



University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

“Breaking through the morass” – Narratives of resistance and persuasion by individuals in creative economy careers

**SOUTH AFRICAN CULTURAL OBSERVATORY
2018 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
7 & 8 MARCH 2018**

NELSON MANDELA BAY STADIUM, PORT ELIZABETH, SOUTH AFRICA



Prof. Willie Tafadzwa Chinyamurindi

wchinyamurindi@ufh.ac.za

Emerging interest in careers & qualitative research in management & social sciences

- Chinyamurindi, W.T. (2016). Middle Manager Role & Contribution towards the Competitive Intelligence Process: A Case of Irish Subsidiaries. *South African Journal of Information Management – Special Issue on Knowledge Ecosystem & Competitive Intelligence*, 18(2), 1-7.
- Chinyamurindi, W.T. (2016). A narrative investigation on the motivation to become an entrepreneur amongst a sample of Black entrepreneurs in South Africa: Implications for entrepreneurship career development education. *Acta Commercii*, 16(1), 1-9.
- Shangase, N.N. & Chinyamurindi, W.T. (2018). A comparative analysis of the critical success factors affecting local and foreign owned Small-Medium Enterprises in the Ndwedwe Area of Kwazulu-Natal. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Economics and Business Law*, 7, 261-278.
- Chinyamurindi, W.T. (2016). Using narrative analysis to understand factors influencing career choice amongst a sample of distance learning students in South Africa. *South African Journal of Psychology*, 46(3), 390-400.
- Chinyamurindi, W.T. (2016). A narrative investigation into the meaning and experience of career success: Perspectives from women participants. *South African Journal of Human Resource Management*, 14(1), 1-11.
- Pike, A., Puchert, J. & Chinyamurindi, W.T. (2018). Analysing the future of Broad-Based-Black-Economic-Empowerment through the lens of small and medium enterprises. *Acta Commercii*. (Accepted for Publication).



Introduction

- Work has become central to modern day working lives, resulting in some classifying it as a calling (Duffy, Dik & Steger 2011).
- Individuals in such a context derive a sense of purpose of meaningfulness from their work (Dik & Duffy 2009).
- However, in developing countries such as South Africa, the experience of work, including career issues, are noted to be **complex** (Chinyamurindi 2012) particularly amongst previously disadvantaged groups (Chinyamurindi 2016a).
- Calls exist for empirical work exploring the career development processes of groups that do not receive much empirical focus within the extant literature.



Creative Economy

- Calls exist for empirical work exploring the career development processes of groups that do not receive much empirical focus within the extant literature.
- One such group are those individuals working in the creative economy.
- These individuals often face challenges in negotiating not just their creative energies to society but also in seeking economic rent using their talents and abilities.
- Further, little is known about the intersection of factors such as structural constraints on such processes especially within developing countries such as South Africa.



Research Aim:

- The purpose of this paper is to explore the career development processes of individuals working within the creative economy in South Africa.



Research Question:

- What are the career development processes of individuals working within the creative economy in South Africa? How do these manifest within a social-setting?



Theoretical Lens

- **Ecological Model of Career Development (EMCD)** (Cook, Heppner & O'Brian 2002) that considers the career development processes of women and **minority groups** in their lifespan.
- **Career construction theory (CCT)** (Savickas 2005) is adopted in giving an understanding of the issue that career agents (in this case women middle managers) place on their careers in a changing environmental context (Pheko 2014).



Method

- Qualitative Approach.
- Arguments around sense-making (Chinyamurindi, 2012, 2016a, b, c).
- Semi-structured interviews.
- 20 creative artists in East London.
- Interviews ranged from 1 hour to 2 hours.
- Ethical clearance obtained from participating university.
- Informed consent from participants



Analytical Technique

Three levels of meaning-making

- Level 1 was helpful in developing a good understanding of the career development experience of each story. This was done by re-reading each interview and listening to audio recordings. This process allowed for the identification of 'markers' in the stories (McCormack, 2000, p. 221) and answered questions about each interview, such as 'what kind of story is this?' (Thornhill, Clare, & May, 2004, p. 188).
- Level 2 was achieved through classifying responses from participants into meaningful categories (Nachmias & Nachmias, 1996).
- Finally, in Level 3, the researcher analysed the content of the gathered narrative accounts and themes (McCormack, 2000). This was done by identifying themes and using quotes based on consistencies across participant stories (Rhodes, 2000).



Participant Pseudonym	Trade	Race	Highest Qualification	Years Work Experience
1	Visual Artist	Black/Coloured	Master's degree	10
2	Creative Artist	Black/African	Undergraduate degree	10
3	Poet	Black/Coloured	Master's degree	10
4	Musician	Black/African	Honours degree	12
5	Film/Acting	Black/African	Honours degree	9
6	Choreography	Black/Coloured	Honours degree	10
7	Creative Artist	Black/Indian	Master's degree	10
8	Photographer	Black/African	Master's degree	11
9	Musician	Black/African	Honours degree	10
10	Creative Artist	Black/African	Postgraduate degree	8
11	Poet	Black/African	Master's degree	9
12	Musician	Black/African	Postgraduate degree	10
13	Photographer	Black/Coloured	Undergraduate degree	10
14	Visual Artist	Black/Indian	Master's degree	9
15	Choreography	Black/African	Honours degree	10
16	Creative Artist	Black/African	Honours degree	11
17	Poet	Black/African	Honours degree	9
18	Musician	Black/African	Master's degree	10
19	Poet	Black/Coloured	Honours degree	9
20	Creative Artist	Black/African	Honours degree	10

Strategies to ensure data integrity

- Pre-testing of interview guide.
- Content and face validity with experts.
- Audio recordings (with permission).
- Field notes
- Transcriptions within 24 hours.
- Coding in QSR NviVO
- Participants mailed back transcriptions to check for accuracy.



Narrative	Initial Codes	Illustrating Quotes
<p>Structural constraints that individuals in the creative industry face affecting their career development</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Creative economy careers as “pseudo-careers” 2. Legitimization of creative economy careers. 3. Lack of support in the creative economy 	<p>“the one question I hate after I tell people I am an artist is – OK – so tell us what exactly do you? As if being an artist is not a career path.”^{P7}</p> <p>“Everyday is a struggle and I gotta roll on – the challenge of seeking legitimacy around my persona and my calling.”^{P5}</p> <p>“I really think if we had support as artists who have the potential to contribute people would us differently and economies would improve. Imagine our province as a mecca of creativity.”^{P17}</p>
<p>Resistance narrative</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Resisting career conscription 2. Resisting mediocrity 	<p>“Many of my artist friends have had to resist being forced into careers they don’t like – the journey is not easy.”</p> <p>“To be taken seriously, resist mediocrity.”^{P15}</p> <p>“I ended losing support from family who wanted me to be an accountant. That was ten years ago. Now the biggest fans I have are those who created this resistance.”^{P11}</p>

Narrative	Initial Codes	Illustrating Quotes
<p>Persuasion Narrative</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Self-persuasion 2. Persuasion with significant others 	<p>“I was my best fan, the only person who can persuade myself that I can do this despite the resistance.” P19</p> <p>“When my family began to see the changes, the gigs, appointments and newspaper features. It was the persuasion we needed.” P4</p> <p>“You must put your family and community first. They support you work but are not your work. Sometimes people just need to see what you do that’s all.” P13</p>



Discussion

- Findings support previous work illustrating presense structural complexities affecting career development (Chinyamurindi, 2016).
- Uniquely, this is illustrated within creative economy careers.
- Interestingly, the challenges at play, as illustrated in this study, have more to do with the experience of resistance and managing **personal relationships with others especially in the community and dealing with structural constraints manifest from a society that is in flux.**



Contribution

- Study pays credence to the issues that creative economy agents face within a South African context.
- The empirical prioritisation in understanding the issues of a sample group often excluded in lieu of empirical studies that pay credence to mostly other sample groups.
- identifying problems but also provides an evidence-based understanding of how creative economy actors deal with the identified issues.





University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

“Breaking through the morass” – Narratives of resistance and persuasion by individuals in creative economy careers



Prof. Willie Tafadzwa Chinyamurindi

wchinyamurindi@ufh.ac.za