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| **Themes** | **Sub-Themes** |
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| **Vocational Personality** |  |
| **Career Adaptability** | Belief in the pursuit of goals  Innovative self |
| **Perceived Self-Efficacy** | Self-belief in academic success  Perceived cognitive abilities self-efficacy  Perceived public speaking self-efficacy |
| **Self-Construction** | Self-identity  Self-efficacy  Self as an expert |
| **Life Themes** | Future aspirations |
| **Resilience** | Faith  Personal agency |
| **Career Decision-Making Difficulties** | Uncertainty  career-related unconscious confusion |
| **Lived Adolescence Stage Experiences** | Uncertainty about his identity |

**Table 4.9**

*Career Construction Interview*

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|  | **Question** | **Response** |
| **Scene** | How can I be useful to you as you construct your career? | He responded that he wants me to assist him in terms of determining the advantages and the disadvantages of his preferred career choices, and also to give him strength to prove his dreams and motivation. |
| **Self** | Who did you admire when you were growing up? Tell me more about him/her. | His accounting teacher and top achievers at his school. |
| **Stage** | Are there any magazines or television shows that you follow consistently? If so, which ones and why do you enjoy them? | *Skeem Saam* |
| **Script** | What is your favourite book/movie? | *Animal Farm* |
| **Self-advice** | Tell me your favourite saying or motto? | “A clever person is the one who fears God” |
| **Key life themes** | What is your earliest recollection? | -Innocent youth devastated by false rape accusation  -Courageous youth’s heroic act rescues family livestock  -Transforming the consequences of inappropriate attempt to fit in into positive growth |

1. ***Participant Reflections on the CCI***

Several themes that emerged from the CCI are similar to the ones that have been reported in part 4 of the CIP as well as the earliest recollections session. Hope’s self-reflections on this session enabled him to make a link between his unconscious motivations (things he was not consciously aware of) and his conscious thoughts, emotions, and cognitions.

When Hope was asked to reflect on the person who he admired since he was young, he responded as follows:

One thing about me, I do not have one role model. I have many role models for different roles. I do not have anyone who I started admiring from a young age. For example, when I am at school, I get inspired by the teachers who are good at their job and students who are the top achievers (6;107;2847). [...] When I am at church, I get inspired by people who can preach well. That is one thing I want to be good at (7;108;2060). [...] I sometimes feel like admiring your role model too much can make you lose your focus. You can end up losing your identity trying to be like someone else. Because after all, in your mind you will always have that thing that you want to be exactly like them (7;108;2869). [...] I do not want to be another person. One thing I want to do is to upgrade my life and remain the same person. But I do not want to be another person. I am okay the way I am. I do not want to skip the process to the next

Hope reported to have changing role models depending on the life circumstances and roles. Furthermore, his desire to be nobody else but himself reflects a high degree of self-acceptance.

When he was asked about his favourite book, he responded that it is *Animal Farm*. Hope mentioned that this book is not part of his school content, however, he found out about them on his favourite soap, *Skeem Saam*. Then he took the initiative to research and find the book in the community library. When asked about what he likes the most about *Animal Farm*, he reflected that, “*Animal Farm* has many motivations that is why I like it” (6; 77; 193). Hope demonstrates a commendable self-initiative, curiosity, and a proactive approach to learning. Hope’s proactive search for literature outside the school curriculum illustrates a strong intrinsic motivation for personal growth and education. Hope's active engagement with his education and his drive to explore beyond prescribed materials suggest that he embodies the qualities of a self-determined and self-motivated learner. He further revealed that he goes to his English teacher to ask for topics that he can write essays about to help him improve his English.

1. ***Reflections on the Collage***

The collage was intended to portray who he is and who he aspires to become. Hope described himself as an intelligent, unique child with dreams that differ from most of the children in his village. He mentioned his strong interest in staying informed about global events and disapproved of people who are complacent about their lack of awareness regarding world affairs. He displayed a high level of uncertainty when asked about his desire to start a family someday.

For his future goals, he expressed his wish to establish his own scientific laboratory, where he can conduct experiments and generate ideas to help his country address its ongoing electricity crisis. He is also keen on engaging in debates and staying updated on the latest developments by prominent scientists worldwide. He mentioned that currently, the world's leading scientists are in a competition to become the first to relocate to Mars. In his words,

The scientist have been striving to establish a presence there, however, they encountered various challenges. There is a weaker force of gravity compared to Earth, so trees do not naturally grow. The Martian soil is not fertile, and there is a lack of water and oxygen. Personally, I think a feasible approach would be to transport soil from Earth to Mars and start planting trees. This way, we could generate oxygen through the process (6;82;2091).

When it comes to his future prospects, Hope pinpointed three crucial factors that he believes could propel him toward changing his current situation. He started by discussing his goal of finding a soccer team to coach, sharing his perspective:

I would advise players that they must not represent themselves, but they must represent the team. I would encourage the players to embrace innovation on the field, urging them not to fixate on outdated tactics. The key to avoiding obsolescence is a willingness to explore new avenues and a commitment to continuous improvement. Some individuals resist change and cling to what they were told led to their success. If people can adapt and welcome fresh ideas, they can endure and thrive in the long run (7;89;2292).

This, he believes, will help him secure a livelihood. Secondly, he emphasised the importance of acquiring capital. He plans to utilise his National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) stipend to initiate a business venture that will enable his mother to leave her domestic work job and return home. Lastly, he mentioned the need to find someone who can recognise his talents and provide support and empowerment to help him achieve his goals.

Concerning his identity, Hope reflected that he used to struggle a lot and question who he was and this used to stress him but he is feeling fine now. He reflected as follows:

I am okay now since I have gone back to church. At church we are not allowed to date or talk about things that involves sexuality (6;115;3130). [...] I used to feel different from other boys. I felt like there was something wrong with me. I was not even confident enough to approach girls. I only approached girls during traditional ceremonies (6;115;3132). [...] I think girls liked me. But I did not have much interest in them (6;115;3134) [...] My voice was soft. Even at school, people laughed at the way I walked. I had difficulties when it comes to making friends (6;116;3171). [...] You see, it was a lot. I ended up not trusting myself because I was always looking for things that were wrong with me (6;116;3172).

Hope's experience of struggling with his identity and feeling out of place in his community due to societal expectations and his personal feelings about his sexuality is a complex and emotional journey. His mention of finding solace in the church, where discussions related to sexuality are often discouraged, suggests a coping mechanism he used to deal.

*c.* ***Reflection on His Selected Subject Choices and Futures Career Aspirations***

There has been a noticeable confusion and misalignment between Hope's chosen academic subjects and his personal interests. Hope expressed a stronger fascination with science, finding it engaging because it talks to the workings of the world we inhabit, “such as explaining the why the Earth rotates and why it does not fall” (6;81;2043). However, societal discouragement led him to select the commerce stream, as mentioned earlier. He also disclosed that his decision to pursue accounting was influenced by the business activities of his mother and brother – his mother's clothing resale business and his brother's takeaway sales at a hostel. During our discussion, Hope demonstrated a good grasp of business concepts. For example, as someone who wants to have a business, he explained that if he were to establish it in his rural area, he would begin by creating a questionnaire and also interview people to determine their most pressing needs, ensuring that he does not introduce a product where it is least needed. He also recognised the effectiveness of the questionnaire, especially in reaching a wide audience. Regarding his future plans, Hope reflected on the following:

My plan is to study and finish high school. After finishing high school, I want to work just to have money to afford a living (6;127;1654). [...] But honestly speaking I do regret sometimes. As we proceed with these sessions, I am coming to realise that I am passionate about science (6;127; 1657). [...] But I am comforting myself because when my friends who do science speak about science, I do not get lost. I always have an opinion. For example, my cousin is doing it, whenever she talks about things that they learn at school. I also intervene (6; 127;1660).

Moreover, Hope expressed a desire to switch to the science stream if given the opportunity. Yet, he believes that it may be too late for such a change, particularly since he repeated Grade 10 twice and is performing well academically. Additionally, he anticipates resistance from his mother regarding this potential shift.

Hope's situation reflects a common challenge in career development known as career indecision.