conceptual framework not only contribute to the corpus of knowledge but could also be implemented to inform future career guidance practice. Besides the knowledge contribution the proposed conceptual framework could have a societal impact addressing goal three of the sustainable development goals notably good health and well-being.

### Biography

Petronella Jonck is an Associate Research Professor at the North-West University in a talent management research entity (GIFT) within the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences. Prof Petronella Jonck is a National Research Foundation C3 rated researcher. Petronella obtained her PhD in Psychology at the University of the Free State and is a registered Psychologist with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA). To date her research outputs, include more than 30 accredited journal articles and numerous other research documents. Prof Jonck was a supervisor for the Southern African Young Scientist Summer Program (SA-YSSP) that was hosted at the University of the Free State in collaboration with the International Institute of Applied Systems Analysis in Vienna, Austria in addition to supervising other postgraduate students. Her research focus areas include career psychology, psychology, industrial psychology, human capital development and higher education. Prof Jonck lectured Psychology, Organizational Behavior, and Research Methodology.