

AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF

June L. Dressler for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Counseling presented on
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Title: Quest for Occupational Identity: Examining Career Resilience, Career-related Adversity, and Career Decision Difficulty during Emerging Adulthood

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Abstract

Emerging adults often encounter obstacles and adversity in pursuit of occupational identity.

College counselors are responsible for delivering mental health, wellness, and career services to distressed students facing unprecedented challenges to enter the workplace. The purpose of this study was to investigate how counselors can promote career resilience in emerging adults struggling to overcome career-related adversity. The first manuscript explored the aspects and impact of career-related adversity and how protective buffers already identified in psychosocial resilience relate to the construct of career resilience. A line of inquiry is proposed to promote career resilience in emerging adults facing career-related adversity. An argument is made to ground career resilience as a subdomain under the larger framework of psychosocial resilience. The second manuscript investigated the impact of a conflict resolution skills training intervention on the career decision self-efficacy of college students experiencing career decision difficulties due to conflict with parents. A non-concurrent multiple baseline across subjects single subject research design examined the impact of a conflict resolution skills intervention on college student career decision self-efficacy. The A-B design enabled the investigators to measure student career decision self-efficacy during and after a conflict resolution skills training evaluated against a baseline. The data collected showed steady increase in the career decision self-efficacy of three college students who engaged in five sessions of conflict resolution skills

training. The career decision self-efficacy of two participants increased from *moderate confidence* with positive trends during intervention and both reached *high confidence* levels post-intervention. The third participant reported *low confidence* during baseline that increased to *moderate confidence* during intervention and continued to improve during follow-up.

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Quest for Occupational Identity: Examining Career Resilience, Career-related Adversity, and
Career Decision Difficulty during Emerging Adulthood

by
June.L. Dressler

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APPROVED:

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Dean of the College of Education

Dean of Graduate School

I understand that my dissertation will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my dissertation to any reader upon request.

June L. Dressler, Author

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I am indebted to my father John Wesley Clausen whose 1953 master's thesis on vocational choice piqued my curiosity in the career decision making difficulties of college students. My mother's tenacity and along with my four sister's devotion kept me grounded and surrounded by joyful unconditional positive regard along the way. I have tremendous appreciation for my three treasured children who are the embodiment of resilience and have shown me what it looks like to suffer well and come out the stronger for it. But foremost I am grateful for my husband Rob—stalwart supporter and beloved companion through it all.

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CHAPTER 1

Quest for Occupational Identity: Examining Career Resilience, Career-Related Adversity, and Career Decision Difficulty during Emerging Adulthood

General Introduction

Dissertation Overview

The purpose of this doctoral study is to demonstrate scholarly work by using the *manuscript style dissertation format* as outlined by the Oregon State University Graduate School. Chapter one provides an overview of how the two journal-formatted manuscripts found in Chapter two and Chapter three are thematically connected. Chapter two is a manuscript entitled, *Career Resilience as a Subdomain of Psychosocial Resilience: Exploring Protective Processes to Buffer Career-related Adversity during the Transition from College to Career* examining the aspects and impact of career-related adversities and argues for grounding the construct of career resilience as a subdomain of psychosocial resilience. A proposed line of inquiry promoting career resilience incorporated protective processes already identified in psychosocial resilience. Chapter three is an article titled, *The Impact of a Conflict Resolution Skills Training on the Career Decision Self-Efficacy of College Students: Addressing Career Decision Difficulty Due to Conflict with Parents* investigated the effect of a conflict resolution skills training on college students experiencing career decision making difficulties due to conflict with parents. Chapter four presents a brief thematic summary and suggests directions for future research.

The foremost implication for this body of work is to urge researchers and practitioners—those working within the subdomains of career resilience, educational resilience, health resilience, or the overarching domain of psychosocial resilience—to take a multi-disciplinary approach to expand the promotion and share the benefit of resilience. Second, to provide counselors with a practical line of inquiry promoting career resilience to buffer distressed emerging adults experiencing career-related adversity. Finally, implications for counselors and

researchers seeking to develop evidence-based career interventions may find conflict resolution skills training a promising intervention to address career decision difficulties due to external conflict with parents.

Thematic Introduction

These manuscripts thematically converge on the examination of career resilience, career adversity, and career decision difficulties during the transition from college to career. Most societies have a transition from adolescence to adulthood, a threshold into the privilege and responsibility of full adult status (Erikson, 1963; Van Gennep, 1960). American cultural markers into adulthood have historically included completing an education to prepare for entrance to the workplace, establishing an independent household, getting married, and/or becoming a parent (Arnett, 2004). However, these more traditional thresholds into adulthood have been reframed by unparalleled economic, social, and demographic changes in the U.S. (Cassidy & Wright, 2008; Silva, 2012).

Due to significant shifts in the American culture, disproportionate rates of youth are unemployed and under-employed, bear the hardship of increased student debt, choose cohabitation, and face soaring housing costs leading to difficulty transitioning to adulthood (Lui, Chung, Wallace, & Aneshensel, 2014; Silva, 2012). A 2013 survey conducted by American Student Assistance identified the impact of college debt as delayed home ownership, rising credit card debt, and increased numbers of graduates living with parents for extended periods of time (American Student Assistance, 2013). In addition, Cassidy et al. (2008) conducted a longitudinal study assessing the effects of employment status on the health of recent graduates, found stress of unemployment and underemployment had a negative effect on psychological and physical health after graduation. Walker and Peterson (2012) identified career-related stress triggers in

college students and found career decision-making confusion the best predictor of depressive symptoms. Luskin (2012) described this cluster of stress-related symptoms as post-commencement stress disorder underscoring the risk and reality of career-related adversity during the transition from college to career.

Career resilience is described as the ability to adapt to changing work circumstances even when discouraged or disrupted (Collard, Epperheimer, & Saign, 1996). Career resilience is a promising but limited construct (Fourie & Van Vuuren, 1998), one with untapped potential to assist individuals rebound from career-related adversity. While research on the larger construct of psychosocial resilience has flourished, it is seldom cited in the study of career resilience. Psychosocial resilience researchers have already identified several of the protective buffers as strong social bonds, ability to problem solve, and self-efficacy (Masten, Burt, Roisman, Obradovic, Long, & Tellegen, 2004; Walsh, 2006).

Interventions most likely to promote resilience are those improving social supports and increasing self-efficacy (Rickwood, Roberts, Batten, Marshall, & Massie, 2004; Rutter, 2013; Walsh, 2006). Career interventions are more effective when they target specific career decision-making difficulties (Gati, Krausz, & Osipow, 1996; Tinsley, Tinsley & Rushing, 2002). Conflict with significant others i.e., parents is identified as one of the career decision difficulties of emerging adults (Gati et al., 1996). However, few if any career interventions are offered to help college students address career decision difficulty due to conflict with parents. Brief conflict resolution training sessions have been found to strengthen interpersonal relationships, increase problem solving skills, lower aggressive behaviors, and improve communication skills (Ando, 2011; Brinson, Kottler, Fisher, 2004; Brockman, Nunez, & Basu, 2010; Haraway & Haraway III, 2005; Katz, 2011).

The purpose of this study was to investigate the aspects and impact of career-related adversity, identify key protective buffers of psychosocial resilience most relevant to promote career resilience, and explore the efficacy of an intervention for college students experiencing career decision making difficulties due to conflict with parents. The researcher used a non-concurrent multiple baseline across subjects single subject research design to examine the impact of a conflict resolution skills training on college student career decision self-efficacy. The A-B design with follow-up enabled the investigators to measure the effect of a conflict resolution intervention on college student's career decision self-efficacy across three phases. The conflict resolution skills training was intended to promote resilience by improving interpersonal communication skills and increasing self-efficacy. The hypothesis of this study stated that a conflict resolution skills training will increase the career decision self-efficacy of college students with decision-making difficulties due to conflict with their parents.

College counselors are charged by university administration to help students address life stressors and career decision difficulties (Fouad, Cotter, & Kantamneni, 2009; Hartley, 2012). Overcoming obstacles to career goal achievement is clearly stated in the American Counseling Association's mission to empower clients to develop strategies to overcome challenges to achieving educational and career goals (ACA, 2015). This is echoed in the National Career Development Associations' mission for career counselors to empower and inspire the achievement of life and career goals" (NCDA, 2016).

The Council for Accreditation of Counseling & Related Educational Programs (CACREP) standards endorsed the use of theory and models promoting individual, couple, marriage, and community resilience (CACREP, 2016). With employment status strongly associated with problematic use of substances (Compton, Groerer, Conway, & Finger, 2014)

addiction and mental health counselors may find the protective benefits of resilience an important aspect of EA recovery. In addition, rehabilitation counselors working with veterans, practitioners already acutely aware of the role and toll of extreme career-related adversity, may find the promotion of resilience during career transition a natural extension and application of their skillset (Frain, Malachy, Bishop, & Bethel, 2010). It is in the best interest of counselors who work with emerging adults to promote career resilience as a buffer for any number of career-related adversities during career launch.

Glossary of Terms

Career Decision Self-Efficacy (CDSE). Belief in one's ability to approach and successfully complete the tasks needed to make career decisions (Betz & Taylor, 2012).

Career-related Adversity. A difficult situation or episode of hardship that may impede the completion of age appropriate developmental tasks leading to occupational identity. (Dressler, 2017).

Career Resilience. The ability to adapt to changing work circumstances even when discouraged or disrupted (Collard, Epperheimer, & Saign, 1996).

Conflict Resolution Skills Training (CRST). A model that builds upon a foundation of conflict awareness, followed by conflict diagnosis, conflict reduction, culminating with a seven-step problem solving process (Katz, Lawyer, & Sweedler, 2011).

Emerging Adulthood. A phase of the lifespan between adolescence and young adulthood encompassing late adolescence and early adulthood described as *in between* (Arnett, 2000).

Occupational Identity. A coherent self-definition achieved over time, formed through interactions between individual growth and societal expectations within the work domain (Josselsons & Marcia, 2013; Vondracek, 1992).

Post-Commencement Stress Disorder (PCSD). The cluster of stress-related symptoms experienced by recent college graduates experiencing obstacles to enter the workplace. (Luskin, 2012).

Protective Processes: Resilience promoters that operate prior to, during, and following adverse conditions leading to relatively good outcomes (Rutter, 2013).

Psychosocial Resilience. Overcoming stress or adversity with a relatively good outcome (Rutter, 1999).

Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI). Assessment tool used to help people understand different conflict handling styles along the two dimensions of assertiveness and cooperativeness (CPP, 2016).

CHAPTER 2

Career Resilience as a Subdomain of Psychosocial Resilience: Exploring Protective Processes to
Buffer Career-related Adversity during the Transition from College to Career:

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Abstract

Emerging adults often face hardship and challenges related to unemployment, underemployment, the burden of college debt, and difficulties making career decisions vital to occupational identity formation. College students and recent graduates often seek help from counseling professionals to address the obstacles they encounter during the transition from college to career. Counselors will find great variability in pathways to adulthood with some emerging adults thriving when exposed to adverse conditions while others with similar difficulties suffer from anxiety, depression, and shame. This manuscript explored the aspects and impact of career-related adversity and argued for grounding the construct of career resilience as a subdomain—along with educational resilience and health resilience—under the broader, well-researched framework of psychosocial resilience. A proposed line of inquiry adapted protective processes already identified in psychosocial resilience to serve as potential buffers for emerging adults transitioning from college to career. The researcher concludes with a discussion on the implications for researchers and practitioners utilizing the proposed line of inquiry and considers the mutual benefits of career resilience as a subdomain under psychosocial resilience.

Keywords: career-related adversity, career resilience, college to career transition, emerging adulthood, occupational identify, protective processes, psychosocial resilience

CHAPTER 2

Career Resilience as a Subdomain of Psychosocial Resilience: Exploring Protective Processes to Buffer Career-related Adversity during the Transition from College to Career

Introduction

Erikson (1968) captured the angst of transition to adulthood by stating “it is the inability to settle on an occupational identity which most disturbs young people” (p. 132). Record-breaking numbers of college students are visiting counseling centers for normal developmental issues and more severe problems (Benton, Robertson, Tseng, Newton, & Benton, 2003; Bland, Melton, Welle, & Bigham, 2012; Fouad, Cotter, & Kantamneni, 2009). College counselors are charged with helping stressed students navigate the obstacles encountered in the college to work transition (Hartley, 2012; Wendlandt & Rochlen, 2008). Central to the distress of many college students and recent graduates is the anxiety and depression related to career indecision, financial difficulty, and unproductive job searches (Arnett, 2007; Daniels, Stewart, Stupnisky, Perry, & LoVerso, 2011).

The transition from college to career is a developmental stage when emerging adults encounter a range of obstacles and impediments to establishing an occupational identity (Arnett, 2000; Caltabiano & Moorhouse, 2007; Luskin, 2012). Emerging adults often experience distress when encountering career-related adversity and hardship such as rising student debt, underemployment, unemployment, and career decision making difficulties (Daniels, et al., 2011; Reed & Cochran, 2013; Spreen, 2013). There is increased variability of pathways to adulthood with some emerging adults navigating career-related adversities with relative ease, while peers facing similar adverse conditions experience psychological and physical distress (Arnett, 2007; Hales, 2002; Shanahan, 2000). Psychosocial resilience researchers investigate the processes of

how high risk individuals are able to function relatively well despite exposure to adverse conditions while others do not (Hinkelman & Luzzo, 2007; Masten & Obradovic, 2006; Rutter, 1987). However, it appears the construct of career resilience has often developed independent of the extant body of research on psychosocial resilience, specifically regarding the protective processes already found to promote resilience (Bimrose et al., 2012; Rutter, 2012).

The integration of empirical research is one of the characteristics of clear construct development, underscoring the importance of viewing concepts as adaptive and interactive rather than static (Cooper, Hedges, & Valentine, 2009). Career resilience is a promising but under-developed construct due in part to its disconnection from psychosocial resilience research. How can the protective components already found to promote psychosocial resilience foster career resilience in emerging adults experiencing career-related adversity? The purpose of this manuscript is to explore the aspects and impact of career-related adversities during emerging adulthood and argue for grounding the construct of career resilience as a subdomain of psychosocial resilience. The researcher suggests a line of inquiry to address career adversity based on key protective processes and factors already found to promote resilience followed by a discussion on the implications for counselors and researchers.

Super's life-span, life-space theory describes career transition as a lifelong process of cycling through normal developmental stages leading to career maturity (Super, 1980). Savickas (2001) replaced the mid-century construct of career maturity with the more useful concept of career choice readiness. What was once seen as a unilateral move into a single career has been replaced by frequent transitions and job rotations described as boundaryless, protean careers—a term derived from Proteus, the shape-shifting Greek god of the sea (Briscoe, Hall, & Frautschy DeMuth, 2006; Hall, 2004). Addressing the unpredictable nature of employment, Schlossberg's

work-life transition model describes anticipated, unanticipated, chronic hassles, and non-event transitions (Goodman, Schlossberg, & Anderson, 2006). Anticipated transitions are events that happen to most individuals across the life-span such as starting a job whereas unanticipated events are being fired or transferred unexpectedly. Chronic hassles are irritating situations such as difficult supervisors or co-workers. Non-events are a desired situation that never occurs such as a job promotion that does not materialize. Difficulties related to frequent job turnovers are well-documented (Classen & Dunn, 2012; Jones-Johnson, 1992; Wanberg, 2012). Upon graduation, EA's begin to cycle through job transitions with each succession presenting new career-related decisions and challenges (Chudzikowski, 2012; Gati et al., 1996).

Aspects and Impact of EA Career-related Adversity

Adverse work environments are found to have negative spillover into one's personal life (Reichl, Leiter, & Spinath, 2014). According to Jackson, Firtko, and Edenborough (2007) workplace adversity is viewed as any negative, stressful, traumatic, difficult situation, or episode of hardship encountered in an occupational setting which can include safety issues, abuse, restructuring, bullying and unresolved conflict. In an exploration of perceived benefits of adversity, McMillen (1999) organized difficult life experiences and adverse events into distinct categories including health-related adversities, natural and technological-related adversities, criminal victimization adversities, grief-related adversities, and combat-related adversities.

Although McMillen does not include a category for career-related adversity as an area of difficult life experiences, Sonnenfield (2002) does make a case for career adversity. He describes career adversity as an endless array of frustrations and setbacks adults encounter in the workplace including termination, down-sizing, false accusations, missed promotions, discrimination, plateauing, burnout, increased/reduced responsibility, failed projects, abusive

bosses, and other sources. Also, Van Vuuren and Fourie (2000) made a case for adverse career situations described as acute uncertainty in the workplace, high stress levels, and challenges to the individuals' sense of security and identity.

For the purpose of this study, career-related adversity during emerging adulthood is defined as a difficult situation or episode of hardship that may impede the completion of age appropriate developmental tasks leading to occupational identity. Career-related adversity for college students and recent graduates may include but not limited to unemployment and underemployment (Spreen, 2013), the burden of college debt (Robb, Moody, & Abdel-Ghany, 2011), and career decision difficulties (Guay, Ratelle, Senécal, Larose, & Deschênes, 2006).

EA unemployment and underemployment

As a result of rapidly changing technology, demographic shifts, and globalization, new jobs are created while well-established lines of work are becoming obsolete (Guichard & Dumora, 2008). Historically, the struggle for recent college graduates to find employment that fully utilizes their degree is not a new phenomenon, however the instability of the 2008 recession resulted in unprecedented levels of unemployment and underemployment for recent graduates ages 20-24 (Abel, Deitz, & Su, 2014; Koc, 2013; Scurry & Blenkinsopp, 2011). Job prospects, the quality of jobs, and salaries for recent college graduates started on a downward trend in 2001 (Abel et al., 2014; Koc, 2013; NACE 2014).

The BLS reported the rate of unemployed recent college graduates with a bachelor's degree peaked at 17.6% in 2009 compared to the national unemployment average of 10% during the same period (Spreen, 2013). The Harvard University Graduate School of Education project evaluated the difficulties young adults face when entering the 21st century labor market and concluded that employment rates for young adults were at a post-World War II low (Symonds &

Schwartz). Furthermore, Lucas and Berkel (2005) found a correlation between vocational difficulties and psychological distress expressed as depression and anxiety in college students. A longitudinal study assessing the impact of employment status on the health of recent graduates, found the stress of unemployment and underemployment had a deleterious effect on psychological and physical health during the post-graduation period (Cassidy & Wright, 2008). Dooley, Praise, and Ham-Rowbottom (2000) found significant increased depression related to unemployment and underemployment.

EA burden of student debt

Responding to labor market fluctuations and its impact on recent college graduates, apprehensive EA and their parents are asking pointed questions regarding the expected rate of return on a college degree (Abel & Deitz, 2014, Koc, 2013). The burden of student debt is now a reality for most college students with the *Project on Student Loan Debt* reporting 71% of the class of 2012 carrying an average debt of \$29,400 per borrower (Reed & Cochran, 2013). Financial difficulties are listed as one of the primary reasons students leave college (Terriquez & Gurantz, 2014). Those who stop or drop out of college face added financial pressures when student loans come due, without benefit of earnings associated with a college degree (Schneider & Yin, 2011; Dwyer, Hodson, & McCloud, 2013). Some conclude that emerging adults who dropout before completing a degree are worse off than those who never attended college due to this added burden of debt (Roberson, Fish, Olmstead, & Fincham, 2015).

College students with more credit card debt reported higher levels of anxiety (Hogan, Bryant, & Overmyer-Day, 2013) found to be associated with a wide-range of adverse health indicators (Nelson, Lust, Story, & Ehlinger, 2008). A retrospective study of over 45,000 college students indicated that both men and women with high risk credit behavior are more likely to

report feelings of exhaustion, sadness, and depression (Adams & Moore, 2007). A 2013 survey conducted by American Student Assistance identified the impact of student debt as delayed home ownership, rising credit card debt, and for extended periods of time (American Student Assistance, 2013).

EA career decision-making difficulties

Another key aspect of career-related adversity is difficulty making career decisions during emerging adulthood. There are many factors and complexities contributing to career indecision such as the quantity of information, the quality of the data, the attributes and supports of the individual decision maker (Gati & Amir, 2010; Gelatt, 1962; Guay et al., 2006). Additionally, Gati et al. (1996) sorted career-decision difficulties into three main categories; lack of readiness prior to the process, lack of information during the process, and inconsistent information during the process. Difficulties located during the decision-making process may include inconsistent information due to unreliable sources, and internal or external conflicts. Internal conflict takes place when an individual contends with their own contradictory career interests and values (Gati et al., 2010). External conflict with significant others can involve disagreement with parents on academic major selection and/or career decision (Gati et al., 1996; Guerra & Braungart-Rieker, 1999).

Some anxiety related to career indecision is to be expected in first-year college students (Morgan & Ness, 2003) however anxiety can become problematic if not resolved in a timely manner (Daniels et al., 2011). Compounding EA career indecision, Saka, Gati, and Kelly (2008) found that anxiety in college students can impede career-decision making by interfering with the cognitive and relational aspects of career counseling. Walker and Peterson (2012) investigated

career-related stress triggers and dysfunctional career thoughts in college students and found career decision-making confusion the best predictor of depressive symptoms.

Luskin (2012) labeled the cluster of stress-related symptoms and maladies experienced by recent graduates as post commencement stress disorder (PCSD). He suggested that new graduates in the process of choosing, changing, or pursuing a career often experience anxiety, fear of failure, and shame brought on by the societal instability of recent job markets. Although giving voice to this growing phenomenon of post-graduation stress, Luskin asserts that PCSD has not been sufficiently studied, suggesting that incidents and occurrences are under-reported. He encouraged future research to identify risk factors and locate best practices to help recent graduates address the impact of acute post-graduate stressors.

The Promise and Limitation of Career Resilience

Given these aspects of career-related adversity and their impact on EA clients, it is critical for counselors to understand the evolution of the construct of career resilience. Bridges (1995) articulated the need for a paradigm shift in the American workplace that required living with ambiguity and uncertainty and called for a new mindset to deal with rapidly changing job shifts and described it as resilience and adaptability. Engels (1995) pointed to career resilience as an essential core response to the radical shift of work at the end of the 20th century.

Early career resilience researchers include London (1983) and Collard, Epperheimer, and Saign (1996). While psychosocial resilience researchers Garmezy, Masten and Tellegen (1984) were investigating risk and protective factors in vulnerable children, London (1983) independently developed an early construct of career resilience from an organizational perspective. London defined career resilience as the ability to adapt to changing circumstances and subsumed career resilience within his broader career motivation construct. London's career

motivation theory involved the interaction between individual characteristics and situational characteristics resulting in decisions and behaviors. The characteristics of motivation were career insight, career identity, and career resilience. London's career resilience construct included self-efficacy, risk taking, taking responsibility, adaptability, and positive peer relationships.

Similar to London's definition, Collard et al. (1996) defined career resilience as the ability to adapt to changing circumstances even when discouraged or disrupted. Collard et al. (1996) identified characteristics promoting resilience as self-efficacy, self-reliance, a sense of responsibility, positive peer relations, and continuous learning. It should be noted that neither London nor Collard referenced longitudinal studies conducted by leading psychosocial resilience researchers. Although Fourie et al. (1998) did cite several psychosocial researchers, they attempted with limited success to operationalize London's construct of career resilience. More recently Rickwood, Roberts, Batten, Marshall, and Massie (2004) proposed a career resilience framework based upon several aspects of psychosocial resilience researchers. This model of career resilience featured four elements: acceptance by the agency and institution, support for self-awareness, conversion of abstract ideas to concrete actions, and connectedness to social supports. Although career resilience research refers to some aspects of psychosocial resilience, it has not fully incorporated its protective components or resilience promoters, and subsequently lacks the benefit of a multi-disciplinary approach to resilience.

Grounding Career Resilience in Psychosocial Resilience

Driven by the rapid pace of discovery and research to identify solutions to preventable diseases and disorders, there is a growing trend of collaborative, interdisciplinary research (Mabry, Olster, Morgan, & Abrams, 2008). They underscore the demand for multi-disciplinary research and development in the behavioral and social sciences is critical to address the complex

healthcare needs of groups and individuals as outlined by the National Institutes of Health (NIH, 2008). The integration of empirical research is an essential characteristic of clear construct development. Expanded knowledge across disciplines allows new generations of information to emerge as a reminder that concepts are adaptive and interactive, not static (Cooper et al., 2009).

Resilience has been criticized as being too large and unwieldy as a single construct and its overuse as a catch all for recovery, wellness, change, and adaptation (Luthar & Cicchetti, 2000). To organize the breadth and depth of resilience research, Burt and Paysnick (2012) proposed psychosocial resilience as an overarching domain with specific resilience subdomains i.e. educational resilience (Clauss-Ehlers & Wibrowski (2007) and health resilience (Dyer & McGuiness, 1996). By grounding career resilience as an additional subdomain of psychosocial resilience, researchers and practitioners may benefit from the integration of knowledge across the disciplines of career development, education, and healthcare allowing for new generations of resilience information to emerge.

The construct of psychosocial resilience has evolved over several waves of resilience research, with each wave building on its predecessor (Masten, 2007, Richardson, 2002). Garmezy (1987) dropped the term ‘invulnerable’ initially used to describe at-risk children with relatively good outcomes. Instead he preferred to use the phrase ‘stress-resistant’ or ‘resilient’ defending a more representative albeit less dramatic description. Werner and Smith (2001) referred to resilience as an innate self-righting mechanism. Rutter (2013) described resilience as overcoming stress or adversity with a relatively good outcome despite encountering situations shown to carry a major risk. Masten (2001) refined the definition of resilience by adding competencies that lead to good outcomes despite serious threats, describing resilience as inferential and contextual. These definitions suggest that two judgments must take place to

identify resilience: first a significant threat or adversity experienced in the past or present pose a risk, followed by the second judgement of a good or relatively good outcome.

Protective Factors and Processes to Promote Resilience

In the first wave of resilience research Masten and Garmezy (1985) organized protective factors into a triad of resiliency including personality features such as self-esteem, supportive family cohesion with an absence of discord, and external supportive systems. Rutter (1985) described protective factors as influences modifying, ameliorating, or altering an individual's response to an environmental hazard with potential maladaptive outcomes. Rutter (1987) stressed that protective factors and positive experiences are not necessarily the same thing. Protective factors are often unpleasant experiences that toughen an individual resulting in *steeling effects* that often remain latent until activated; whereas positive experiences may have no detectable effect on future stressors.

Werner and Smith (1977) followed a cohort of 698 Kauai youth from birth to adulthood with a focus on risk factors and resilience. Researchers noted that one-third of the Kauai young adults in the high-risk category due to childhood adversity nonetheless grew into competent, caring young adults (Werner, 1992). They found characteristics of high risk individuals who displayed resilience included: positive temperaments, an internal locus of control, assuming responsibility, helping others, having at least one supportive relationship, and possessing religious affiliation and inner faith.

The second wave of resilience research investigated how key risk and protective processes and regulatory systems promoted resilience (Masten et al., 2006). Dyer et al. (1996) found resilience to be a dynamic process influenced by protective factors including both skills and resources. Rutter (1987) identified resilience promoters found to minimize risks associated

with adverse situations included the reduction of risk impact, the reduction of negative chain reactions, establishment and maintenance of self-esteem and self-efficacy, and opening new opportunities. Rutter argued that risk cannot be eliminated, but its impact can be reduced, just as some chain reactions are inevitable, these too can be minimized in duration and impact.

Protective processes have been identified prior to and after adversity (Rutter, 2013). Resilience promoters operating prior to adversity are situations allowing the individual to take responsibility and demonstrate autonomy, and/or cope with a stressful or challenging situation to learn from mistakes and exercise personal agency. Personal agency is demonstrated by effective planning, self-reflection, and taking action, which serve as protective processes for future adversity. Rutter (1987) underscored that protection resides not in the evasion of the risk but in successful engagement with it. Rutter (2013) also identified resilience promoters that operate after a stressful or traumatic experience. These include external interventions or personal actions that can lead to new situations that both cut off the past and provide new experiences and opportunities. When these protective processes are functional, individual resilience is common and conversely there is increased risk when any one or a combination of these systems is destroyed or damaged (Masten et al., 2006).

Walsh (2002) focused on key protective processes to promote resilience informed by a family systems and ecological perspective. This approach located the individual within a family structure surrounded by larger social systems such as peer groups, school/work settings, community, and political/economic systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Walsh, 2002). Similar to Rutter, Walsh asserted that key processes learned from previous adversity serve as protective buffers useful for future transitions (Walsh, 2002). Rutter (1987) described the goal is not to

avoid adversity but rather to leverage hard-earned lessons from past hardship as protective buffers for future adversity, thus making the most of difficult key turning points.

The third wave of resilience research emphasized prevention, intervention, and policy due in part to the urgency to care for at-risk children growing up amidst adverse conditions (Masten et al., 2006). Walsh (2003) developed a conceptual map to guide prevention and intervention in clinical settings for the purpose of strengthening family functioning within the context of adversity. This model grew out of dissatisfaction with deficit-based models main purpose being to identify dysfunction in family systems experiencing adversity. Walsh (2006) identified key processes used by resilient families, those functioning well during normal developmental transitions and/or rebounding after disruptive crisis or catastrophic event. These key processes are organized into three domains: family belief systems, organizational patterns, and communication/collaborative problem solving.

With increased interest in resilience, it is not surprising that much debate has ensued (Atkinson, Martin, & Rankin, 2009). Masten et al. (2006) warned against the danger of blaming the victim for poor outcomes and cautioned practitioners that there are no magic bullets to produce resilience. Rutter (1999) warned against the danger of viewing resilience as a millennium Rorschach where the viewer sees what they want to see. Richardson (2002) developed a metatheory of resilience in contrast to Rutter's (2013) insistence that resilience does not constitute a theory nor should it be equated to positive psychology since resilience involves negative experiences albeit with potential steeling effects.

Rutter (1987) cautioned against turning the concept of resilience into fixed individual attributes, and emphasized that as circumstances change, so too resilience alters. Doll and Lyons (1998) expressed concern that resilience smacks of faddism in need of sound scientific moorings.

These concerns are not only relevant but essential to note in the continued development of career resilience. The study of career resilience as a subdomain of psychosocial resilience is promising, especially if buoyed by the lessons learned from the three waves of psychosocial resilience research.

Promoting EA Career Resilience through Inquiry

Masten et al. (2004) described emerging adulthood as a normative window offering new avenues of research on resilience. Well-being during emerging adulthood has been found to be facilitated by strong social supports (Schulenberg, Bryant, & O'Malley, 2004). Murphy, Blustein, Bohlig, and Platt (2010) conducted a qualitative study to explore the sources of adaptability and resilience of emerging adults transitioning from college to their working life. They identified the general themes of social support, expectations, and optimism. Werner (2012) described potent second chances for at risk EA as experiences developing vocational skills from college or the military, and opportunities to take responsibility that then leads to increased self-esteem. A common theme found during EA is the degree of variability of individual trajectories that can drastically change for better or worse (Arnett, 2004; Schulenberg et al., 2004).

Murphy et al. (2010) pointed to the need for counselors to have the tools to help emerging adults along positive trajectories, especially during key turning points. The protective factors and processes already found to promote psychosocial resilience have great potential to be adapted to career resilience. In particular, Rutter's resilience promoters, the age appropriate competencies proposed by Masten, and the key processes in family systems advocated by Walsh could inform lines of inquiry for the counselor to take when working with distressed clients. For example, Rutter's resilience promoters, adapted below, can serve as effective prompts for the counselor working with EA in transition:

- When career-related adversity cannot be eliminated, how can it be minimized?
- How can negative chain reactions be reduced, especially when they can't be removed?
- How can self-esteem and self-efficacy be enhanced rather than diminished?
- What might counselors do to help clients open up new opportunities?
- How can the client normalize the stress of career-related adversities?

Referring to the resilience criteria developed by Masten et al. (1985) in *Project Competence*, the absence or presence of age-appropriate competencies of emerging adulthood can be identified through this possible line of inquiry:

- Is there planfulness to EA client behavior?
- Does the client express future motivation or dwell on past rumination?
- How is autonomy demonstrated during this difficulty?
- What adult support is in place; if not, who can serve as an engaged, supportive adult?
- What coping methods are used?

Walsh (2006) outlined key processes within a family resilience framework and encouraged interventions to bolster a positive family atmosphere found to buffer individuals during normative transitions and/or suffering from extreme adverse circumstances. Her model reminds practitioners to locate the individual client within a larger system and to activate these support systems and access resources. Proposed inquiry aligned with the family resilience/ecological model might consider:

- How does the family make meaning of EA career-related adversity?
- How can their outlook move towards a more positive hopefulness?
- Do they share a spirituality or faith tradition to draw upon?

Observing organizational patterns:

- How might it be beneficial to replace rigidity with flexibility?
- How do family members stay connected?
- How can social and economic resources be more fully utilized?

Evaluating communication processes:

- Is there clarity in giving and receiving messages; how can they be more straightforward?
- How might members express emotions openly?
- How do they manage conflict and solve problems?

Discussion

Early resilience researchers Masten and Garmezy laid out a triad of resiliency including personality features i.e., self-esteem, supportive family cohesion with an absence of discord, and external supportive systems. While Rutter identified individual resilience promoters, Walsh concentrated on key processes to promote family resilience using an ecological approach. Their findings adapt readily to expand our understanding of career resilience. Resilience promoters are especially useful guides for reducing negative chain reactions when they can't be removed, giving consideration to how self-esteem and self-efficacy might be increased, and opening up new opportunities during the demands of a grueling job search. Although individual competencies are needed to promote career resilience such as motivation, autonomy, and coping methods, so too are external support systems. Walsh reminds practitioners to locate the individual client within a larger ecological system and to activate these supports to access untapped resources.

Risk and resilience studies confirm emerging adulthood is a time with ample opportunity to convert setbacks into growth at key turning points. Murphy et al. (2010) underscored the importance of resilience research to provide tools for counselors and educators to create a

positive trajectory for EA during this pivotal transition. Grounding career resilience under the larger framework of psychosocial resilience could be mutually beneficial. With career, health, and educational resilience residing under psychosocial resilience, not only would the construct of career resilience be sharpened, but it could also answer critics concern that psychosocial resilience is too broad and unwieldy. The proposed line of inquiry not only leverages individual assets but also identifies and activates crucial systemic resources available to buffer EA career-related adversity.

Implications for Practitioners and Researchers

Building on lessons learned from psychosocial resilience, promoting protective components of resilience will involve strengthening both internal and external assets. Improving individual problem solving skills and increasing self-efficacy is as important as activating support systems. Future research is needed to clarify the dynamic processes of career resilience, study its function prior to and following adverse conditions, and focus on prevention and intervention leading to positive outcomes for at-risk emerging adults. More research is needed to address the intrapersonal stressors, interpersonal conflict, economic pressures, and career decision difficulties related to post-commencement stress. Interventions are yet needed to address specific career decision difficulties involving the individual, while considering family and social support systems. Future research is specifically needed to address career decision making difficulties due to conflict with parents.

With the variability of pathways and levels of success emerging adults experience in transition to the workplace, more questions remain. How can we activate strengths and resources that enable clients to surmount obstacles and struggle well during post-commencement transition? How do innate, self-righting qualities manifest in different personality types and what

counseling approach is best for each type? How does the family system of the individual deal with the financial difficulty and uncertainty of emerging adulthood? Building upon the recommendation by Burt et al. (2012) to delineate resilience by specific areas i.e., educational resilience, health resilience, further study is warranted to consider the implications of how career resilience would fit as a distinct subdomain of psychosocial resilience.

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CHAPTER 3

The Impact of a Conflict Resolution Skills Training on the Career Decision Self-Efficacy of
College Students: Addressing Career Decision Difficulty Due to Conflict with Parents

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Abstract

Selecting an academic major or deciding a career direction is often a perplexing and stressful ordeal for emerging adults striving to consolidate their occupational identity. College students experience career decision difficulty for a variety of reasons. Conflict with significant others has been identified as one of the difficulties during the career decision-making process. This manuscript examined the impact of a conflict resolution skills training intervention on the career decision self-efficacy of college students experiencing decision difficulties due to conflict with parents. The participants were college students with moderate to salient external conflict as measured on the *Career Decision-making Difficulties Questionnaire* with low to moderate confidence on the *Career Decision Self-Efficacy Scale*. A non-concurrent multiple baseline across subjects single subject research design examined the impact of a conflict resolution skills training on the career decision self-efficacy of college students. The A-B design enabled the investigator to measure the target behavior (career decision self-efficacy) across three phases—baseline, intervention, and post-intervention. The data collected showed steady increase in the career decision self-efficacy of three college students who engaged in five sessions of conflict resolution skills training. Two students reported *moderate confidence* during a stable baseline followed by similar upward trends during intervention that reached *high confidence* levels post-intervention. The other student reported *low confidence* during baseline that increased to *moderate confidence* during intervention that continued to improve during follow-up.

Key words; *career decision difficulty, career decision self-efficacy, career-related adversity, career resilience, conflict resolution skills training, emerging adulthood, occupational identity.*

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The Impact of a Conflict Resolution Skills Training on the Career Decision Self-Efficacy of College Students: Addressing Career Decision Difficulty Due to Conflict with Parents

Introduction

Conflict is inevitable in the parent-child relationship beginning with the toddler's first defiant "no!" continuing into adolescence with parents exasperated "no way!" to their teens' unrelenting "just this once!" Emerging adulthood is no exception. This newly defined psychosocial transition from adolescence to young adulthood often sets the stage for contention between parents and their college-age children struggling to make high-stakes career decisions (Arnett, 2000). Central to emerging adulthood are the developmental tasks of achieving an occupational identity, taking responsibility for ones' self, and making independent decisions (Arnett, 2007; Murphy, Blustein, Bohlig, & Platt, 2010). Research confirms the potency of social supports during emerging adulthood, especially when making career decisions (Garcia, Restubog, Toledano, Tolentino, & Rafferty, 2012; Hartnett, Furstenberg, Birditt, & Fingerman, 2013). College students ranking parent support as high reported a greater degree of career decision self-efficacy (Garcia et al., 2012; Whiston & Keller, 2004). Career decision self-efficacy (CDSE) is a well-researched construct predictive of a range of career exploratory and decision-making behaviors, and recommended for the evaluation of career development interventions (Betz, Hammond, & Multon, 2005; Betz & Voyten, 1997; Metheny & McWhirter, 2013).

The relational aspect of career decision-making has often been overlooked, however there is renewed interest in the influence of the family of origin on career decision-making (Blustein, 2001; Phillips, Christopher-Sisk, & Gravino, 2001; Schultheiss, Kress, Manzi, & Glasscock, 2001; Slaten & Baskin, 2014). In addition, Berrios-Allison's (2005) research on career decision

and occupational identity suggest college students struggling with career indecision may benefit from interventions responding to family dynamics present during the decision process.

Strengthening family dynamics and self-efficacy promotes resilience in EA experiencing stressful events (Rickwood, Roberts, Batten, Marshall, & Massie, 2004; Walsh, 2006). Although career interventions address readiness to make career decisions (Sampson Jr., McClain, Musch, & Reardon, 2013); target information deficits (Hinkle, 1992); focus on interests and values (Dobson, Gardner, Metz, & Gore, 2014); few if any career interventions address decision difficulties due to parental conflict.

The purpose of this study is to conduct a preliminary examination on the impact of a conflict resolution skills training on the career decision self-efficacy of college students experiencing career decision difficulties due to conflict with parents. This study used a non-concurrent multiple baseline across subjects single subject research design to investigate the question: What impact will a conflict resolution skills training intervention have on the career decision self-efficacy of college students experiencing decision-making difficulty due to parental conflict? Our hypothesis stated that a conflict resolution skills training would increase the career decision self-efficacy of college students.

Consolidating Occupational Identity

Erikson (1963) observed “In most instances, however, it is the inability to settle on an occupational identity which disturbs individual young people” (p. 262). Erikson (1968) explained identity formation as a developmental task spanning different life domains i.e., work, ideology, and love. Identity is described as a coherent self-definition achieved over time, formed through interactions between individual growth and societal expectations (Josselsons & Marcia, 2013; Vondracek, 1992). Koepke and Denissen (2012) found parents to be mediators of societal

expectations as their children's identity takes form. Occupational identity is found to precede the development of identity in other domains, underscoring the critical developmental task during EA being to explore and commit to a career path (Arnett, 2007; Skorikov & Vondracek, 1998).

As a means to operationalize Erikson's developmental task of achieving identity versus identity diffusion, Marcia (1966) developed four identity statuses. His identity status paradigm is based upon the two-dimensions of exploration and commitment located on two dichotomies (i.e., high, low) yielding the four identity statuses of diffused, achieved, foreclosed, and moratorium. Family tensions can arise when foreclosed college students move to moratorium identity status by exploring careers different from parental expectation (Berrios-Allison, 2005). Holland and Holland (1977) found a significant and positive correlation between identity and career choice.

Central to emerging adulthood are the developmental tasks of making independent decisions, becoming financially stable, and consolidating an occupational identity (Arnett, 2007; Gati, Krausz, & Osipow, 1996; Konstam & Lehmann 2011; Settersten & Ray, 2010). Individuals struggling with occupational or ideological issues during moratorium are described as having an identity crisis (Vondracek, 1992). Savickas (1985) found that once this identity crisis was resolved, clear career goals are achieved. Although moratorium is marked by high exploration, its associated low commitment can be distressing and anxiety provoking for many emerging adult college students and their parents (Arnett, 2007; Josselson & Marcia, 2013; Vianden & Ruder, 2012).

Career Decision Making Difficulty

Identifying the dynamics and difficulty inherent in the career decision making process is a recurrent theme beginning with Frank Parsons early trait and factor approach to career choice (Parsons, 1909). Super (1953) developed his theory of vocational development against the backdrop of Ginzberg's work describing occupational choice as the interplay of the individual

and reality. Super's (1957) person-environment model of vocational development centered on self-concept and key figures i.e., parents, teachers, and famous people (Super, 1957). Although Roe (1957) sought to establish a link between parental attitudes and their children's career choice, early vocational researchers tended to concentrate on the individual decision maker and factors of career indecision (Clausen, 1953; Crites, 1969; Holland et al., 1977; Salomone, 1982). Peterson, Sampson, and Reardon (1992) viewed career indecision as a problem to be solved using cognitive processes, whereas Krumboltz (1992) normalized career indecision defending the value of exploration and openness to unplanned events. Miller-Tiedeman (1992) stressed the inner reality of the individual when choosing a career direction.

Responding to concerns expressed by Tinsley (1992) regarding the lackluster state of research on career indecision, Gati et al. (1996) developed a taxonomy of career-decision difficulties. This taxonomy organized career decision making difficulties into three distinct categories: lack of readiness prior to the process, lack of information during the process, and inconsistent information during the process. The taxonomy organizes difficulties based on the stage in the decision process, the similarity between the sources of the difficulties, and the effects that the difficulties may have on the process, and the relevant type of intervention (Gati et al., 1996). Research confirms most college students will experience some sort of difficulty when making career decisions (Gordon, 1995; Morgan & Ness, 2003).

Difficulty Due to Conflict with Parents

External conflict with significant others has consistently been identified as one of the difficulties that can arise when making career decisions (Gati, 2014; Guerra & Braungart-Rieker, 1999; Osipow, 1999). In their meta-analysis of career decision difficulties, Hacker, Carr, Abrams, and Brown (2013) found interpersonal conflict related to career indecision. Within the

major category of inconsistent information during the decision process, Gati et al. (1996) identified external conflict as a gap between the decision maker's preferences and opinions voiced by others or a contradiction between the opinions of significant others (Gati et al., 1996).

Research confirms the significant role parents have in supporting their children upon entering college, persistence in completing a degree, and when exiting college (Vianden et al., 2012; Schultheiss & Blustein, 1994; Titley et al., 1985). It is no surprise that parents also play a key role in the identity formation and career decision making of college-age children (Guerra & Braungart-Rieker, 1999; Whiston et al., 2004). Research on college student decision making and family influence found the degree of intimidation predicted the number of problems encountered in the decision process (Larson & Wilson, 1998). The pressure of student loans repayment can constrain early career choice (Rothstein & Rouse, 2011) frustrating both recent graduates and their parents. Conflict with parents, depressive symptoms, and anxiety sensitivity were also found predictive of suicide rumination in college students (Lamis & Jahn 2013). College students rating parental support as high, reported increased levels of career decision self-efficacy (Garcia et al., 2012; Whiston & Keller, 2004).

Career Decision Self-efficacy

Bandura's (1977) concept of personal efficacy has had significant impact on career theory (Betz, 2000). Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief that s/he can approach and successfully complete a task or behavior. Betz and Hackett (1981) applied Bandura's construct of self-efficacy to the vocational behavior of college students. Career decision making self-efficacy has been predictive of career exploratory and decision-making behaviors and often used to evaluate the outcome of career counseling and career interventions (Scott & Ciani, 2008).

Komarraju, Swanson and Nadler (2013) found increased career decision self-efficacy to be predictive of college student motivation and satisfaction with coursework and major choice.

Career Counseling and Intervention Challenges

Gati et al. (2014) described career counseling as decision counseling. Research confirms that career counseling interventions can facilitate career-decision making when tailored to individual need (Fouad, Guillen, Harris-Hodge, Henry, Novakovic, Terry, & Kantamneni, 2006; Oliver & Spokane, 1988; Tinsley, Tinsley, & Rushing, 2002). However, there is a troublesome disconnect between career counseling practitioners and researchers, resulting in a chronic failure to conduct empirical investigations of specific career intervention processes (Buboltz, Gibson, Loveland, & Schwartz, 2006). This is due in part to the lack of large numbers of clients and cumbersome research methods inappropriate for counselors in a clinical setting (Sampson, Hou, Kronholz, Dozier, McClain, Buzzetta, & Kennelly, 2014). Whiston, Brecheisen, and Stephens (2003) found interventions that did not involve career counseling were less effective.

Two themes emerge from meta-analysis of career interventions: first interventions for career decision-making difficulties are effective; and second, these effects are best when accompanied by individual counseling (Brown & Ryan Krane, 2000; Whiston, Brecheisen, & Stephens, 2003). Career interventions can be improved by targeting client's particular difficulty using empirically supported diagnostics (Savickas, 1989). Now with a clear taxonomy to identify career decision difficulties such as the CDDQ, interventions can address specific difficulties (Gati & Amir, 2010; Spokane & Nguyen, 2016; Whiston, 2002). Counselors are encouraged to work from a relational and contextual perspective to foster clients' self-views to use social support to facilitate career decision making (Li, Hazler, & Trusty, 2017).

Conflict Resolution Skills Training

Interpersonal conflict conceptualized as a constructive process to be learned is grounded in social psychology (Deutsch, 2006). Building on Lewin's life-space and field theory, Deutsch developed a conflict theory based upon cooperation and competition, advancing the innovative concept that disputing parties can work toward a "win-win" solution with effort and intention. In developing an instrument to identify and measure conflict styles, Kilmann and Thomas (1978) organized conflict modes on the two dimensions of assertiveness and cooperativeness. They suggested that individuals tend to prefer a conflict mode, assert the value of each conflict mode, and promote the intentional use of different conflict modes. The Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI) is the most commonly utilized instrument to measure conflict styles of college students (Schaubhut, 2007; Zigarovich & Myers, 2011). How conflict is managed has key effects on decision making (Thomas, 2015).

Counselors in educational settings are encouraged to teach conflict resolution skills to students (Brinson et al., 2004; Hodges, 2008; McFarland, 1992; Van Slyck, Stern, & Zak-Place, 1996). Career counseling practitioners are well-positioned to deliver brief conflict resolution interventions to help college students address their career decision difficulties such as those due to interpersonal conflict with parents (Berrios-Allison, 2005; Gati et al., 2014). Conflict resolution skills are not only needed to engage in high-stakes career conversations with parents while in college, they are the same interpersonal skills needed to address future conflict inherent in graduate school and inevitable contentions in the workplace (Brockman, Nunez, & Basu, 2010; Katz, Lawyer, & Sweedler, 2011). Managing conflict well serves as a protective buffer for career-related adversity with workplace conflict identified as a primary cause for dismissal or termination (Katz & Flynn, 2013).

Interventions Promoting Career Resilience

Promoting career resilience is a critical component of counseling that involves strengthening key supports (Bimrose & Hearne, 2012). Rickwood et al. (2004) stressed an important aspect of career resilience was building relationships to explore work possibilities and to make better career decisions. Walsh (2006) developed key processes to promote resilient families by improving interpersonal processes in communication and collaborative problem solving. Collard, Epperheimer, & Saign, (1996) identified characteristics promoting career resilience as self-efficacy and positive relationships. Interventions most likely to promote resilience are those that improve self-efficacy and fortify social supports (Rutter, 2013; Walsh, 2006). Dressler (2017) outlined a line of inquiry to promote career resilience built upon the protective processes identified by psychosocial researchers Masten, Rutter, and Walsh. This subset of questions selected from the proposed line of inquiry target self-efficacy and family support:

- How can self-esteem and self-efficacy be enhanced rather than diminished?
- What adult support is in place and how can it be strengthened?
- How does the family make meaning of EA career-related adversity?
- How do family members stay connected, how do they communicate?
 - Is there clarity in giving and receiving messages?
 - How do they manage conflict and solve problems?

Conflict resolution skills strengthen social supports and improve interpersonal communication through role playing difficult conversations and problem solving activities (Katz et al., 2011). Brief conflict resolution training sessions have been found to decrease stress, increase problem solving skills, lower aggressive behaviors, improve communication skills, and strengthen interpersonal relationships (Ando, 2011, Brinson, Kottler, Fisher, 2004; Brockman, et al., 2010; Haraway & Haraway III, 2005).

Research Questions/Hypothesis

This study sets out to answer the question: What impact will a conflict resolution skills training have on the career decision self-efficacy of college students experiencing career decision difficulty due to conflict with parents? Our hypothesis stated that a conflict resolution skills training would increase the career decision self-efficacy of college students experiencing career decision-making difficulties due to interpersonal conflict with parents.

Methods

Research Design

The present study utilized a non-concurrent multiple baseline across subjects single subject research design. We examined the treatment effect of a five-session conflict resolution skills training (CRST) intervention for three college students experiencing career decision difficulty due to conflict with parents. Single-case research designs (SCRD) are used by counseling practitioners as an effective method to identify practices that are clinically relevant and of value when large numbers of participants are not feasible (Lundervold & Belwood, 2000). SCRD are well-suited to the college career counseling setting and have previously been used to study the use of computer-assisted career counseling with college students (Hinkle, 1992).

Watson and Workman (1988) advocated for the use of non-concurrent designs in applied settings over traditional concurrent designs given clients with target behaviors are unlikely to be referred at the same time. We chose a non-concurrent design since it is unlikely that students with career decision difficulties due to parental conflict would seek career counseling at the same time. A multiple baseline design is appropriate when it is impossible for the intervention to be withdrawn such as our CRST intervention promoting skill development. Harvey, May, and Kennedy (2004) explained that a multiple baseline design lends itself to use within educational

research as many instructive practices cannot be withdrawn. Participants were randomly assigned to varying baselines by the researcher utilizing www.random.org. The participants were assigned the following baselines: Participant A with a 3-day baseline, Participant B with a 5-day baseline, and Participant C with an 8-day baseline.

The unique characteristics of SCRD are a specific coding system for distinct phases, continuous assessment of a target behavior over time, and stability of performance within phases (Balkin, 2015; Ray, 2015). The independent variable for this study was a conflict resolution skills training (CRST) intervention and the dependent variable was career decision self-efficacy as measured by the Career Decision Self-Efficacy (CDSE) scale specifically the problem-solving index. The A-B design with follow-up allowed the investigators to take repeated measures of the target behavior (CDSE) during the five-session intervention phase (CRST) evaluated against multiple baselines established prior to intervention (Gast & Ledford, 2010). Three measures of the CDSE were taken post-intervention at 12 to 24 hour intervals. The utility of SCRD is its function to graphically depict change following treatment (Barlow, Nock, & Hersen, 2009).

Participants

The participants in this study were three college students enrolled in a small liberal arts university who were referred or self-referred for career counseling to address career decision-making difficulties and/or experiencing conflict with their parents. Participant selection criteria included (a) scoring >4 moderate difficulty on the Career Decision Difficulty Questionnaire subscale of external conflict with significant others, confirming significant other as their parents, and (b) scoring <3.5 on the Career Decision Self Efficacy problem solving scale. The three participants who qualified for this study were two female and one male. Pseudonyms were used to report the data to protect the identity of the participants.

Participant A. Abby was an 18-year-old who self-identified as a female Asian-American in her freshmen year of college. She reported a major in Biology and currently pursuing a career in Optometry. She self-referred for career counseling expressing frustration with parental conflict on choosing a career. Abby scored 5 on external conflict indicating *salient difficulty* as measured by the CDDQ. She identified her mother as being the significant other she often had conflict with about career choice. She scored 3 *moderate confidence where the individual may be comfortable exploring or may need some help* on the problem-solving scale of the CDSE.

Participant B. Beth was an 18-year-old who self-identified as a Caucasian female in her freshmen year of college. She reported being undecided about her major and career. She self-referred for career counseling seeking help making career decisions. Beth scored 4.5 on the CDDQ indicating *moderate difficulty* due to external conflict with significant others. She confirmed that the significant others were her parents, and that she was having conflict in particular with her father over career direction. She scored 3.2 indicating *moderate confidence where the individual may be comfortable exploring or may need some help* on the problem-solving scale of the CDSE.

Participant C. Cody was a 21-year-old who self-identified as a Caucasian male in his junior year of college. He reported having a Media Arts major with a film concentration and had not decided a career yet. Cody was referred by a Resident Assistant after expressing difficulty with career decisions related to conflict with parents. He scored 7.5 indicating salient difficulty on external conflict with significant others as measured by the CDDQ. He confirmed that the significant others were his parents and that he specifically had conflict with his father about choice of major. His score of 2.4 indicated *low to little confidence and needs intervention* on the CDSE.

Measures

Measure 1: Career Decision-making Difficulty Questionnaire (CDDQ)

The CDDQ was used as a screening measure to identify students experiencing career decision difficulties due to parental conflict. The *Abridged Professional Manual for the Career Decision-Making Difficulty Questionnaire* was obtained from Dr. Gati with permission to use for research purposes. Gati, Krausz, and Osipow developed this instrument in 1996 to identify the focus of an individual's career decision difficulty. The CDDQ has been validated by numerous exploratory and confirmatory analyses and is recommended for college student use (Amir, Gati, & Kleiman, 2008; Vahedi, Farrokhi, Mahdavi, & Moradi, 2012). External conflict with significant others is located within the specific category of difficulty due to inconsistent information during the process. Scores in a difficulty category below 3.33 is *negligible*, and scores between 3.33 and 6.34 are *moderate*, with scores of 6.34 or above considered *salient*.

Measure 2: Career Decision Self-Efficacy Scale (CDSE)

The CDSE scale was used in this study for screening participants and served as the repeated measure of career decision self-efficacy across baseline, intervention, and follow-up phases. *CDSE Scale Manual and Sampler Set* were obtained from Mind Garden, Inc. with permission granted to use the instrument for research purposes. The CDSE scale is recommended for individual assessment and evaluating career development interventions (Betz & Taylor, 2012). High scores on the CDSE scale are predictive of approach behavior with low scores predictive of avoidance behaviors. The CDSE measures an individual's degree of belief that they can successfully complete tasks necessary to making career decisions. The CDSE is comprised

of five scales including behaviors pertinent to accurate self-appraisal, gathering occupational information, goal selection, making future plans, and problem solving.

In this study, the researcher used the problem-solving scale on the long form with ten questions prefaced with “How much confidence do you have that you could...” For example, question 25 on the CDSE problem solving scale measures the degree of belief that the individual could “Resist attempts of parents or friends to push you into a career or major you believe is beyond your abilities.” Average scores for all scales are between 1 and 5. Scores ranging 1.0 to 2.5 indicate *low to little confidence and needs intervention*. Scores from 2.5 to 3.5 indicate *moderate confidence where the individual may be comfortable exploring or may need some help*. The 3.5 to 5.0 range shows *good confidence with the skill set*.

Treatment Protocol

Students completed both the CDDQ and the CDSE to determine eligibility. Those who met the criteria were asked to complete the CDSE according to their randomly assigned baseline and scheduled their individual CRST sessions. Each participant attended five individual sessions with the counselor—five sessions being identified as optimal for career counseling (Brown & Krane, 2000). Students were introduced to and practiced interpersonal communication and conflict resolution skills according to CRST stages.

Stage one of the CRST was conflict awareness which introduced at an interpersonal communication model and different conflict styles as measured by the Thomas Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI). Stage two was conflict diagnosis focused on determining whether the nature of the conflict was about resources or values. Stage three was conflict reduction by identifying interests beneath entrenched positions, and stage four was introducing and practicing a 7-step collaborative problem solving process. One stage was introduced per session with the fifth

session being a cumulative role play incorporating skills learned in the four previous sessions. During post-intervention, three follow-up measures of CDSE were taken at 12 to 24 hour intervals.

Each CRST session lasted approximately 60 minutes and included four components. The first component of the session was didactic where the counselor explained and demonstrated the specific target skills associated with the stage. This was followed by an experiential component where the student practiced the target skill in a role play of their choice with counselor feedback. During the assessment component, the student completed the CDSE. The fourth component was a homework assignment to complete and bring to the next session.

Treatment Fidelity

The student investigator completed a 2012 training to earn a certificate in *Conflict Resolution and Interpersonal Communication* at the Summer Institute for Creative Collaboration taught by Dr. Neil Katz, faculty in the *Program for the Advancement of Research on Conflict and Collaboration* at Syracuse University in New York. She completed over 100 hours as a volunteer mediator at a community dispute resolution center. For five years, she has taught a two-credit conflict resolution course for undergraduate students using interpersonal and conflict resolution skills from the Katz text. Dr. Katz approved the CRST model adapted for this study as outlined in an email correspondence with the student investigator dated November 25, 2015.

Data Analysis

The researcher conducted a visual analysis of all participant CDSE scores across three phases including baseline, intervention, and follow-up. The percent of data exceeding the median was calculated (Gast & Ledford, 2010). Visual analysis determined level, trend, and variability of CDSE scores. The percent of data exceeding the median (PEM) was utilized as an overlap

method to determine treatment effect size of the CRST. PEM measured the degree of non-overlap between the baseline and intervention phase (Ma, 2016).

Results

All three participants completed their assigned baseline measures, actively engaged in five sessions of conflict resolution skills training, and finished post-intervention activities. Career decision self-efficacy for all participants improved at similar rates and with varying effect sizes. A visual analysis evaluated the level, trend, and variability of each participant. The percent of data exceeding the median (PEM) was calculated. Figure 1 graphically depicts the CDSE scores across three phases demonstrating increased career decision self-efficacy of three college students who participated in a five-week conflict resolution skills training.

Participant A. As graphically depicted in figure 1 Abby's median of 3.0 indicated *moderate confidence* on the CDSE problem solving scale. Her scores demonstrated a positive trend with a slope of .24 during the intervention phase with 90% of the variability of CDSE explained by the CRST ($R^2 = .90$). Her lowest level during intervention was 3.2 and highest level was 4.2 (range of 1.0) with a mean score of 3.7 (SD .39). Abby continued to report *good confidence* with a mean score of 4.2 post-intervention. The percent of data exceeding the median (PEM) was 1.0 with all five CDSE scores above baseline during treatment with 1.0 considered a large effect size.

Participant B. Beth's CDSE median baseline score was 2.8 on the CDSE problem solving scale shown in figure 1. Although there was not an immediate change in CRST scores at the start of treatment, there was a positive trend with a slope of .20 during the intervention phase and 89% of the variability ($R^2 = .89$) of CDSE explained by the CRST intervention. Her lowest level during intervention was 2.7 and highest level was 3.5 (range of .80) with a mean score of

3.1 (SD .33). The percent of data exceeding the median was .60 with three of the five scores taken during the CRST intervention above the baseline. A score of .60 suggests a small effect size.

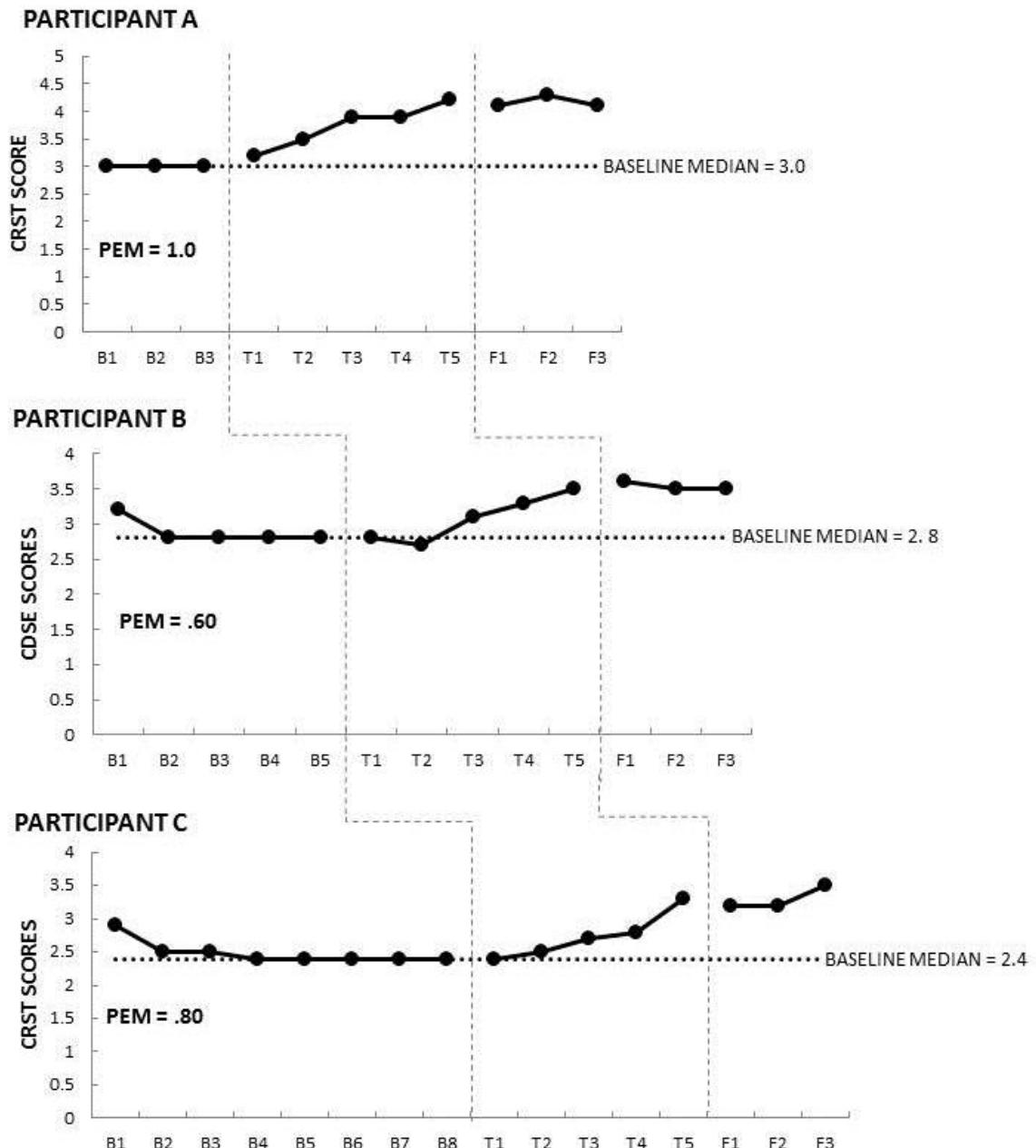


Figure 1. CDSE Scores across Three Phases

B = Baseline, T = Treatment, F = Follow-up, PEM = Percentage of Data Exceeding the Median

Participant C. Cody's CDSE median score during baseline was 2.4 on the CDSE problem solving scale demonstrated in figure 1. Although there was not an immediate change in his CRST scores at the start of treatment, there was a positive trend with a slope of .21 during the intervention phase with 90% of the variability ($R^2 = .90$) of CDSE explained by the CRST intervention. His lowest level during intervention was 2.4 and highest level was 3.3 (range of .90) with a mean score of 2.7 (SD .35). During intervention, four of the five CRST scores were above the median baseline resulting in a PEM score of .80 considered moderate effect size.

Discussion

Following the CRST intervention, the career decision self-efficacy for each of the three participants did increase with similar trends on the CDSE problem solving scale, however their effect sizes differed. Abby and Beth both reported *moderate confidence* levels during baseline followed by similar upward trends (A slope = .24, B slope = .20) during intervention that reached *high confidence* levels post-intervention. Cody reported *low confidence* during baseline increasing to levels indicative of *moderate confidence* during intervention that continued to improve during follow-up. Upon entering the intervention phase, Cody's first CRST score dipped below his baseline median then began an upward trend (C slope = .21) with a mean score of 3.3 *moderate confidence* during follow-up with his final score 3.5 indicative of *high confidence*.

During the intervention phase, the first two CDSE scores for both Beth and Cody stayed close to their baseline median, but by the third session both of their scores exceeded their baseline median and continued a positive trend. This suggests a cumulative effect of CRST with a more gradual increase in confidence compared to Abby's immediate effect upon starting treatment. During follow-up, all three participants demonstrated *good confidence* within the

range of 3.5 to 5.0. Beth and Cody both reported their last score as 3.5 with Abby's final score 4.1 on the CDSE scale. Although participant's CDSE trends were similar (slope = 20, 21, 24) their effect sizes differed. Abby had the highest effect size (PEM = 1.0) with all five CRST scores above the baseline median. Cody had a moderate effect size (PEM = .80) with four out of five scores above the baseline median. Beth had a small effect size (PEM = .60) with three out of five scores above the baseline median.

Post-intervention, participants were asked to comment on what they found useful during CRST. Abby found it helpful to consider location when having a serious conversation, practice listening to the other side of the story, and make sure both parties are on the same page so things don't spiral up. Beth found the assertion activity most helpful and indicated the importance of trying to identify interests behind entrenched positions. Beth said that with her dad, the conflict immediately boils over, so slowing the process down was good to practice. She concluded that she wouldn't use much of her school work outside of class, but indicated that she would "*use the skills learned from the conflict resolution training for the rest of my life.*" Cody found the role play beneficial when he practiced asserting his viewpoint to his dad.

Limitations

The study was limited in that parents were not included in the training nor were measures taken to assess the parents' perspective or the level of change in conflict. Betz, et al, 2012 pointed out that increased CDSE scores are indicative of increased likelihood students will engage in approach behavior rather than avoidance behavior. We did not develop a means to determine whether the students in our study will be more likely to approach difficult conversations rather than avoid conflict with their parents. Although role play with the counselor attempted to simulate difficult conversations with a parent, it is not possible to reproduce the

tension unique to parent-child dyads. The immediacy of the effect was delayed for two of our participants indicative of intervention effects that are cumulative—with CRST skills being cumulative. This study was also limited due to the lack of inter-rater control during the intervention.

Implications for Researchers and Practitioners

Counselors and researchers interested in working with college students need specific interventions to target career decision making difficulties as they present in session. Since the CDDQ is found to be a reliable, valid, and free online assessment it is useful to identify specific career decision difficulties in college students. When career decision making difficulties are not accurately identified, there is danger of treating the wrong symptom. For example, if a student presents decision difficulties due to external conflict with parents and the counselor generates occupational information, the intervention will most likely be ineffective. The purpose of the conflict resolution skills training was to target career decision difficulties due to conflict with parents and to promote career resilience by improving student self-efficacy with improved communication skills to strengthen key social bonds.

Further research is needed to examine the effectiveness of CRST on the parent-child relationship before, during and after conflict. Further study is also needed to determine if CRST be effective when administered to small group or class settings. It would be of interest to identify specific conflict resolution skills, if any, that may have carried over to manage conflict in the workplace. Since CRST has potential to address one of the ten difficulties identified in the taxonomy of career decision making difficulties (Gati et al., 2010) it would be most beneficial to continue to develop this and other evidence based interventions to address specific career-decision difficulties.

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CHAPTER 4

General Conclusion

With occupational identity often preceding the development of identity in other domains, it is a critical developmental task for emerging adults to explore, decide, and commit to a career path (Arnett, 2007; Skorikov & Vondracek, 1998). However, as our review of the literature demonstrated, emerging adulthood is a time fraught with career-related adversity—difficult career decisions made against a backdrop of financial pressures, often erupting in conflict with parents (Guay, Ratelle, Senécal, Larose, & Deschênes, 2006; Spreen, 2013; Robb, Moody, & Abdel-Ghany, 2011). We found the impact of career-related adversities to be sobering: career decision-making confusion being predictive of depressive symptoms in college students (Walker & Peterson, 2012); negative health effects of unemployment and underemployment included both psychological and physical problems during emerging adulthood (Cassidy & Wright, 2008); higher levels of anxiety associated with accumulated credit card debt in college students (Hogan, Bryant & Overmyer-Day, 2013; Nelson, Lust, Story, & Ehlinger, 2008); with student loan repayment often delaying home ownership with increased numbers of graduates living with parents for extended periods (American Student Assistance, 2013).

Luskin (2012) described this cluster of maladies as post-commencement stress-disorder and encouraged future research to identify risk factors and locate best practices to help recent graduates address the impact of these acute post-graduate stressors. To this end our proposed line of inquiry and conflict resolution skills training intended to help counselors promote career resilience in emerging adults experiencing career-related adversity, specifically career decision difficulty. By adapting the protective processes already found to promote psychosocial resilience, our line of inquiry and our CRST intervention focused on improving interpersonal communication skills, strengthening key support systems, and increasing self-efficacy.

We found career resilience to be a promising but limited construct as it currently stands. We argued for grounding career resilience within the larger domain of psychosocial resilience with potential to answer critics who decry resilience as being too large and unwieldy. By locating career resilience as a subdomain along with educational and health resilience under an overarching framework of psychosocial resilience, we suggested that shared research has great potential to yield mutually beneficial gains across domains.

This study investigated the impact of a conflict resolution skills training intervention on the career decision self-efficacy of three college students experiencing career decision difficulties due to conflict with parents. A non-concurrent multiple baseline across subjects single subject research design examined the impact of a conflict resolution skills intervention on college student career decision self-efficacy. The A-B design with follow-up enabled the investigators to measure career decision self-efficacy during and after a conflict resolution skills training evaluated against a baseline. The data collected showed steady increase in the career decision self-efficacy of three college students actively engaged in five sessions of conflict resolution skills training.

In summary, the conflict resolution skills training not only increased student self-efficacy, it specifically increased their problem solving self-efficacy as measured by the CDSE scale. This is of importance since career decision self-efficacy is predictive of numerous career exploratory behaviors and is also related to vocational identity. The results of our intervention align well with other studies that find brief conflict resolution skills training to be effective (Haraway & Haraway, 2005). Although our training specifically targeted career decision self-efficacy, we also know that conflict resolution training often lead to decreased stress, increased problem solving skills, lower aggressive behaviors, improved communication skills, and stronger

social bonds (Brinson, Kottler, & Fisher, 2004). Early resilience researchers identified these qualities as the triad of resilience: personality features of self-efficacy, supportive family cohesion, and external supportive systems. The intrapersonal assets and interpersonal competencies identified by psychosocial resilience researchers are vital to rebounding from adverse conditions. As such, these are also integral to the understanding and promotion of career resilience.

Across their lifespan, emerging adults will continue to make difficult career decisions, manage conflict in the workplace, and cycle through multiple job transitions. These career-related adversities call for rebounding mechanisms to serve as buffers for present and future difficulties inherent in the workplace, academia, and family life. Overcoming obstacles and making informed decisions to advance career and life goal attainment are integral to client well-being as articulated by the collective missions of the counseling profession. Counselors working with college students are uniquely positioned to fulfill this mission by promoting career resilience with its protective processes to buffer career-related adversities and career decision difficulties inherent in emerging adulthood.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Recruitment Email Sample

Dear (*Pacific Staff or Career Advisor*):

Can you please review and forward the email below as an invitation to Pacific University students to participate in my Oregon State University research project. Please send this to groups of students or to specific individuals you are aware of who may be having difficulty choosing a major or career due to conflict with parents. Thank you for your time and consideration!

Regards, June Dressler

Hello Pacific Student—

If you are experiencing difficulty choosing or changing a major or struggling to select a career due to conflict with parents, please consider participating in my study this spring. I am conducting a brief conflict resolution skills training as part of a research project for my Ph.D. Counseling program at Oregon State University.

Currently I am seeking Pacific University students to participate in my research project. The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of a conflict resolution skills training on student confidence in making major/career decisions. Participation in this study involves:

- Attending five training sessions to learn/develop conflict resolution skills
- \$100 gift card given to students upon completing the five sessions
- Committing to approximately 10-15 hours of activities

If you are interested in learning more about participating in this study, please contact me at 503-992-7742 or email me at dresslej@oregonstate.edu.

Thank you for your consideration,

June Dressler
OSU Student Researcher

Study Title: The Impact of a Conflict Resolution Skills Training on the Career Decision Self-Efficacy of College Students: Addressing Career Decision Difficulty Due to Conflict with Parents.

This research project is approved by Oregon State University's IRB with the knowledge and support of Pacific University's IRB office. I am supervised by Dr. Gene Eakin, OSU Counseling Faculty and Principle Investigator of this research project.

APPENDIX B

Consent Form Copy

OSU IRB Study # 7383 Expiration Date: 04/27/2021 Counseling Academic Unit

Project Title: *The Impact of a Conflict Resolution Skills Training on the Career Decision Self-Efficacy of College Students: Addressing Career Decision Difficulty Due to Conflict with Parents*

Principal Investigator: Gene Eakin, Ph.D.

Student Researcher: June Dressler

Version Date: March 21, 2016

1. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS FORM?

This form contains information you will need to help you decide whether to be in this research study or not. Please read the form carefully and ask the study team member(s) questions about anything that is not clear.

2. WHY IS THIS RESEARCH STUDY BEING DONE?

The purpose of this research study is to see how a conflict resolution skills training might help college students experiencing career decision difficulties due to conflict with parents. This study is being conducted by a doctoral counseling student and is an integral part of completing her dissertation. June Dressler is employed by the Pacific University Career Development Center.

3. WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY?

You are being asked to take part in this study because you are a college student who may be experiencing career decision difficulty due to conflict with your parents.

4. WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF I TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH STUDY?

The activities include taking the Career Decision Making Difficulty Questionnaire (CDDQ) two times, completing a Career Decision Self-Efficacy (CDSE) inventory 10- 15 times. You will participate in a training to learn Conflict Resolution Skills. This training includes the completion of Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode instrument (TKI) and meeting with a counselor for five sessions, each session lasts one hour. During these sessions you will learn different approaches to address conflict constructively. There is some reading to be done outside the sessions.

Storage and Future use of data or samples: The results of the CDDQ and CDSE will be stored in a locked cabinet. Because it is not possible for us to know what studies may be a part of our future work, we ask that you give permission now for us to use your personal information without being contacted about each future study. Future use of your information will be limited to studies about career indecision due to conflict with parents. When data will remain coded or identifiable: If you agree now to future use of your personal information, but decide in the future that you would like to have your personal information removed from the research database, please contact Dr. Gene Eakin, Principal Investigator, Gene.Eakin@oregonstate.edu We will be destroying all identifying information at the end of the study. Once the identifying information is destroyed, we will not be able to remove your information from the larger dataset.

You may store my information for use in future studies. Initials

You may not store my information for use in future studies. Initials

Future contact: We may contact you in the future for another similar study. You may ask us to stop contacting you at any time. Study Results: Upon your request, the results of this study will be shared with you at an aggregate level.

APPENDIX B (Continued)

5. WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THIS STUDY?

We do not know if you will benefit from the study, however, you may find improved conflict resolution skills increase your confidence making career decisions. Participants who complete the five sessions will get to keep the textbook given to you as part of this study.

6. WILL I BE PAID FOR BEING IN THIS STUDY?

You will be given a \$100 gift card when you complete the five sessions. Participants who leave the study early will be given a gift card on their last session prorated at \$20 per session.

7. WHO WILL SEE THE INFORMATION I GIVE?

The information you provide during this research study will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law. Research records will be stored securely and only researchers will have access to the records. Federal regulatory agencies and the Oregon State University Institutional Review Board (a committee that reviews and approves research studies) may inspect and copy records pertaining to this research. Some of these records could contain information that personally identifies you. If the results of this project are published, your identity will not be made public.

8. WHAT OTHER CHOICES DO I HAVE IF I DO NOT TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY?

Participation in this study is voluntary. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without penalty. If you choose to withdraw from this project before it ends, the researchers may keep information collected about you and this information may be included in study reports.

The CDDQ, CDSE, and TKI inventories require that all questions must be answered. Please note that while your participation in this study is voluntary, all questions must be answered in order for their individual responses to be included in the study results. Your decision to take part or not take part will not impact your ability to access the career development center nor your relationship with the student researcher.

9. WHO DO I CONTACT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions about this research project, please contact: Dr. Gene Eakin, Principal Investigator, Gene.Eakin@oregonstate.edu If you have questions about your rights or welfare as a participant, please contact the Oregon State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) Office, at (541) 737-8008 or by email at IRB@oregonstate.edu

10. WHAT DOES MY SIGNATURE ON THIS CONSENT FORM MEAN?

Your signature indicates that this study has been explained to you, that your questions have been answered, and that you agree to take part in this study. You will receive a copy of this form.

Do not sign after the expiration date: 4/27/2021

Participant's Name (printed): (Signature of Participant) (Date)

(Signature of Person Obtaining Consent) _____ (Date) _____

APPENDIX C

Career Decision Self-Efficacy Scale: Problem Solving Items

No Confidence at All	Very Little Confidence	Moderate Confidence	Much Confidence	Complete Confidence
1	2	3	4	5
How Much Confidence Do You Have That You Could:				
1. Determine the steps to take if you are having academic trouble with an aspect of your chosen major.				
○ ○ ○ ○ ○				
2. Persistently work at your major or career goal even when frustrated.				
○ ○ ○ ○ ○				
3. Change majors if you did not like your first choice.				
○ ○ ○ ○ ○				
4. Change occupations if you are not satisfied with the one you enter.				
○ ○ ○ ○ ○				
5. Resist attempts of parents or friends to push you into a career or major you believe is beyond your abilities.				
○ ○ ○ ○ ○				
6. Move to another city to get the kind of job you really would like.				
○ ○ ○ ○ ○				
7. Apply again to graduate school after being rejected the first time.				
○ ○ ○ ○ ○				
8. Identify some reasonable major or career alternatives if you are unable to get your first choice.				
○ ○ ○ ○ ○				
9. Go back to school to get a graduate degree after being out of school 5-10 years.				
○ ○ ○ ○ ○				
10. Come up with a strategy to deal with flunking out of college.				
○ ○ ○ ○ ○				

