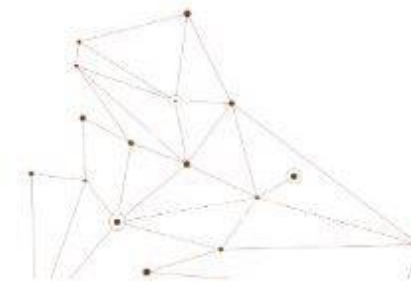


**Challenges and opportunities
in career counselling for
people with psychosocial
vulnerabilities:
The contribution of critical
perspectives analysis**



COCAG 2024-8



**Critical Perspectives on Career and
Career Guidance (COCAG)**

Paola Magnano, Kore University of Enna (Italy)

Teresa Maria Sgaramella, University of Padova (Italy)

Rita Zarbo, Kore University of Enna (Italy)

Aims

1. What are the main challenges to career development under some vulnerable conditions?

- *Understand which career counselling methodologies and processes best meet the specific needs of individuals with particular disadvantages.*
- *Focus on work alliance as a driver of the change process, serving as a bridge between the client and their context, and helping the client give meaning and re-contextualise the supports and barriers.*

2. How are critical perspectives considered in current career guidance research and practice with persons in vulnerable conditions?

- *Pillar 1. Understanding individuals to be in a dialectical relationship with their context.*
- *Pillar 2. Viewing human beings as having a bounded but transformative agency.*

3. How current educational actions involving them promote social inclusion through career counselling?

- *Vocational guidance and Career counselling must activate a sense-making process regarding its social mission taking responsibility for the reduction of inequalities, and serving as a mechanism to promote social justice.*



Methods

This contribution will analyse data from career interventions involving vulnerable individuals (immigrants, persons in prison, persons with a history of substance abuse) in career guidance. It will focus on the **person-in-contexts** (including the relationship with the counsellor as part of the context and the transformative process) and identify emerging issues, barriers, strengths, and weaknesses.

The analysis will contribute to:

1) Highlighting the existing gaps between theories and practices in supporting vulnerable groups in their career development.

✓ *Actually, the literature is lacking about process analysis in career counselling.*

2) Developing reflexivity on the relevance of career counselling as a co-construction process rather than as isolated actions, as well as the significance of the working alliance between counsellor and client.

✓ *Overcoming the view of career counselling as a single action or moment, we will emphasise the centrality of the collaborative co-construction. The work alliance, including trust in the counsellor, is an integral part of a heterodirected change process and can facilitate or hinder it within the setting.*

3) Emphasising the importance of considering the contextual dimension in career construction as a source of both threats and opportunities.

✓ *The Systemic framework is the reference framework for reading and considering work alliance as a relevant influence on career development, both inside and outside the career counselling setting.*

Contribution