

Magnano Paola
Zammiti Andrea*

*Career Guidance for Unaccompanied
Young Migrants. A Report
on an Italian Experience*

ABSTRACT

Unaccompanied foreign minors are migrant children without their parents, relatives, or other adults. In Italy, especially in Sicily, an increasing number of young, non-European Union foreigners arrive daily in search of a new life and work opportunities. Despite this increasing phenomenon, interventions to support young migrants in career projects are infrequent and occasional within the host communities. With the aim of developing a career guidance intervention suitable for unaccompanied foreign minors, we propose a case study presenting a career guidance intervention for a group of unaccompanied foreign adolescents. The framework is the life design paradigm. The conductors of the activities were career counsellors, with the support of a cultural mediator and/or an educator. The setting of the interventions was individual and small groups. The instruments and procedures were predominantly qualitative. This paper includes a discussion of the strengths and weakness of this intervention, including the results of the post-intervention evaluation and the follow-up after one year.

KEYWORDS: young migrants, life design, career counselling.

* Correspondence regarding the paper should be sent to: Magnano Paola, Faculty of Human and Social Sciences, Kore University, Enna (Italy), e-mail: paola.magnano@unikore.it, or Zammiti Andrea, Department of Sciences of Education, University of Catania, Sicily (Italy), e-mail: zammiti.a@gmail.com

The European Union is increasingly becoming a multicultural society. A primary factor indicating this change is the free movement of European citizens or the European monetary unit; but this change also comes from the outside and concerns the influx of immigrants from other cultures (Passevant & Marcos, 2008). Twentieth century immigration created multicultural societies where integration coexists with exclusion and discrimination (San Juan, Bermejo, & Ocariz, 2007). The causes of migration are varied, including economic imbalance, poverty and environmental degradation, absence of peace and security, and violations of human rights (Guha-Sapir, Vos, Below, & Ponserre, 2012).

Together with adult migrants, unaccompanied foreign minors also arrive in Europe. According to Article 2 of the European Directive 2001/55/EC3, they are migrant children under 18 years old without their parents, relatives, or other adults (Barone, 2016; Derluyn & Broekaert, 2008; United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR], 2002). They are: (1) children fleeing from conflict and persecution, (2) minors emigrating for economic reasons, who have been encouraged by their families to seek better employment opportunities, (3) minors attracted by Western lifestyles, and (4) minors who are driven out of their home countries due to 'social de-structuration' (Giovannetti, 2008).

The resulting scenario is as follows. In Europe, in the first six months of 2018, 45,000 migrants landed in Italy, Greece, Spain, and Cyprus. Among them, 16% were unaccompanied minors (about 2,593 minors arrived between January and June 2018). In Italy, the government's decision to close ports led to an 80% reduction in immigration. In 2018, about 17,000 migrants landed on Italian shores, while during the same period in 2017, there were more than 84,000 (Initiatives and Studies on Multi-ethnicity [ISMU Foundation], 2018).

In Italy, in June 2018, there were 13,151 unaccompanied foreign minors (92.5% males, 7.5% females), and 92.8% of them were between 15 and 17 years old. Most of the unaccompanied foreign

minors (43.3%) lived in Sicily (Labour and Social Policies Ministry, 2018). In Italy, unaccompanied foreign minors represent an emergency that began in the 1990s. Huemer et al. (2009) examined 22 documents published between 1998 and 2008 that focused on unaccompanied foreign minors, underlining how this population has been neglected in terms of research and interventions, probably due to cultural differences and linguistic barriers. In support of this hypothesis, Thomas and Byford (2003) underlined the difficulty in conducting scientific research with unaccompanied foreign minors, highlighting how their vulnerability implies the need to adopt special measures when conducting field research, which have focused for the most part on mental health problems of this population (Bean, Eurelings-Bontekoe, Mooijaart, & Spinhoven, 2006; Vervliet et al., 2014). Other qualitative research studies (Bosisio, 2011; Giovannetti, 2000, 2002, 2007; Vacchiano, 2012) investigated the reasons for their arrival in Italy. In most cases, they come to Italy with the aim of finding a job and better living conditions.

Despite this increasing phenomenon, and despite employment being one of the main reasons for migration, interventions to support young migrants in career projects are infrequent and occasional in host communities, especially in Italy. Moreover, research into the development of suitable career guidance models and practices specifically addressed to this target has been minimal. Many researchers (Chiesi & Zucchetti, 2005) highlight the importance of this kind of support. In fact, immigrants who speak the dominant language of their host country and who develop an adequate knowledge of the labour market do not need to use informal networks created by their compatriots, which represents an obstacle to social inclusion (Ambrosini, 2005). Therefore, in addition to teaching Italian, it is important to improve career construction through a wider knowledge of work in Italy, including values, meanings, and representations.

A FOCUS ON ITALY

In Italy, the immigration welcoming system is divided into two parts. The first is reception, which includes entry hotspots and first reception centres where migrants receive emergency support, food, clothes, and medical assistance, all of which are frequently provided by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that also provide language interpretation services. The second part is the Protection System for Asylum Seekers and Refugees, which welcomes migrants after identification and the procedures for the asylum application.

In Italy, there are four types of services specifically for adult and minor migrants, all of which have a substantial career guidance component (Piazza, Magnano, & Zammiti, 2017): (1) reception centres for migrants, (2) the Public Employment Centre (CPI), providing administrative assistance and job opportunity information, (3) the Territorial Centres for Adult Learning (CPIAs), which provide guidance-related services, such as the validation of skills, and (4) training activities for migrants organised by NGOs and private associations. The minimum age for having an apprenticeship contract or a training and work contract is 16 years.

When an unaccompanied foreign minor arrives in Italy, he or she is identified by the public security authorities and accommodated in a community for minors. A judge assigns a legal guardian to each child. The guardian can be a volunteer who intends to perform this function as an experience of active citizenship or an institution. The guardian has to care for the child and, if necessary, administer necessary goods. The host communities are required to provide a series of services to children, including cultural mediation, legal guidance, and health and psychological assistance. The second reception facilities also ensure that services are aimed at the social inclusion and autonomy of the child, such as school integration and vocational training as well as guidance and support for job placement (Long, 2018).

Regarding migrant integration into the labour market, some authors (Çelikaksoy & Wadensjö, 2016) have underlined how it can be complicated due to linguistic difficulties. Often, inclusion into the labour market takes place through the mediation of local institutions, such as associations and cooperatives, or through informal networks created among foreigners themselves. The use of these channels can set off the disadvantages that derive from the lack of knowledge of the language of the host country, inability to participate in public tenders, and difficulty in obtaining recognition of educational qualifications conferred in the country of origin (Ambrosini, 2006). Nonetheless, these channels increase the risk of ghettoising foreign workers into niches.

Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen interventions that favour the employment of foreigners in general and, above all, unaccompanied young migrants by proposing career guidance actions, which are still lacking, in structured and useful ways for the promotion of job placement.

Youths with migrant backgrounds are more likely than those from host cultural contexts to become so-called youths not in education, employment, or training (NEET), which is, in turn, related to the possibility of social exclusion and marginalization and the prospect of radicalisation (European Commission, 2015). School education and vocational guidance are the main vehicles for reaching this goal (Oppedal, Guribye, & Kroger, 2017).

If properly managed, the adequate support of job placement favours suitable inclusion both in relation to one's own interests and competences and with respect to the needs of the Italian labour force. To do this, in addition to the economic and professional resources, it is necessary to create ad hoc models of career guidance that could be useful for this group. Unfortunately, the reality of our context highlights that career counsellors' interventions with migrants are often limited to the same procedures as career guidance used with Italians, which often are not meaningful (Boerchi, 2018).

Some experiences already carried out in this field (Piazza, Magnano, & Zammitti, 2017; Zammitti, Magnano, & Giammarinaro, 2017) have highlighted the flexibility of career design of young migrants in comparison to adults, indicating that it is necessary to intervene early with the purpose to support them to (re)define their career project in light of the new cultural context. The migration project for unaccompanied young migrants includes the improvement of their living conditions, and an important part of it is linked to the desire to find a good job. All adolescents, including unaccompanied youth migrants, have professional dreams that are often influenced by their birth culture and are anchored to a different cultural context with respect to the Italian one. In fact, the transition from the birth culture to the host community culture involves a reorientation, or a change in daily practices and communication (Barone, 2016).

We believe that a career intervention based on the life design paradigm (Savickas et al., 2009) can represent a good practice to help young migrants construct a decent life and find a meaningful job. Life design career counselling promotes the construction/reconstruction of life stories, identities, and cultural models together with the social representations associated with them. It helps individuals reappropriate their past experiences with a view to constructing a new vision of their futures. Further, it supports individuals in identifying their internal and external barriers, both real and perceived.

A CASE STUDY: CAREER GUIDANCE WITH A GROUP OF UNACCOMPANIED FOREIGN ADOLESCENTS

The case study presented here is a career guidance intervention for migrant adolescents carried out in a host community for unaccompanied foreign minors located in Sicily.

The career guidance pathway: participants, methodology, and aims

Participants in the intervention included 14 unaccompanied foreign male adolescents (2 from Ivory Coast, 7 from Gambia, 3 from Senegal, 1 from Ghana, 1 from Guinea-Conakry, and 1 from Republic of Guinea), aged between 14 and 18 years, who arrived in Italy 6 to 8 months ago. The procedures and instruments chosen were predominantly qualitative; this type of methodology is particularly recommended for activity guidance in disadvantaged socioeconomic contexts, with people with disabilities, and with people from non-dominant cultural backgrounds (Goldman, 1990). The aims of the intervention were as follows:

- stimulate the reconstruction of personal and professional stories, thus improving self-perception and facilitating awareness of individual strengths and challenges;
- explore the cognitive representations of the participants with regard to work;
- investigate how the past might influence their training choices and future jobs through the use of a career genogram instrument;
- explore their personal and professional values, including their choices of professional training and future jobs;
- expand their knowledge of the Italian market labour, of appropriate working behaviours, and of the basic rules of its functioning;
- analyse their professional interests by linking them to specific job competences.

The intervention was articulated in seven meetings, six of them conducted in a group (or small group) setting, the last in an individual setting. The participants were divided into small groups of 3 or 4 based on their spoken language (English, French or Arabic). In this way, the career counsellor collaborated with the cultural mediator and carried out the meetings in the first language of the participants involved. The duration of each meeting was between

two to three and half hours. Each youth participated voluntarily; legal guardians were informed and signed a form consenting to the processing of personal information. Evaluations measuring the effectiveness of the interventions were conducted at two different stages: after the last meeting and then at a follow-up one year later.

DESCRIPTION OF THE MEETINGS

Meeting 1. Individual stories. The reconstruction of personal and professional stories has primarily focused on developing self-knowledge. The self-image is formed by the descriptive aspects of the person that characterize the individual's definition of him or herself; the dimensions of the self also include the ideal self-image (the concept of self as the way we would like to be) and the social perceived self (the concept of self as we think others perceive us) (Di Nuovo & Magnano, 2013). Using a group game, the career counsellor investigated the self-perceived image of each participant and the social perceived self (the self-concept as seen by other people). Participants chose descriptors from a list of possible personal characteristics (e.g., sympathetic, introverted, extroverted, pessimistic, sociable, optimistic, etc.), that best represented them. At a second meeting, they exchanged their lists of characteristics with fellow participants, and they were instructed to, reciprocally, underline the adjectives that more punctually painted the perception of the other, adding, if necessary, and features not present. The game was followed by a large group discussion about how the participants developed these characteristics, which experiences in their lives have been more significant in constructing their self-image, the role of social self-perception in creating our self-concept, and, finally, the importance of knowing our strengths and areas needing improving so as to make wise choices regarding the future.

Meeting 2. Tree of life. As reported by Hughes (2014), Ncube (2006) describes the tree of life as a narrative technique that uses a tree as a creative metaphor on which participants are invited to represent their lives. People trace their cultural and social histories in the roots by drawing their family origins and identifying those who have influenced them most in life, including the construction of their personal values. The ground contains features of their current lives, including where they live and what they are doing now. The main trunk of the tree represents their strengths and abilities, which may be identified by what others have observed of them. Finally, hopes and dreams for the future are put in the branches of the trees, with the names of important people from the present and past on different leaves and gifts that the person has received in the fruits of the tree. Through a process of narrative questioning, participants are invited to build rich descriptions of their lives, identify their resources and skills, describe the social history of how these were developed, and imagine how these can lead them towards their desired goals. By specifically analysing the values, contexts, and people who are important in the lives, frequent references to an individual's family of origin, his or her place of birth, and his or her friendships emerged (Piazza, Magnano, & Zammitti, 2017).

Meeting 3. Definitions of work and decent work. In this meeting, once again, a narrative procedure was used. Participants were asked to define their cognitive representations of *work* and *decent work*. Specifically, we requested each participant to complete the sentences, 'Work is...' and 'Decent work is...' (Ferrari & Sgaramella, 2014). As Ferrari, Nota, and Soresi (2008) stated, work represents the means for ensuring one's own livelihood; it provides opportunities to participate in social exchange, and it confers social status, which can enhance one's own sense of prestige and power (Blustein, 2006). Work has a crucial role in a person's psychological well-being, and it is characterized by its intrinsic or instrumental value or by both. Intrinsic value

refers to the meaning that individuals attribute to doing their jobs. Instrumental value is linked to the importance that work has in constructing personal identity, in satisfying individual life needs, in conferring meaning to adult life, and in representing a possible means for individuals to express their talents (Szymanski, 2000; Szymanski & Hershenson, 2005). The cognitive representation of work is important because oftentimes individuals' plans for the future are linked to their ideas about what work should provide them, what characteristics a good job should have, and which type of work individuals can aspire to in relation to their needs and competences (Blustein, 2001; Vondracek & Skorikov, 1997), which influences their decisions about their professional futures (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994; McWhirter, 1997). Starting from the definitions that emerged through the proposed activity, the career counsellor highlighted commonalities between the participants and stimulated discussion on characteristics that could represent weaknesses in the future inclusion in the marketplace, such as accepting any job, accepting any wage, and accepting illegal work. Comparisons between the definitions of work in this phase of the intervention, after the intervention, and in the follow-up were used as indicators of the effectiveness of the career guidance pathway.

Meeting 4. Career genogram. A career genogram is used to analyse familiar working experiences and highlight how these can be connected to the present situation of the client. It is also a useful instrument for the identification of familiars who have played significant roles in the creation of individuals' professional expectations (Soresi & Nota, 2010). As presented by Magnuson and Shaw (2003), Okiishi (1987) proposed genograms to explore sources of influence, values, life roles, decision-making strategies, and barriers to success in the context of career counselling. The construction of the career genogram requires three-phases: (1) construction of genograms, (2) documentation of family members' occupations, and (3) exploration of role models' influence on

worldview, career values, and related constructs. Some representative questions have been used to facilitate the third phase, such as *What members of your family were successful in their personal lives?* and *For what reasons?* (Okiishi, 1987). The group discussion, conducted after the construction of the genograms, encouraged participants to reflect on their past stories.

Meeting 5. Knowledge of the Italian labour market. Before expounding on the Italian labour market, the career counsellor focused on the definition of work. The definition proposed to the group was the following: Work is an activity carried out for producing goods or services, but at the same time it is an activity that favours the development of professional identity (Blustein, 2013; Richardson, 2012). This view of work is linked to Blustein's proposal (2013), according to which a job ensures an individual's survival, allows the individual to feel a part of society, and influences the health and well-being of the individual. The group was stimulated to discuss the importance of considering a job beyond its economic dimension by considering it also as an activity that fosters the psychological well-being of an individual and enables him or her to feel like a contributing member of society. Afterward, the counsellor presented the most common working activities in Italy through the professional cards taken from the Iconographic Professional Interests Inventory (3IP; Boerchi & Magnano, 2015). The 3IP is a psychometric questionnaire that evaluates professional interests through the use of iconographic items instead of traditional verbal items. The professional cards contain figures that represent a person performing a specific working activity. To minimise the influence of stereotypes, the human figures in the pictures were stylised, rendering them unidentifiable in terms of gender and facial expression; the pictures were accompanied by the job titles. The questionnaire is composed of 65 professions collected into 19 dimensions. The counsellor used the cards to present each job and classified them into professional areas (as indicated by the inventory itself) by explaining what kind of

actions and behaviours are carried out by people who practice each job and what type of training is required to be able to carry out each working activity.

Meeting 6. Analysis of the professional interests. To investigate the participants' professional interests, the career counsellor used the 3IP in a qualitative way. In fact, it was considered that quantitative use of 3IP (which requires indicating on a four-point Likert scale the degree of interest toward each of the 65 jobs presented) would easily generate feelings of boredom and increase the risk of poor participation. For this reason, it was requested that each participant choose the three most-preferred working activities from among the 3IP professional cards. A group discussion was conducted on each chosen job to verify that the participant had the correct knowledge about the activities linked to the job, the working behaviours associated with it, and the competences required to carry out the job. Moreover, the group reflection was guided toward the redefinition of gender and ethnicity stereotypes.

Meeting 7. The Final profile and the professional project. The last meeting was conducted in an individual setting. The final profile given to each participant included the individual's image of the real-self and social-self, values, and professional interests. During the final interview, starting from the information collected, the professional project was discussed with each participant, which helped them identify some short and medium-term objectives.

EVALUATION OF THE CAREER GUIDANCE INTERVENTION

The evaluation was carried out at the end of the seventh meeting, seven weeks from the start, using two instruments:

- a. 3IP (Boerchi & Magnano, 2015). For each 3IP card (the card total is 65, one for each working activity represented), each participant was asked (1) if the profession was known, and (2) to indicate on a scale from 0 to 10 the degree of familiarity with

it (e.g., *Do you know the job of mechanic? What is the main activity of a mechanic? Which competences should a mechanic possess?*). To overcome language barriers, the name of each profession was translated into each participant's first language (specifically English, French or Arabic). For each job, we calculated the arithmetic mean of the familiarity that participants had with it. Comparison between the means of familiarity during and after intervention provided an indicator of the effectiveness of the career guidance pathway in terms of increasing job knowledge.

- b. Comparison of the definitions of work and decent work during and after career counselling: We expected a greater richness of content in the definition of work and decent work at the end of the intervention and a wider range of meanings attributed to it.

The most significant results concern:

- a. *The knowledge of the Italian labour market.* The comparison of the results during and after the intervention show that the participants, in general, had broadened their knowledge of the Italian labour market. The increase of familiarity was reported for all the areas presented in 3IP, with the exception of the classical area (which includes historian, geographer, and archaeologist) and the scientific area (which includes scientist, chemist, and biologist) in which there was less improvement of knowledge related to the professional areas.
- b. *The professional interests.* The professional choices of the adolescents involved in the path were particularly focused on the automotive area (mechanical, coachbuilder) and handicraft (carpenter, electrician, and blacksmith). The participants showed preferences for jobs that concern the repair of automobiles or the creation and repair of objects of daily use. Other preferences were related to the hospitality (cook), agriculture (farmer), military, and tourism (tourist guide and steward). These choices may find explanations in the fact that many

of the participants may have performed these professions in their birth countries, they considered themselves to possess the competences needed to perform these jobs, or they were convinced that the competences requested are easy to learn.

- c. *The definition of work and decent work.* The career counsellor compared the definitions of work and decent work collected during the third meeting with the ones obtained at the end of the career guidance intervention. According to the participants involved in the intervention, in the early phase, definitions of work focused on something that serves to obtain economic advantages (13 of 14), that allows a person to be prepared to the future (7 of 14), and that serves to help their own families economically (9 of 14). Only one participant focused his definition of work on the possibility of achieving individual psychological well-being. No one considered work as a useful activity for becoming a member of a society. Regarding the differences between work and decent work, the results show a substantial overlapping between the two concepts. All participants defined decent work through the economic dimension, which allows one to take care of the family. Additionally, some participants added other aspects to their definition of decent work, such as a work that provides opportunities to learn new things, allows one to satisfy his or her own needs, assures well-being, and is interesting and satisfying. At the end of the path, we observed an increasing number of participants who partially modified their originally defined concept of work to include being an activity that serves to obtain economic advantages, prepares one for the future, helps the family economically, serves to help one achieve psychological well-being (10 of 14), and to feel a part of society (9 of 14). In the definitions of decent work, we have discovered a new issue in comparison to the early phase of the intervention that concerns the respect of human rights.

FOLLOW-UP

The follow-up was conducted one year later through individual interviews with 10 of the 14 participants. Four of them had become adults and did not live in the same host community anymore. The semi-structured interviews explored the following: (1) whether the participant had a memory about the career guidance pathway; (2) their definition of work to verify if it had changed after new working or training experiences; (3) their professional interests; (4) the perceived utility of the career guidance intervention regarding their professional projects; and (5) their future career guidance needs.

Regarding point 1 above, the interviewed participants had few memories about the career guidance intervention, and these were focused predominantly on working activities and professional interests. Moreover, they had difficulty framing the career guidance activities as unique interventions that could help them in job seeking.

The participants were then requested to again provide a definition of work. Descriptions included work as an activity that serves to obtain economic advantages (8 of 10), prepares one for the future (7 of 10), and provides economic assistance to the origin family (10 of 10). Only one participant focused his definition of work on the possibility of achieving psychological well-being and social inclusion.

The professional interests analysis in the follow-up interview highlighted a general correspondence respective to the previous analysis with the exception of the younger participants, whose initial professional interests were put into doubt. They were influenced by a low self-perception of their abilities rather than their real attraction toward a certain job. The younger participants had actively tried to expand their knowledge about the jobs by seeking information from community educators and cultural mediators. So, the career counselling had a positive influence for younger

participants who gave a positive evaluation regarding its utility for their future professional and personal projects. Emerging needs regarded broader information on active job seeking strategies.

DISCUSSION

The activities proposed during the career counselling were actively and favourably carried out by the participants. The evaluation of the intervention underlined a broader knowledge of the Italian labour market. The follow-up interview highlighted strengths, weaknesses, and improving areas of the career guidance pathway.

Since we first interviewed the participants, four of them had become adults, so they lived in another host community; however, three of them were regularly working through apprenticeships, and the fourth worked occasionally as farmer, finding this job through the informal networks created by fellow countrymen (Ambrosini, 2005). Previous research has underlined that young migrants who have already done some work in their origin countries tend to distance themselves from what are called 'jobs for foreigners' (Besozzi & Colombo, 2009), and try to address their professional interests toward activities that can facilitate social inclusion (i.e. tourism, cooking). However, professional interests tend to remain stable, particularly for the elders. In fact, the elders seem to bring with them a rigid professional project, as attested in the interviews: *'When I was in my country, I wanted to become a mechanic, and now it's the same'*; *'My professional interests are the same as in the past'*. The stability of the professional project is often linked to the lack of information about how migrant youth can access other jobs. Moreover, it is associated with low self-perception of the abilities required by some jobs and low perceived self-efficacy (*'I think this job is attractive for me, but I am not able to do it; I think it's too difficult to learn; I don't know anyone who does this job'*). Conversely, younger participants attending the junior high

school showed more flexible projects, presenting different ideas respective to the previous ones that emerged during the career counselling (*'In the past, I wanted to do heavy works because in my origin country I don't want to study. I was not interested in school. Here I want to learn languages, and I want to use them in my work. Coming to Italy, I am changed'*). Younger participants show more professional curiosity, and they were more active in seeking out new information (*'I asked the cultural mediator for information on how to do this work'*). This step was activated spontaneously and probably can be considered a collateral effect. It was facilitated by the presence in the host community of key witnesses in some professions (i.e., cultural mediators coming from the same experience as the participants), who could offer reliable information about professional activities (requested competences, type of studies, etc.). The use of key witnesses is a way to activate vicarious experience, which is one of the sources of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977) that refers to the possibility of feeling able to activate efforts due to a comparison to a similar person who has achieved his or her objectives. Self-efficacy is a key personal resource in personal achievement; people who have higher self-efficacy tend to consider a wider range of preferences than those with low self-efficacy (Bandura, 1996; Lent, Brown, & Larkin, 1986) who tend to renounce exploring professional alternatives (Anderson & Betz, 2001; Bandura, 2000). Finally, the participants considered the career counselling very useful, in particular the activities that focused on the labour market (*'We had the opportunity to reflect on our future, knowing new opportunities'; 'It's important to have the possibility to make a choice for the future'; 'It's important to be aware of what job is attractive for us; in Africa we do a job because there aren't other possibilities'*).

LIMITATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

In summary, the career guidance intervention presented in this article allowed unaccompanied foreign minors to increase and broaden their knowledge of the Italian market labour, become aware of their professional interests, and restructure their representations of work. This type of intervention increases the possibilities of accessing work through services offered by the host community rather than the informal networks created by their fellow countrymen, which sometimes represent an obstacle to social inclusion in the host countries (Chiesi & Zucchetti, 2005). 16-year-old migrants can also access apprenticeships consistent with their professional interests. Frequently, apprenticeship is a concrete way toward a more stable contract: 39.1% of foreign youth workers who hold a qualification continue to work in the company that hosted them during the internship (Besozzi & Colombo, 2009). The follow-up interview highlighted some weakness and areas needing improvement. First, it is necessary to create a better structure for the intervention by underlining that is a unitary pathway aimed to work inclusion. Further, greater involvement of community educators is needed. In fact, they represent models for the minors because they are in strict personal contact with them. For these reasons, it is recommended to include them in a specific training session on career counselling issues. Moreover, the use of professional key witnesses could be improved. They can provide practical information about their professional paths and, through their stories, increase youth self-efficacy. Finally, the early career education could help younger migrants to develop a more flexible project, based on the new cultural context.

Nonetheless, the positive results of the study should be read in light of its limitations: First, in the absence of a control group, it is difficult to appreciate the effects of the intervention on the participants. Second, the follow-up after one year was conducted only with some of the participants, as some of had changed residence.

As stated in a previous work (Piazza, Magnano, & Zammiti, 2017), this type of career counselling represents a small block of a wider path of social inclusion, which should provide, among the interventions of career education, more elaborate work on self-concept and psychosocial resources (Di Nuovo & Magnano, 2013) that support future planning in terms of a broader life project. The success of the young migrants' life project requires active involvement of the host communities. In fact, the main objective of second-level reception is educational intervention, which can be configured as a support for the development of personal and social identity that promotes empowerment and autonomy and improves and encourages the development of skills for social and professional adjustment. Only under these conditions can career education and career guidance be part of a broader path to social and cultural inclusion. Career counselling may also play an important role in facilitating sedentarization in host countries. This enables migrants to open themselves up to new roles and new needs while respecting their cultural roots. These kind of interventions must assume the characteristics of life design (Savickas et al., 2009) through the construction-reconstruction of life stories, identities, and their own cultural models together with the social representations associated with them. Career counselling, in this respect, must help individuals to reappropriate their past experiences and build new visions of their futures, as the best indicator that immigrant people are leading high-quality lives is doubtless the possibility of experimenting with employment integration (Soresi, Nota, & Wehemeyer, 2011).

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