Life design resources and career decision: a cross-cultural research in three European countries


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Our Society:
Few important words:
• Globalization
• Risk
• Diversity
• Economic crisis
• Change
• Unemployment
• Insecurity
• Instability
## Youth Unemployment Still Unrelenting In Europe

Youth unemployment rate in the European Union in March 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>2006 (%)</th>
<th>2015 (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>49.9%</td>
<td>49.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>49.7%</td>
<td>49.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>43.6%</td>
<td>42.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>34.4%</td>
<td>32.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cyprus</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>19.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>19.3%</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU28</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Malta</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Persons under 25

Source: Eurostat

### Different level of FEAR:
- Germany and Great Britain: the level is lower
- France, Greece, and Italy: the level is higher
Influence on adolescents:

- New issues:
  - how young people face to the increased uncertainties (Brannen & Nilsen, 2007; Devadson, 2008; Leccardi, 2008; Pais, 2003; Woodman, 2011)
  - the influence of changes, job instability, and precariousness on young people development:

  - “Emerging adulthood” (Arnett, 2000; Reifman & Grahe, 2015);
  - association with suicidal ideation, substance abuse, criminal behaviors, smoking, depression, and anxiety (World Health Organization, 2011)
Influence on career of career development:

- future is viewed risky, uncertainty, unpredictability, with fear and obstacles;

- adolescents and young adults perceive more fears and worries about their future (Nurmi, 2005);

- thinking about the future is one of the principal fears and stressful concerns among other domains;

- career decisions, and other life-related choices, are taken later (Vilhjalmsdottir, 2015);

- disinvestment in education → decline of enrollment in the university.
A possible answer:

Other important words:

- Innovation
- Flexibility
- Opportunity

Personal Resources:

- Career Adaptability
- Optimism
- Resilience
- Hope
- Courage

CREATIVITY

Design your LIFE

PLAN A B

opportunity.
COURAGE:

- The courage definition and its prototypic peculiarity are still under investigation (e.g., Rate, Clarke, Lindsay, & Sternberg, 2007)

- Different types of courage:
  - Physical, moral and psychological (Putman, 1997)
  - General courage and personal courage (Pury, Kiwalski, and Spearman, 2007)
The Role of Courage:

- New construct: it has received a sporadic attention by the psychological literature (Lopez, O’Byrne, & Peterson, 2003);

- Courage predicts **adaptive academic outcomes** (Martin, 2011)

- Courage is positively associated with:
  - persistence,
  - self-efficacy,
  - resilience,
  - future time perspective (Hannah et al., 2007; Pury et al., 2007; Rachman, 2004)
  - implementation of multiple solutions
  - confidence (Ginevra & Capozza, 2015).

- Courage can be considered a **psychological resource** in order to cope the difficulties and the crisis and to make career decisions albeit future-related fears.
Our Hypothesis:

- For the first time, we aim to investigate courage in mutual interaction with career adaptability, hope, optimism, psychological flourishing, and career decision-making difficulties.

- Test an interactional model and to identify the constructs with the higher influence as well as to understand how these influences are structured.

- Examine the cross-cultural variations in the interactional model.
Participants et procedure:

- **France**: 252 high school students
  - 164 ♀ (65%) and 87 ♂ (35%)
  - Mage: 16.08, SDage: .92
  - 10th grade: 45%, 11th grade: 29%, 12th grade: 25%

- **Greece**: 251 high school students
  - 133 ♀ (54%) and 114 ♂ (46%)
  - Mage: 16.28, SDage: .65
  - 10th grade: 56%, 11th grade: 37%, 12th grade: 7%

- **Italy**: 465 high school students
  - 219 ♀ (47%) and 246 ♂ (53%)
  - Mage: 17.23, SDage: .68
  - 10th grade: 12%, 11th grade: 43%, 12th grade: 45%

- **Procedure**: *The most effective and culturally relevant approach was used in each country to collect data* (van de Vijver, 2002)
Instruments:

- Career Adapt-Abilities Scale – CAAS (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012)

- Career Decision-making difficulties Questionnaire – CDDQ (Gati et al., 1996)

- Flourishing scale (Diener et al., 2010)

- Courage (Norton & Weiss, 2009)

- Optimism (Ginevra et al., 2015)

- All these scales were available in Italian. Back-translation procedure was used to adapt several of these scales in French and Greek
First results (1/2):

- Graph 1. Mean score for each variable across sample
First results (2/2):

Table 1. Correlations between all the variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>France</th>
<th>Greece</th>
<th>Italy</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CAAS</td>
<td>CDDQ</td>
<td>CAAS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDDQ</td>
<td>-.34***</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-.23**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flourishing</td>
<td>.63***</td>
<td>-.26***</td>
<td>.45***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courage</td>
<td>.36***</td>
<td>-.18**</td>
<td>.51***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optimism</td>
<td>.68***</td>
<td>-.36***</td>
<td>.54***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

***p < .001, **p < .01
Discussion:

• Positive psychological resources and career adaptability
  ◦ Need to develop a holistic approach of individuals (Zunker, 2012)
  ◦ The causal relationship between these variables must be examined

• As preliminary results, further analyses are needed
  ◦ Measurement invariance prior to examine cross-cultural differences (Duarte & Rossier, 2008; Sovet, Dimillo, & Samson, 2016)
  ◦ Components of CAAS and CDDQ
  ◦ Mediational model
Conclusions:

- Perspective of positive psychology in the field of career counseling (Sovet, Carrein, Jung, & Tak, 2014)

- Need to increase positive psychological resources among youths in order to face challenging decisions and transitions

- Cross-cultural comparisons across Europe may be relevant to improve the European orientations about career practices and employment policies