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CAREER MATURITY INVENTORY

Comprehensive models of vocational development during adolescence address the content of occupational choices and process of career decision making. Choice content matches an individual's abilities and interests to the occupational requirements and rewards. A good match leads to success and satisfaction, a poor match to failure and frustration. Career choice process deals with how individuals make decisions, not which occupation they choose. Individuals who apply a more highly developed and mature decisional process usually make more realistic and suitable choices. Because career maturity is central to adolescent vocational development, several inventories have been designed to measure "career choice readiness." The Career Maturity Inventory (Crites, 1978) was the first such measure to be published, and subsequently one of the most popular readiness inventories for students in grades six through twelve.

The Career Maturity Inventory measures the process dimension of vocational development during adolescence. The process dimension consists of two group factors: career choice attitudes and career choice competencies. Decision-making attitudes are viewed as dispositional response tendencies that mediate both choice behaviors and the use of the competencies. The decision-making competencies are viewed as comprehension and problem-solving abilities that pertain to making occupational choices.

The attitudes are considered affective variables and the competencies are considered cognitive variables.

The 1978 version of the Career Maturity Inventory-Attitude Scale remains available in two forms: Screening Form (A-2) and Counseling Form (B-1). The screening form consists of 50 items that yield a general score to indicate overall degree of career choice readiness. It is best used for performing needs analyses, evaluating career education interventions, and conducting research. The Counseling Form uses the same 50 items and adds 25 more items. It yields the same general score as the screening form and also provides scores for five subscales: Decisiveness, Involvement, Independence, Orientation, and Compromise. As its name implies, it is best used during individual counseling sessions aimed at fostering vocational development and increasing career choice readiness. The 1978 version of the CMI also included five separate 25-item cognitive tests to measure the five decision-making competencies of self-appraisal, occupational information, goal selection, planning, and problem solving. Because of the 2.5 hours required to complete the five competency tests, few counselors or researchers ever used them.

Attempting to provide a briefer test, Crites and Savickas constructed a 1995 version of the CMI that measures both the attitudes and the competencies. The CMI-R includes content appropriate for use with high school students, as well as for use with postsecondary adults. The CMI-R yields one score for each of the Attitude Scale, Competence Test, and Career Maturity Inventory. Five items from each of the 1978 B-1 subscales were selected to comprise the CMI-R Attitude Scale. The CMI-R Competence Test also consists of 25 items, five for each of the five competencies. The CMI-R total

score merely sums the scores for the Attitude Scale and the Competency Test. The CMI Form A-2 is available to qualified professionals free of charge at <http://www.vocopher.com>. The CMI-R is available from Western Educational Assessment, Inc in Boulder, Colorado.

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Suggested Additional Readings

Crites, J.O. (1978). *Theory and research handbook for the Career Maturity Inventory* (2nd ed.). Monterey, CA: CTB/McGraw-Hill.

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