

# Chapter 10

## Solution–Focused Perspectives on Career Transition Strategies for Students With ASD

### **ABSTRACT**

*This paper examined solution-focused career transition strategies for students with autism spectrum disorders (SASD). The data were gathered using a quantitative cross-sectional design among teachers and parents of SASD. The results demonstrated a great similarity in the perceptions of the stakeholders in all strategy dimensions, and strengths and exceptions were the most strongly supported in the survey. Meanwhile, a future-focused vision was comparatively less highlighted. There were no significant differences between genders, types of participants, or residential area, which means that there is a common perception landscape that is influenced by structural limitations as opposed to personal traits. When viewed through the lens of Hephapreneurship, the findings emphasise the position of capability, meaning-making, and context-responsive pathways for career transition among SASD. This chapter presents a theoretically combined and contextually based framework for enhancing inclusive career transition practices for SASD in Nigeria.*

### **BACKGROUND**

Strategy is a thoughtful, consistent course of action that is aimed at attaining a long-term objective in circumstances of limitation and ambiguity. It is the act of making decisions regarding priorities, allocation of scarce resources and choosing what to act on and what to leave unacted to develop an advantage or move forward

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to a specified outcome. In this study, strategy is contextualised as purposeful approaches individuals or institutions use to navigate change, manage constraints, and move toward desired future outcomes. Career transition strategy is a complex action plan that involves mapping of the past, present, and future, support networks, reskilling, and lifelong learning (Stambulova, 2010). It also entails psychological and social support, personal branding, as well as structured programs based on the individual's needs (Rochat & Borgen, 2023). All these strategies are aimed at assisting individuals in making successful transitions in their career paths and realising their professional development (Coppola & Young, 2022; Malta et al., 2025). The career transition strategies of Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (SASD) are based on the ability to utilise the positive aspects, like focus and detail orientation, while addressing weaknesses, like communication needs and sensory needs, through structured individual support (Dean et al., 2022; Qian et al., 2021).

This current chapter explored the future-focused, strengths and exceptions, action planning and scaling, and support and reinforcement. Future-focused career transition strategies are the deliberate capacity of SASD to construct a clear and personally meaningful picture of a preferred occupational future and to use that picture to guide present decisions, learning priorities, and help-seeking behaviours. In the transition literature, a future-focused transition strategy is perceived as a functional cognitive asset that reduces uncertainty, enhances objective commitment, and improves participation with preparatory tasks (Malekpour, 2019; Tourais & Videira, 2024). Research findings from scholars (Hazan-Liran & Walter, 2025; Tomaszewski et al., 2020, 2022) strongly support the notion that higher self-determination and goal-directedness are associated with better educational and adult outcomes for transition-aged autistic individuals. Future orientation serves as a practical mechanism to achieve these outcomes, emphasising the need for targeted interventions and supports to enhance self-determination and future planning skills. According to Wehmeyer and Zhao (2020), career development models prioritise self-determination, and future objectives serve as the central organising element that structures choice-making, planning, and ongoing action, especially in unpredictable environments (Wehmeyer & Zhao, 2020). For SASD, with constant high executive functioning load and ambiguous social cues, a future-focused strategy provides ground that makes tasks more intelligible and less emotionally destabilising.

In the school-based transition, future-focused strategies operate through three interlocking processes. The first is preferred future-focused construction, where the SASD are supported in a detailed description of adult working life, encompassing daily routines, workplace sensory conditions, kinds of tasks, supervision styles, and social demands (Webster et al., 2022). This is vital because SASD benefits from aspirations that are specific and have predictable transition plans instead of vague aspirations that are less actionable (Lam et al., 2023; Torres et al., 2024). Second

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