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DE CARRIÈRE**

By/Par **CERIC + MUN**

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Editor Dr. Robert Shea

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Dr. Robert Shea, Founding Editor

I am pleased to present Volume 19, Issue 1 of the Canadian Journal of Career Development. This issue contains six articles that are national and international in scope. From career adaptability to narrative approach, career motivation to experiential learning opportunities, these articles all reflect how important it is to focus on career development. We invite you to read about these new research findings.

This year brings many new changes for our Journal. We are working on a new modern, interactive, and easy-to-use website. Anticipated new features include: streamlined submission and reviewer software, mobile and tablet friendly layout, html and pdf readability, search features, and more. This new website is anticipated to be launched in early 2020.

In order to make it easier for both authors and readers, last year our Journal discontinued using author contracts and moved to a Creative Commons licence. This change will be retroactive for all articles published with us. You can find more information on this licence agreement at cjdonline.ca/copyright-information. Moving to this licence will make it easier for our authors and readers to understand what they can and cannot do with published articles, what copyright they retain, and how material can be shared.

In addition, this year our Journal will be sending out a Call for Submissions in late January for a special themed issue. This special issue will focus on the career and career development needs of Indigenous Canadians. Indigenous Canadians have specific needs and face different barriers when it comes to their careers and career development, and there is not enough research being published on this. Our Journal wants to help correct this and provide a platform for this research. Guidelines are currently being defined, so keep an eye on our social media accounts for this call. If you are interested and want to receive a direct notification when the call goes out, please contact Associate Editor Diana Boyd.

In closing, we continue to strive to bring you the latest research related to career and career development. We would like to thank our reviewers who spend many hours providing valuable and detailed peer-review comments. We also thank our authors who decided to let us be the publisher of their research. And lastly, we thank our many readers for continuing to follow us and use the information provided to better yourself, your colleagues, or your clients.

Cheers,

Rob Shea

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Shea', written in a cursive style.

Editor-in-Chief



CERIC

Advancing
Career
Development
in Canada

Promouvoir
le développement
de carrière
au Canada

CERIC is a charitable organization that advances education and research in career counselling and career development.

Le CERIC est un organisme caritatif voué à la progression de l'éducation et de la recherche en matière d'orientation professionnelle et de développement de carrière.

CANNEXUS

Cannexus is Canada's bilingual National Career Development Conference promoting the exchange of information and innovative approaches for career counselling and career and workforce development.
Ottawa, January 25-27, 2021.

Cannexus est un congrès national bilingue favorisant l'échange d'informations et d'initiatives novatrices en orientation professionnelle, en développement de carrière et en perfectionnement de la main-d'oeuvre.
Ottawa, du 25 au 27 janvier 2021.

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Careering is a magazine by and for career development professionals in Canada, with analysis of and reflection on the latest theories, practices and resources.

Careering est un magazine conçu par et pour les professionnels du développement de carrière du Canada et propose des analyses et des réflexions sur les dernières théories, pratiques et ressources.

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CJCD is a peer-reviewed publication of multi-sectoral career-related academic research and best practices from Canada and around the world.

La *RCDC* est une publication évaluée par les pairs et portant sur la recherche universitaire multisectorielle liée à la carrière ainsi que sur les pratiques exemplaires au Canada et partout dans le monde.

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Impact of Proactive Personality on Career Adaptability and Intentions for Expatriation

Irfan Hameed. Iqra University
 Sanam Brohi. Institute of Business Management
 Atif Shahab. Institute of Business Management

Abstract

Decision-making about career direction is an important part of an individual's life, which requires careful consideration and adaptability in order to meet specific career expectations and needs. Therefore, it is imperative to look for factors that can influence career adaptability. Guided by career construction theory, this research study explored the impact of a proactive personality on career adaptability. The mediating effect of resilience between proactive personality and career adaptability, the mediating effect of cultural intelligence between intentions on expatriate career and career adaptability, and the moderating role of gender between intentions for an expatriate career and career adaptability were examined. Findings revealed useful insights for understanding the relationships between career adaptability and intentions for pursuing an expatriate career.

Careers are becoming global, boundaryless, non-linear and diverse (Jiang, 2016). It has been contended that fruitful career advancement requires individuals to undertake self-improvement in work and work-related settings (Zacher, 2015). Adaptability is demonstrated when an individual consciously maintains an integration with the environment and builds behaviours, attitudes and capabilities to fit into different careers (Ferreira, 2012). Whereas career adaptability has been defined as "a psychosocial state that signifies an

individual's readiness and skills for adapting necessary career related assignments, transitions (moving from school to higher education or doing an apprenticeship), traumas (e.g. losing a job) in their work-related roles" (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). The term career adaptability was first introduced by Super and Knasel (1981) and was used by Savickas (1997) in his career construction theory. According to Savickas (2013), people develop their own career by understanding their life patterns and their occupational personality. Additionally, adaptability reflects an individual's propensity to accept the changes that occur in their surroundings and that streamlines an active process of adaptation (Savickas, 2013; Tolentino, Garcia, Lu, Restubog, Bordia & Plewa, 2014). Career adaptability has various important aspects for career and job-related outcomes such as work engagement (Rossier, Zecca, Stauffer, Maggiori, & Daulwalder, 2012) lower turnovers, and job and career satisfaction (Chan & Mai, 2015). There has been an ongoing need to explore the formation process of career adaptability, and enrich our understanding on ways to improve and maintain adaptability resources in occupational settings (Hameed, Khan, Sabharwal, Arain, & Hameed, 2017).

Previous studies showed there is a strong relationship between career adaptability and proactive personalities. Proactive personalities are individuals who initiate personal actions to improve their environment (Bateman & Crant, 1993). Proactivity is a vital component of career adaptability

and leads individuals to take actions, which improve their career adaptability across circumstances (Tolentino et al., 2014; Öncel, 2014). However, this rationale is somewhat unclear and requires further exploration.

Contemporary work environments have become increasingly stressful and turbulent compared to more traditional environments. This phenomenon increases the need for individuals to develop a psychological state of resilience in order to remain adaptable and resilient when coping with career uncertainty (Bimrose & Hearne, 2012). A psychological state of resilience is the ability to 'bounce back' from any difficulty, stress, or trauma with a stronger sense of adaptability. Resilience is found to be a characteristic of proactive individuals and flexibility a product of circumstance, nurture and fortification (Luthans, Vogelgesang, & Lester, 2006). Proactivity impacts resilience by allowing individuals to adapt to a career more effectively through availing of opportunities and avoiding workplace stress (Nguyen, Kuntz, Näswall, & Malinen, 2016).

Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses

Proactive Personality and Career Adaptability

Proactive personality is defined by Bateman and Crant (1993) as a human's propensity to pursue responsibilities that are dynamic in nature and that generate a change in

one's environment. Proactivity is explained by Jiang (2016) as the tendency of an individual to pursue initiatives, which impact their immediate surroundings. Proactive personalities engage in purpose-driven activities until they see significant results from their efforts. Such individuals tend to have a vulnerable, optimistic orientation towards change (Parker, Williams, & Turner, 2006).

Proactive individuals recognize opportunities and make efforts to avail those opportunities to improve their situations. They also thrive on change and have an ability to manage profession-related changes. They are keen on finding changes which can help them develop in their careers and they consider the workplace as a centre where they can develop their proactive skills and pursue opportunities (Crant, 2000; Tolentino et al., 2014). Their ability to adjust to evolving vocation-related conditions and identify areas for improvement in their professional life, the proactive individual is able to make fruitful career decisions (Bocciardi, Caputo, Fregonese, Langher, & Sartori, 2017). Therefore, Tolentino et al. (2014) suggest that proactive people will actively engage in efforts to shape their work environment and develop resources for their own career adaptability.

Literature indicates a positive relationship between career adaptability and proactive personality, as demonstrated through studies on university and college students (Xie, Bagozzi & Gronhaug, 2015). Prior research also provides substantial insight into the various practices that are found in a proactive personality. For instance, Tolentino et al., (2014) found that students from Australian universities and colleges with higher proactivity characteristics were more likely to have stronger career adapt-

ability than those with less proactivity characteristics. Öncel (2014) distinguished solid and constructive connections of proactive personality with career adaptability. These discoveries have been repeated in other studies of universities and colleges of China (Cai et al., 2015). Prior studies also found evidence for the relationship between proactive personality and career adaptability for workers in China were a positive relationship was demonstrated between proactive personality and career adaptability (Jiang, 2016). Empirical studies further found the relationship between proactive personalities and anticipated career outcomes, such as career planning (Frese, Garst, & Fay, 2007), organization entry, socialization (Ashford & Black, 1996) and career success (Seibert, Kraimer, & Crant, 2001). Along with these studies, the relationship between proactive personalities and job-related outcomes such as job satisfaction (Crant, 2000) and leadership effectiveness has also been established (Bateman & Crant, 1993).

Therefore, people with proactive personalities more readily shape and adapt their careers as compared to those who lack proactivity in their personalities. Those with proactive personalities tend to also have the characteristics needed to adapt to situations and environments surrounding their careers. These characteristics include, concern, control, curiosity and confidence across career states (Savickas and Porfeli, 2012). As Savickas (2005; 2013) explained, concern is the degree to which individuals look ahead and get ready for their professional life. Control refers to the degree to which people fortify individual power and assume liability for professional activities by utilizing determination, struggle, and self-restraint. Curiosity indicates the

degree to which individual discover numerous ways for professional positions and circumstances for forming conceivable personalities and optional situations. Confidence indicates how a person feels about doing a particular job. These four parts of career adaptability work co-operatively to help individuals navigate and thrive through unforeseen changes in their professional career journey (Guan, Capezio, Restubog, Read, Lajom, Li, 2016).

Based on the theoretical and empirical assumptions derived from prior research, the following hypothesis is proposed:

***H1:** Proactive personality has a positive impact on career adaptability.*

Mediating Role of Resilience

Literature suggests that resilience is not inherent, but rather can be created and reinforced through personal efforts of self-examination and the acquiring of adaptability characteristics (Xie, Bagozzi & Gronhaug, 2015). Additionally, psychological resilience is found to be a constructive work-related personal characteristic (Luthans et al., 2006). Resilience is related to one's career in a way that enables individuals to exploit their personal adaptation skills and overcome career obstacles. Bimrose and Hearne (2012) argue that resilient people are those who focuses on continuous learning, adapting to change, manage their careers and reshape themselves according to job market needs. Resilient people, therefore, are potentially valuable resources for increasing the competitiveness of their organizations.

Proactive individuals are those who are relatively unconfined by their situational forces and envi-

ronmental changes (Crant, 2000). They can achieve work goals, can handle work-related problems and can make effective plans for adapting to their careers by utilising their personal resources. As Tolentino et al. (2014) find, there is a sturdy connection between career adaptability and proactive personality. Career adaptability generates those behavioural patterns, mind-sets and abilities that individuals use in modifying themselves according to the requirements of their professions (Savickas, 2013). Proactive individuals can use these skills of self-modification to adapt to changing circumstances along their career path. However, Nguyen, Kuntz, Näswall and Malinen (2016) argue that proactive personality is significantly associated with resilient behaviour, as resilient individuals have the ability to overcome difficulties. Therefore, it follows that proactive individuals having resilient behaviour can adapt within their careers more effectively than those who may be proactive but not resilient. In the light of above literature, the second hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Resilience mediates the positive relationship between career adaptability and proactive personality.

Moderating Role of Gender

Career adaptability is described as the self-administrative quality that people have and use to navigate present or future professional assignments (Savickas, 2002). Research about the moderating role of gender on intentions for expatriate careers found that women have a tendency to be more versatile than men do when it comes to adapting themselves for their careers. Women have a greater tendency than men to pursue

international careers (Ferreira, 2012; Buser & Niederle, 2012). Tharenou (2008) found that family commitments are the primary hindrances for women pursuing expatriate careers. Moreover, research also highlights that the embarkation of the decision to pursue an expatriate career is not only dependent on spouse and kids but also upon the influence of extended family members.

Female employees have a number of limitations that affect their pursuit of international assignments, that males may not experience, on account of the nature of the profession and its time requirements (Lyness & Thompson, 1997). Existing literature also demonstrated that having school-age children decreases opportunities to pursue an expatriate vocation (Van der velde, Bossink, & Jansen, 2005).

Based upon this literature, the third hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Gender moderates the negative relationship between career adaptability and intention for expatriate careers.

Mediating Role of Cultural Intelligence (CQ)

According to Tams and Arthur (2007), careers are becoming more globalized. In recent decades, individuals more frequently move across land, sea and cultural limits to accept employment opportunities (Iredale, 2001). This kind of expatriation from one country to another, typically to 'developed countries', without being sent by an employer is termed as self-initiated expatriation (Cerdin & Pargneux, 2010). The motivation behind this type of self-initiated expatriation is to acquire more stable career opportunities (Collings, Doherty, Luethy & Osborn, 2011).

Other factors are also important for evaluating personal proactivity, career adaptability and motivations for expatriation. Those with high meta-cognitive (CQ) are quite conscious of others' social inclinations before and throughout their communications (Brislin, 2006). Cognitive CQ reflects learning of the standards, exercises and traditions in various societies obtained from educational and individual encounters. This contains learning of the financial, lawful and cultural frameworks of various societies and sub-societies and understanding of essential structures of social ethics (Triandis, 1994). People with higher cognitive CQ comprehend similarities and differences among all societies (Brislin, 2006). Motivational CQ reflects one's capacity to direct responsiveness and energetic drive for finding out about and working in circumstances that have social differences. Kanfer and Heggstad (1997) found that motivational limits give instrumental control of effect, insight and conduct which encourage individuals to accomplish their objectives.

People with higher motivational CQ tend to seek out and thrive on cross-cultural and diverse environments (Bandura, 2002). As Hall (1959) highlighted, individual psychological capacities for social understanding and encouragement must be supplemented with a range of appropriate, socially-ethical, supportive verbal and non-verbal behaviours. People with high behavioural CQ display conditionally suitable behaviours built upon their wide scope of capacities (Gudykunst et al., 1988). Hence, we derive our multi-mediated model which has two mediators, "intention for expatriate career" and "cultural intelligence", hypothesized as:

H4: The relationship between the intention to pursue an expatriate

career and career adaptability is mediated positively by cultural intelligence, when a proactive personality is used as a predictor of intention to pursue an expatriate career.

H5: *Cultural intelligence mediates the positive relationship between intention to pursue an expatriate career and career adaptability.*

Methodology

Participants and Design

The respondents of this research were 297 Pakistani adult workers of different professions, including banking, construction, teaching, personal businesses, sales and marketing, administration, engineering, pharmaceutical, and telecommunication. The purpose of involving employees from different disciplines was to take the viewpoints of adult workers on their career adaptability, because career adaptability is not specific to any particular field or profession. Data was collected in two ways, through the internet and via printed copies of the questionnaire distributed to participants. The reason for collecting data using these two methods was to ensure diversity and a significant sample size of respondents. The questionnaire was first converted into an online survey form through a reliable online survey tool used collect data (Xie, Bagozzi & Gronhaug, 2015). The online survey tool was used to reach a wider audience within the country. The largest possible sample was sought in order to increase the generalizability of the research, which depends upon the sample's representation of the entire population (Hameed, Waris & Haq, 2019; Jiang, 2016; Le, Jiang, & Nielsen, 2016; Holland, Allen, & Cooper, 2013).

The consent form, which was provided to participants at the beginning of the questionnaire, specified that the identity of the participants would be kept confidential. Participation was voluntary and individuals could withdraw from the study at any time. The consent form also indicated that their responses are accessible only to the researcher. Participants who agreed to the consent form were required to respond to each item on the questionnaire before being directed to the next section. In this way, the whole questionnaire had complete information and there was no missing data. A comparable online approach has been utilized by numerous experts and has demonstrated reliability as shown by values of Cronbach's alpha (Holland, Allen, & Cooper, 2013; Jin, Ford, & Chen, 2013). The current study's sample consisted of 125 females (42.1%) and 172 males (57.9%). Respondents originated from diverse age groups ranging from less than 21 years (n=20, 6.7%), 21-30 year (n=238, 80.1%), 31-40 years (n=25, 8.4%), 41-50 years (n=9, 3.0%), and 51 years and above (n=5, 1.7%). Educational qualifications of the respondents were also stretched into different categories, as presented in Table 1.

Measures

The questionnaire utilized a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

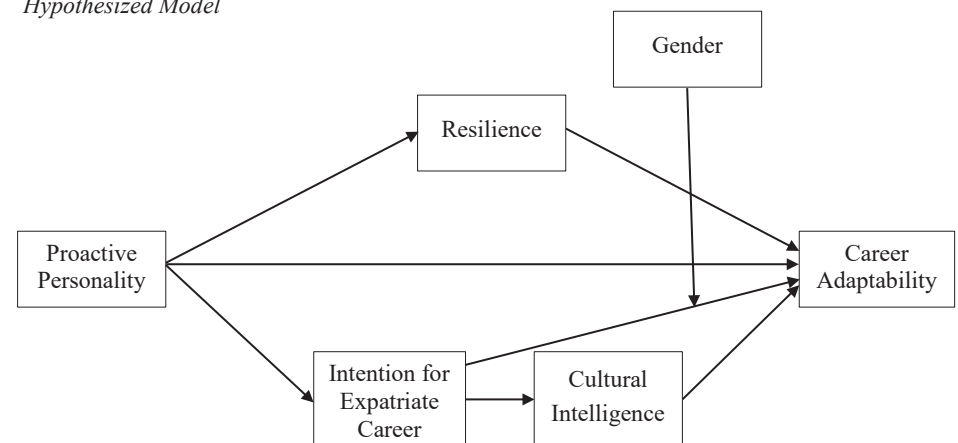
Career Adaptability. A twenty-four item scale of career adaptability was adopted from the career adaptability scale (CAAS) and the Korea form (Tak, 2012). CAAS comprises four components, including, concern, control, curiosity, and confidence. Reliability for the Korean form is relatively high as compared to the international version of the CAAS (0.93) and the sub factors demonstrate reliabilities as concern: 0.85, control: 0.80, curiosity: 0.82 and confidence: 0.84.

Proactive Personality.

Items relating to a proactive personality were adapted from the work of Bateman and Crant (1993). From the entire scale, four questions were used to measure proactive personalities, which had continuous higher factor loading throughout the different samples with a factor loading of 0.60. The statements used for the study included: *'I am always looking for better ways to do things'*, *'Nothing is more exciting than seeing my ideas*

Figure 1

Hypothesized Model



turn into reality’, ‘If I see something I don’t like, I fix it’ and ‘If I believe in an idea, no obstacle will prevent me from making it happen’.

Intention for expatriate careers. Intention for expatriate career in the study is being measured through a two-item scale modified from Lee, Wong, Foo and Leung (2011), demonstrating a Cronbach alpha of 0.86. This approach has also been used in prior studies (Presbitero and Quita, 2017). The statements used for the study included: ‘I have always wanted to relocate and work overseas’ and, ‘If I have the opportunity, I would work and build my career in another country’.

Resilience. Resilience in the current study was measured through the Connor and Davidson’s (2003) study, demonstrating a Cronbach alpha of 0.89 for full scale. The full scale contained 25 items to measure resilience. However, this study used the four items which had the highest factor loadings. The statements used for the study included: ‘I can adapt changes easily’, ‘I can deal with whatever comes in my way’, ‘My past success gives confidence for new challenge’, and ‘I believe in close and secure relationships’.

Cultural intelligence (CQ). Cultural intelligence was measured through the scale of Ang, Dyne, Koh, Ng, Templer, Tay and Chandrasekar, (2007), which measures cultural intelligence through four constructs. The cultural intelligence scale comprises the dimensions of meta-cognitive CQ having alpha of 0.71, cognitive CQ having alpha of 0.85, motivational CQ having alpha of 0.71 and behavioural CQ having alpha of 0.83.

Table 1
Respondents’ Profile

Variable		Number	Percentage
Gender	Male	172	57.9
	Female	125	42.1
Age	Less than 21 years	20	6.7
	21 to 30 Years	238	80.1
	31 to 40 Years	25	8.4
	41 to 50 Years	9	3.0
	51 years and above	5	1.7
Income (Rs.: Pakistan Currency Rupees)	Up to Rs. 25,000	131	44.1
	Rs. 25,000 to 50,000	95	31.9
	Rs. 50,000 to 75,000	42	14.1
	Rs. 75,000 to 100,000	11	3.5
	Rs. 100,000 & above	18	6.1
Profession	Banker	20	6.7
	Doctor	10	3.4
	Engineer	45	15.2
	Teacher	27	9.1
	Own Business	25	8.4
	Others	170	57.2
Education	Matriculation/O-level	9	3.0
	Intermediate/A-level	8	2.7
	Bachelors	136	45.8
	Masters	131	44.1
	MS/MPhil	24	26
	Doctoral	13	4.4

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Proactive personality (Mean = 3.97, SD = 0.76) has the highest skewness (-0.17), and resilience (Mean = 3.95, SD = 0.73) has the lowest skewness (-0.91). Kurtosis for four items is positive although only one item has a negative kurtosis. Proactive personality has the highest kurtosis i.e., 3.85 (Mean = 3.97, SD = 0.76) and intention for expatriate

career has the minimum value of kurtosis i.e., -0.57 (Mean = 3.48, SD = 1.20).

Reliability of the Constructs

As mentioned in the methodology section, the scales used in the current study contained items that were formerly used and tested by different authors. The reliabilities and validities of these items were also established previously as cited in the methodology section. The reliabilities were regenerated in the framework

of the current research with all 297 respondents. These results are listed in Table 2.

Table 2 shows that the reliability of cultural intelligence is highest ($\alpha = 0.876$, Mean = 4.311, SD = 0.830) whereas reliability for the proactive personality is lowest ($\alpha = 0.678$, Mean = 1.213, SD = 0.222). Reliability values of all the constructs were greater than 0.6, which are within the satisfactory range. This suggests that the selected items have coherent reliability and internal consistency.

Correlation

Correlation analysis was applied to gauge the relationship between the variables and to determine the existence of multicollinearity between the variables. The results are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3 demonstrates that the correlation between intention for expatriate career (Mean = 3.48, SD = 1.20, N = 297) and career adaptability (Mean = 4.05, SD = 0.65, N = 297) is weakest ($R = 0.16$, $p = 0.0 < 0.01$). Correlation of proactive personality (Mean = 3.97, SD = 0.76, N = 297) and career adaptability (Mean = 4.05, SD = 0.65, N = 297) is highest ($R = 0.601$, $p = 0.0 < 0.01$), followed by resilience (Mean = 3.95, SD = 0.73, N = 297, $R = 0.567$, $p = 0.0 < 0.01$) and then by cultural intelligence (Mean = 3.59, SD = 0.69, N = 297, $R = 0.494$, $p = 0.0 < 0.01$). Correlation for intention for expatriate career (Mean = 3.48, SD = 1.20, N = 297) and cultural intelligence (Mean = 3.59, SD = 0.69, N = 297) is highest ($R = 0.294$, $p = 0.0 < 0.01$), followed by resilience (Mean = 3.95, SD = 0.73, N = 297, $R = 0.223$, $p = 0.0 < 0.01$) and weakest with a proactive personality (Mean = 3.97, SD = 0.76, N = 297, $R = 0.144$, $p = 0.0 < 0.01$). Cultural

intelligence (Mean = 3.59, SD = 0.69, N = 297) is correlated with resilience (Mean = 3.95, SD = 0.73, N = 297) at $R = 0.527$, $p = 0.0 < 0.01$ and with a proactive personality (Mean = 3.97, SD = 0.76, N = 297) at $R = 0.495$, $p = 0.0 < 0.01$. Whereas, Cultural intelligence (Mean = 3.59, SD = 0.69, N = 297) and proactive personality (Mean = 3.97, SD = 0.76, N = 297) are correlated at $R = 0.438$, $p = 0.0 < 0.01$. The correlations suggest that the constructs are distinctive and unique.

Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis 1. Results of the regression analysis demonstrated that proactive personality significantly predicted career adaptability ($\beta = .567$, $p < 0.001$). Hence, our first hypothesis for the current study, that proactive personality has a significantly positive impact on career adaptability, has been supported by the data.

Hypothesis 2. Beta value for the hypothesis is 0.2, demonstrating that with one unit change in resilience; career adaptability will increase by 20 percent. The confidence interval of bootstrapping contains both positive values. The lower value is 0.1 and the upper value is 0.2, which clearly demonstrates that zero does not lie in the confidence interval. Therefore, resilience mediates the positive and significant relationship between proactive personality and career adaptability.

Hypothesis 3. The Beta value for the hypothesis is 0.1, demonstrating that with one unit change in cultural intelligence, career adaptability will increase by 10 percent. The confidence interval of bootstrapping have both positive values. The lower value is 0.0 and the upper value is 0.1.

Hence, cultural intelligence mediates the positive and significant relationship between intention for expatriate career and career adaptability.

Hypothesis 4. The relationship between intention for expatriate career and career adaptability is further mediated by cultural intelligence. This is a multi-mediated model which is tested by using the "Process" model developed by Hayes and Preacher (2014).

The indirect path 2 serves as a comprehensive model, having two mediators. In a case where cultural intelligence is taken as a second mediator, the upper boundary (0.1) and lower boundary (0.0) are both positive and in the same direction. The indirect effect of the independent variable (through mediator) supports our hypothesis. Therefore, intention for expatriate career and career adaptability is mediated positively by cultural intelligence, when a proactive personality is used as a predictor of intention for pursuing an expatriate career.

Hypothesis 5. The beta value for hypothesis 5 is 0.1, demonstrating that with a one-unit change in cultural intelligence, career adaptability will increase by 10 percent. The confidence interval of bootstrapping have both the positive values. The lower value is 0.0 and the upper value is 0.1. Hence, cultural intelligence mediates the positive and significant relationship between intention for pursuing an expatriate career and career adaptability.

Conclusion, Implications, Limitations & Future Research

This research study finds a high degree of resilience in proactive individuals. These individuals may

Table 2
Reliability of the Constructs

Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha on standardized item	No of items	Mean	S.D
Career Adaptability	0.803	0.86	12	4.85	0.77
Proactive personality	0.678	0.68	03	1.21	0.22
Intention for expatriate career	0.77	0.77	02	0.69	0.23
Resilience	0.668	0.68	04	1.57	0.29
Cultural intelligence	0.876	0.87	12	4.31	0.83

Table 3
Correlations

Construct	CA	IE	RE	CQ	PP
Career adaptability	1	-			
Intention for expatriate career	.169	1	-		
Resilience	.567	.223	1	-	
Cultural intelligence	.494	.294	.527	1	-
Proactive personality	.601	.144	.495	.438	1

not have these qualities innately, but the tendency of being resilient can be developed at any stage of life. Moreover, the individuals with high proactivity as compared to their low proactive colleagues can also develop this tendency, which facilitates the development of career adaptability and intentions to adapt to a career as an expatriate.

Individual-level factors such as career adaptability and cultural intelligence also contribute towards the formation of the intention of pursuing an expatriate career. These findings have theoretically and empirically extended career construction theory, proactive personality theory, and

the resilience model to amplify the sophisticated process of developing adaptability resources in the career path. The findings of this study provide insight to scholars interested in exploring expatriate careers and may guide career counsellors to further understand the dynamics of expatriation.

Theoretical Implications

Former studies have observed the impact of variables, such as ‘thriving’, to discover the impact of a proactive personality on career adaptability (Jiang, 2016). Such studies provided valuable insights about intentions for pursuing an

expatriate career. The purpose of the Jiang’s (2016) study was to examine the relationship between the desire to work abroad and an individual’s adaptive resources used to build up their professional careers. Moreover, career adaptability, as a self-administrative ability, is considered to be strengthened by an individual’s intercultural ability and social aptitude (Presbitero and Quita, 2017). There is no available research which examined the effect of a proactive personality on career adaptability by measuring the impact of resilience and then how a proactive personality can shape an individual’s intention for pursuing an expatriate career. Further question arises about the relationship between expatriate career intentions and cultural intelligence.

This current study builds upon existing literature by highlighting other personal variables and identifying resilience as the outcome of a proactive personality. The current study also finds that a proactive personality endows professional adjustment and expectation by regulating the impact of cultural intelligence on these goals to develop an expatriate career.

This research utilized an example of Pakistani adult specialists to examine the relationships between proactive personality, resilience, career adaptability, intention for pursuing an expatriate career, cultural intelligence and gender. The framework for this research was reasonable and fitting given that Pakistan has distinctive expectations for males and females with regard to pursuing an expatriate career. In accordance with past studies (Jiang, 2016; Öncel, 2014; Tolentino et al., 2014), this current study observed a constructive connection between proactive personality and career adaptability.

Building on earlier research conducted on these topics, this study affirms the hypothetical notion that the qualities of a proactive identity are adjusted to individual support centres in professional development theories (Savickas, 2002; Tolentino et al., 2014). This current research additionally exhibits that, while career adaptability can impact the intention to pursue an expatriate career, cultural intelligence, or the individual capacity to work adequately in new social spheres (Earley & Ang, 2003), can further enhance the possibilities of achieving an expatriate career. Moreover, resilience will increase the likelihood of adapting to the stresses encountered while immersing in a new culture and a proactive personality will be an indicator of one's intention to pursue an expatriate career. Furthermore, previous studies indicate that men are more willing and likely to pursue expatriation than women due to family concerns and obligations (Tharenou, 2008). Female employees have been found to have more limitations on pursuing international assignments than male employees on account of the nature of certain professions and concerns for lengthy time-based obligations (Lyness & Thompson, 1997). Prior studies also highlight how having school-age children decreases the chances of pursuing an expatriate career (Van der velde, Bossink, & Jansen, 2005). However, this current study suggests that gender does not influence the intention to pursue an expatriate career or career adaptability. Although, females in Pakistan are still less likely than males to pursue expatriate careers.

Practical Implications

This research further proposes a realistic approach for profession-

al advocates. First, consistent with prior research (Tolentino et al., 2014), the current discoveries propose that the thought of proactive personality and resilience is critical when facilitating workers and creating opportunities to facilitate them to improve resources for career adaptability. For instance, career counsellors may plan further assistance during the design of any career adaptability improvement programs, while keeping in mind each worker's proactive personality and capacity for resilience. The findings of this study may also help career counsellors to strategize more active involvements to enhance employees' career adaptability and their intentions to adapt their career as an expatriate.

Limitations of the study and Future Research

Initially, to test the variables only selected items were used rather than a full scale of constructs. Future research could use the full scales to measure each construct so that more insights can be gathered for better results. The second limitation of the study was the greater participation of the young workers ranging from (21 to 30 years), lowering the response rate of 80%. However, the same age group has been used in some of the most recent studies (e.g., Linkeš, Ezekiel, Lerch and Meadows, 2018). The quality of the research could be further improved with a larger sample size, expanding to other age groups for a better understanding of career adaptability and proactive personality across age and generations.

Future studies could also look into the relationship between proactive personalities and actual adaptation to a career as an expatriate. Resilience could also be further explored to examine its effect on stress-

es encountered during expatriation. Studies could also further explore the impact of gender on intentions for pursuing an expatriate career.

Future research may also examine the effect of age on intention to pursue an expatriate career, as personal needs and physical capabilities may change with respect to age. Lastly, future studies could introduce new variables, such as commitment, identification and emotional intelligence, as mediators to further help understand the effects of a proactive personality on career adaptability.

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University Students' Perceptions of Unplanned Events as a Factor in the Process of Career Choice

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Abstract

The unplanned events that individuals encounter throughout their lives may either positively or negatively impact their careers. Hence, the authors aimed to reveal what is perceived as chance in university students' career development stories and how these students view the effects of the events perceived by them as chance. The theoretical framework for this study is Happenstance Learning Theory developed by Krumboltz. Participants in this study consisted of a total of 102 senior students, with 68 women (66.7%) and 34 men (33.3%), attending a medium-size public university in southeastern Turkey. The participants were randomly selected. Conventional content analysis among qualitative analysis methods was used in this study. A form including personal information and chance situations in career choice was used to collect data. Findings obtained in the study indicated that chance events in university students' career choices were found in three themes: social factors, individual factors, and political/legal factors. Results of the study were discussed in the light of relevant literature and suggestions for researchers were included.

Keywords: career choice, unplanned events, Happenstance Learning Theory, university students.

An individual puts effort towards their career targets. The career choice process involves situations of designing and making those targets

relatively clearer. In the 21st century with fast access to information, continuous technology development and renewal, and increasing competition, career choice becomes a more complex and challenging process (Edwards & Quinter, 2011). According to Brown (2002), the most ideal career choice happens when an individual's wishes and needs match well. Navin (2009), on the other hand, stated that an individual's discovery of career choices increased their potential career success and satisfaction. Conversely, an inappropriate career choice, may negatively impact both an individual's personal-social and career life. Relevant literature indicates that many factors impact the career choice process that is so important in an individual's life. These factors are variables such as family structure, family members' roles and relationships with one another, family values and attitudes (e.g., Paloş & Drobot, 2010), parents' influence (e.g., Njeri, 2013), family's expectations (e.g., Vurucu, 2010), family's level of income (e.g., Clutter, 2010), parenting styles (Roe & Lunneborg, 1990), siblings and socialization processes in the family (Njeri, 2013), and family background (e.g., Muraguri, 2011). Also, gender differences (e.g., Edwards & Quinter, 2011), social expectations of gender role (e.g., Njeri, 2013), social class expectations of the individual (Friesen, 1981), career expectations (e.g., Njeri, 2013), cultural factors (e.g., Njeri, 2013) may impact the career choice as well. In addition, an individual's expectations (Soyer & Can, 2007), self-realization instinct (Şimşek & Öge, 2007), person-

ality (e.g., Bayraktar, 2009), interest areas (e.g., Mikkonen, Heikkila, Ruohoniemi, & Lindblom-Ylänne, 2009), competencies (e.g., Genç, Kaya, & Genç, 2007), values (e.g., Genç, Kaya, & Genç, 2007), self-concept (Kerka, 2002), sources of social support (Kerka, 2002), peer influence (Fisher & Griggs 1995), ethnicity (McQuaid & Bond, 2004); academic success level (e.g., Ayık, Özdemir, & Yavuz, 2007), environment and opportunities (Borchert, 2002), and role models (e.g., Bandura, 2000) are also among factors that are influential in career choices. As can be seen, the factors influencing the career choice can be internal, external, or interpersonal (Carpenter & Foster, 1977).

Researchers examined the factors impacting the career choice and explain how these factors effect career choice. Some of these theories may include Parsons' Trait-Factor Theory (1909) emphasizing the harmony between an individual and a profession, developmental approaches emphasizing that career choice is a dynamic process (Ginzberg, Ginsburg, Axelrad, and Herma, 1951). Super's (1980) Theory of Life Roles/Lifelong Development emphasizing self-concept and lifespan-life space in career choice, Holland's Career Typology (1959) emphasizing the interaction among an individual's personality and environment, and Lent, Brown, and Hackett's (1994; 2002) Social Cognitive Career Theory emphasizing the influence of individual beliefs on career choice. These theories point to various factors in an individual's career choice and

state that this process continues in a systematic fashion. Career choice as a systematic process has brought along the possible control of leading factors that could impact this process. However, recent studies have examined how uncontrollable chance events can also impact career choices.

Krumboltz (1998) defines chance as an unplanned events and indicated that the situations in which individuals find themselves are partly a function of factors over which they have no control and partly a function of actions that the individuals have initiated themselves. According to Krumboltz (2009) these unplanned events are a normal and necessary component of every career. Chance events refer to 'unplanned, accidental, or otherwise situational, unpredictable, or unintentional events or encounters (Rojewski, 1999). Thus, both the independence and the individual part of the concept of chance are emphasized. However, the concept of chance in Turkish culture mostly refers to the situations obtained outside of knowledge and effort and it is defined in various forms in the socio-cultural context in Turkey. For instance, statements such as *being on a lucky streak*, *being in luck*, *I would not be in this condition if I were lucky*, and *I was born lucky* are often used. The individual may feel the need to use these words to express situations in which she/he cannot give meaning or control to a certain extent. So, the chance factor, used as a source of reference for an individual to evaluate a situation, can occasionally be considered protective and, at other times, a risk factor. That is to say, when the individual is able to consider the situation positively and turns it into an opportunity, the chance factor could be protective and supportive. Otherwise, the chance factor becomes a risk factor for an individual, particularly during the career choice process. An

individual occasionally may view the chance factor from the destiny perspective (Turkish Language Association, 2019), with belief that everything is pre-destined and individuals are not able to change this predestination, and leave the responsibilities unfulfilled. In Turkey, the predestination perspective of people, particularly with low SES (Oge, 2014) is considered to potentially impact an individual's career life. Hence, examining how the chance factor is viewed, how it impacts an individual's life, and the aspects through which it impacts it are important. Also, the concept of chance was cited in various names such as unplanned chance, unplanned events, serendipity events, etc. in the relevant literature. As it is viewed within the Happenstance Learning Theory (Krumboltz, 2009), the chance factor is considered to be about "unplanned events" in the current study.

Recent studies on career counselling have been observed to include various dimensions of the chance concept (Hirshi & Valero, 2017; Schlosser, McPhee, & Forsyth, 2017; Urbanaviciute, Kairys, Paradnikė, & Pociute, 2019) and theories explaining the chance factor have emerged (See: Borg et al., 2006; Bright & Pryor, 2005; Krumboltz, Levin, & Levin, 2010; Mitchell, Levin, & Krumboltz, 1999; Pryor, 2016; Schlesinger & Daley, 2016). Among those theories, Krumboltz' theory of Happenstance Learning Theory is often mentioned and supported by research. The theory of happenstance learning has evolved from Krumboltz's (2009) learning theory of career counseling and is foremost form of Mitchell, Levin and Krumboltz's (1999) Planned Happenstance Theory. Similar to the importance that Mitchell et al. (1999) attributes on the chance factor in career development, one of the proposition of Happenstance Learning Theory is that

clients can learn to engage in exploratory actions as a way of generating beneficial unplanned events (Krumboltz 2009). Similar to the importance that theories attribute on the chance factor in career development, Brights and Pryor (2005) and Pryor (2016) examined unplanned events in career process through their Chaos Theory of Careers. With this theory, they emphasized that clients might experience negative emotions and attitudes when facing events that cannot be controlled by them and career advisors needed to show them how to control chance events.

In addition to explanations by all those theorists, studies on unplanned events; in other words, studies testing statements about chance and examining the relationships between chance and career development are also available. For instance, in a study on skills recommended by Mitchell et al. (1999) and later works of Krumboltz (2009) to be used to manage chance (Ahn, Jung, Jang, et al., 2015), high level professional identity statuses of high school students in South Korea were found to be associated with curiosity, persistence, flexibility, optimism, and risk taking. In other words, adolescents with skills like curiosity, persistence, flexibility, optimism, and risk taking tend to more positively perceive their own professional identities. In another study, with planned happenstance career education used, this type of education was found to increase university students' career competencies (Chien, Fischer & Biller, 2006). In another research with Swedish adolescents (Hirschi, 2010), the majority of participants were found to be influenced by chance events on their transition from compulsory school to vocational education or high school. Results of another study revealed that when college students have enough planned happenstance skills to dis-

cover unexpected career opportunities, their career engagement level affects their career decision certainty through career decision self-efficacy (Kim, Jang, Jung, et al., 2014). As can be seen in those studies, unplanned events may have a functional role in an individual's career choice process.

Bright, Pryor, Chan, and Rijanto (2009), who wanted to consider the effect of chance events on university students' career development and the students' ability to control those, stated in their study that high-impact and low-controlled chance events had the highest-level influence on students' career development. However, the research revealed that negative chance events were more influential on university students' career development. Similarly, in another study (Bright, Pryor, & Harpham, 2005) on the relationship between locus of control and perception of influence the chance events, students with external locus of control, among high school and university students, were found to emphasize the chance events in their career development more than the students with internal locus of control. In addition to that, approximately 70% of the participants in the study stated that their career choice was influenced by chance events. Krumboltz (2011) reported numerous stories of people whose actions enabled them to create and benefit from unplanned events. Also, in a study on university students' reasons for choosing majors, the chance factor accounted for 6% of the influence on selecting specific university majors (Korkut-Owen, Kepir, Özdemir et al., 2012). In those studies with university students, chance could be considered to impact the career choice process.

In relevant literature, studies on the significance of chance on the career choice processes of various samples are also available. In Bets-

worth and Hansen's (1996) study, senior individuals' career stories were examined and careers of two thirds were found to be impacted by serendipitous events. Scott and Hatalla (1990) found that the career development of a majority of female university graduates was found to be impacted by chance. In Williams, Soeprapto, Like, Touradji, Hess, and Hill's study (1998), female scholars' career process and development were found to be impacted by chance and unexpected events. However, the study results indicated that internal characteristics (e.g., ability to take risks and self-confidence) and external characteristics (e.g., strong support system and external barriers) enabled women to convert unexpected events into advantages. As can be seen, some studies show that chance factors could be influential based on gender.

In sum, the chance factor could be considered to play a defining role in individuals' career choice processes. Hence, it is important for individuals to be aware of the chance events and to be able to manage and convert them into advantage in their career development, in terms of a healthy career development process. Although various studies emphasizing the importance of chance are available abroad, it can be said that no study examining the concept of chance and its effects has been found in Turkey as it is a new topic. Particularly in developing countries such as Turkey, factors such as renewed legal processes and policies in employment and testing or the education system may lead to unexpected changes in individuals' career choices. Also, the chance factor is a method of explanation for many individuals to use in events encountered in their lives in Turkey. Thus, how individuals perceive those unexpected events must be determined and preventive studies must be provided in order for them

to effectively cope with those events. Particularly determining the events that individuals perceive as chance events is considered to be important in effectively providing career and employment services as chance is a new concept related to career development in Turkey. Later, finding out about those perceptions is considered fundamental for training for skills to cope with chance events. Thus, we aimed to determine what events are considered chance events by university students in career development. The current study seeks answers for the following research question for this purpose:

1. What are the events that university students perceive as unplanned events in their career development stories?

Method

Research Design

In the current study examining what the chance factors are in university students' career development stories and how those unplanned events are perceived, conventional content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005), a commonly-used qualitative data analysis method with coding categories directly driven from the text data, was used.

Participants

Participants consisted of 102 senior students attending a medium-size public university in southeastern Turkey. 68 (66.7%) were females and 34 (33.3%) were males. Thirteen (12.75%) majored in psychological counselling and guidance, 43 (42.15%) in sociology, and 46 (45.10%) in primary school teaching. Data for the study were collected during spring

2016 and 2017 academic terms. The participants were randomly selected.

Tools

The form used with the participants in this study consisted of two sections. The first section in the form included some demographic information (e.g., gender, years in academic studies, and major). The second section in the form in order to examine participants' experiences associated with the chance factor, the question "What type of unplanned experiences, with positive and negative effects, did you have in your career choice? Please elaborate on them" was asked. Open-ended questions explored learners' thinking processes and as such were difficult to analyze. However, they can best be analyzed by qualitative methods, especially by summarizing the responses to the questions (Mosothwane, 2002).

Procedure

Participants of the study were informed through informed consent form about the purpose of the study. After data collection, conventional content analysis method was used for analysis. Four researchers, three of whom were researchers of this research and one of them were non-researchers, first examined the data. It was accepted that there was no power struggle due to the similarity of the educational levels of the researchers. Data were analyzed separately, then separate code lists were created. After a common coding list was decided, the researchers completed the coding process together. Sub themes were created by studying the codes. Apart from the study, codes, themes and sub-themes were examined by the researcher. Finally, the necessary mergers and

separations were made by the researchers and defined by the researchers.

Results

The results of the content analysis in this study showed that 33 participants did not have experiences associated with chance. Sixty nine of the participants stated that they had experiences considered unplanned events and the analysis indicated that those experiences fell under three themes such as social factors, individual factors, and political/legal factors. Themes and associated sub-themes were summarized in Figure 1.

As can be seen in Figure 1, based on the explanations by the participants on the concept of unplanned events, three themes (i.e., individual, social, and political and legal factors) and 11 sub-themes were obtained. These themes, associated sub-themes, and codes are explained below.

Subthemes and Codes Associated with the Social Factors Theme

Frequencies associated with the participants' considerations of unplanned events with sub-themes and

codes of social factors are included in Table 1. An overview of social factors theme indicated that this theme was mentioned by the participants 43 times.

A review of Table 1 shows that social factors themes included four sub-themes. The first sub-theme is one of the codes associated with the effect of a colleague; having a colleague around was stated three times. A review of the impact of colleagues shows that having a colleague around was mentioned three times and coming across a colleague during the career choice phase was mentioned once.

A review of the immediate environment sub-theme shows that family impact was mentioned 14 times. The impact of relatives was stated four times. The impact of teachers and friends was stated four times each. In another sub-theme, the impact of the school counselor was stated three times. Finally, codes for the expectation of those around and the negative view of the profession by those around were stated once each.

A review of demographics and family characteristics indicated that social-economic status was mentioned

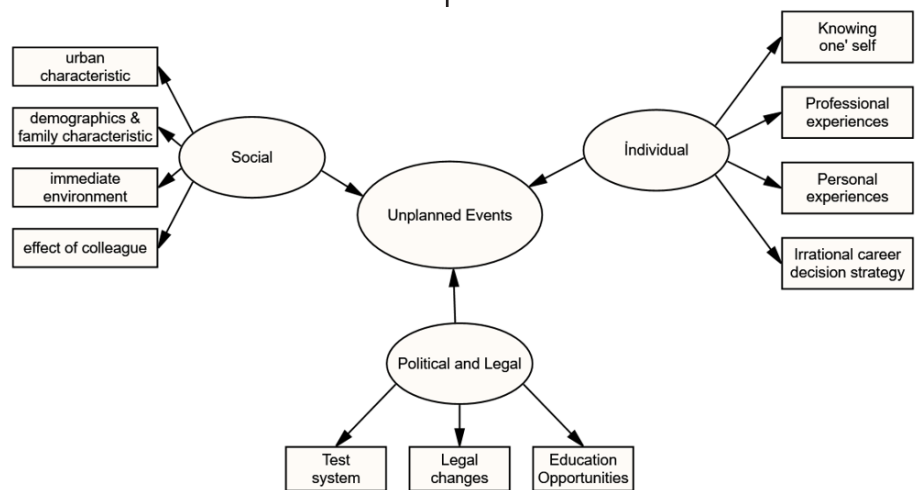


Figure 1. Participants' responses associated with unplanned events

Table 1

Participants' Responses Associated with Social Factors Theme

Themes	Sub-themes	Code	f
Social Factors	The effect of a colleague	Having a colleague around	3
		Coming across a colleague during career choice	1
	Immediate environment	Family impact	14
		Relative impact	4
		Teacher impact	4
		Friend impact	4
		School counselor impact	3
		Expectation of those around	1
	Demographics and family characteristics	Negative view of the profession	1
		Social-economic status	2
		Family with no educated member	1
	Urban characteristics	Loss of a family member	1
		Father's sickness	1
		The location of the town	2
		The urban culture	1
Total			43

Table 2

Participants' Responses Associated with Individual Factors Theme

Themes	Sub-themes	Code	f
Individual Factors	Knowing one's self	Personal development	5
		Personal characteristics	3
		Value	2
		Interest	2
		Ability	1
	Professional experiences	Past work experiences	1
		Voluntary work	1
		Personal experiences	3
	Irrational career decision strategy	Test anxiety	3
		Sickness	1
		Receiving psychological help	1
		Being caught when cheating	1
		Being uninformed about one's major	2
	Total		

two times. Family with no educated member, loss of a family member, and father's sickness were each found to be mentioned once. Finally, the urban characteristics sub-theme was included under the theme of social factors. A review of the urban characteristics sub-theme shows that participants mentioned the urban characteristics of

the town where they attend school two times and the urban culture once.

Subthemes and Codes Associated with the Individual Factors Theme

Frequencies associated with the participants' considerations of unplanned events with sub-themes and

codes of individual factors are included in Table 2. An overview of the individual factors theme indicated that this theme was mentioned by participants 25 times.

Personal development under knowing one's self as a sub-theme of individual factors was mentioned five times and personal characteristics were mentioned three times. Also, the values and interest were mentioned two times each and ability was mentioned once. In addition, past work experiences and voluntary work under the sub-theme of professional experience were mentioned once each.

Test anxiety among the codes under the sub-theme of personal experiences was mentioned three times by the participants. Sickness, receiving psychological help, and being caught when cheating were mentioned once each. Being uninformed about one's major under the sub-theme of irrational career decision strategy was mentioned two times by the participants. Choosing a major unwished for was mentioned once.

Subthemes and Codes Associated with the Political and Legal Factors Theme

Frequencies associated with the participants' considerations of unplanned events with sub-themes and codes of political and legal factors are included in Table 3. An overview of the political and legal factors theme indicated that this theme was mentioned by the participants 31 times.

University entrance examination score under the current test system sub-theme was mentioned 22 times. The code of change in appointment criteria under the legal changes sub-theme was mentioned three times. Similarly, system change was mentioned for three times. The right to be appointed beyond one's area and

Table 3

Participants' Responses Associated with Political and Legal Factors Theme

Themes	Sub-themes	Code	f
Political and Legal Factors	Test system	University entrance examination score	22
		The right to be appointed beyond area	1
	Legal changes	Change in appointment criteria	3
		System change	3
	Education opportunities	Revoking the right to pedagogy formation education	1
		The Farabi scholarship	1
Total			31

revoking the right to pedagogy formation education were mentioned once each. The Farabi scholarship under education opportunities sub-theme was mentioned once.

Discussion and Conclusions

A review of unplanned events, thought to play a role in career stories by university students, showed that they fall under three categories: individual, social, and political/legal. Similar to the current study, Betsworth and Hansen (1996) also found in their research that the most frequently mentioned themes in students' career stories included the effects of professional or personal connections, unexpected developments, marriage and family, encouragement by others, and previous (voluntary) work. From this point of view, many areas related to individuals are effective in career choice.

A review of participants' responses under social factors theme shows that a great majority of them falls under the sub-theme of influence in the immediate surrounding. It is not unexpected that participants who are affected in their immediate environment during the career choice process would interpret that as chance. That is because social structure in Turkey is mostly collectivist tendency (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2013) and dependent behavior, based on the influence by

this structure, is considered normal (Türküm, 2005; Yıldırım & Ergene, 2003). When making a career decision, an individual may be influenced, based on the understanding of *being us* by the lives of the people that s/he observes and adopts as models. Also, receiving or providing advice may be considered among the behaviors frequently encountered in Turkey. Hence, even in a process such as career choice, elderly people are consulted about their experiences and their guidance is taken seriously. For instance, a female participant attending in the sociology department stated the following about the influence of a teacher in career choice:

...In the first year, my score was enough to let me enroll in the philosophy department; however, one of my teachers was a graduate of philosophy and s/he advised me to prepare for one more year to enroll in sociology, a larger major. I was convinced and consequently I enjoyed studying in that department; I had the greatest luck...

A male participant in the sociology department stated the following about the influence in the immediate environment: "... I received the most influence from my uncle. When I first passed the university entrance test, he told my father about his disapproval of my education and this made

me study even more. That was the most important moment in my life." This male participant re-structured the negative influence into positive impact. Another male participant stated the following about his uncle's positive influence on his career choice:

I did not have the slightest idea of sociology until the day of choosing a major. My father was sick. I met my uncle whom I saw maybe once a week or a month and had a chat. That conversation is the one making me to fill in this form today...

As can be seen in these examples, experiences of those in the immediate environment may be considered effective in the lives of individuals' career decision.

A female participant, considering the presence of a professional in the immediate environment as chance, stated the following about her uncle's positive impact on her career choice: "I thought I am lucky because my uncle had the same profession. I could learn about every bit of this profession through him." In this example, an individual received a direct or indirect support from someone in their immediate environment during career development process and the career process was mostly shaped based on this. Another female participant had the following to say:

When I first took the university entrance test, I scored 415. Compared to my friends, that was a very successful score. However, my older sister was attending school and my father said that he did not have enough financial means to support both of us. Therefore, I preferred Turkish Language and Literature at Open Education Faculty and took classes for a year. Due to anxiety later

because there could be something wrong again, I did not do well in the test; I scored 310 on the re-take. With guidance from my teachers, I applied to sociology department. I had a different preference but life conditions made me choose this major. Later, when I began to attend, I thought luckily I was there and fortunately, all those negative things happened. I feel lucky.

As can be seen in the example, the participant considered the inability to attend university due to her father's financial constraints in the first year as a negative life experience; however, because she was pleased with her major then, she had positive consequences through a negative experience.

Some studies on the impact of family members' and relatives' qualities in an individual's immediate environment on his/her career choice, as in experiences similar to those in the examples, are available (Fisher & Griggs 1995; Levine & Hoffner, 2006; Mau & Bikos, 2000; Njeri, 2013). Kerka's (2002) study showed that support received from parents and close relations was influential on individuals' career choice. In addition, variables such as family expectations that could be included among an individual's social factors (Kıyak, 2006; Vurucu, 2010), family SES (Arslan, 2002; Clutter, 2010; Kuzulu & Koçak, 1997; Vurucu, 2010), parenting styles (Roe & Lunneborg, 1990), siblings and family socializations processes (Njeri, 2013), and family background (Agarwala, 2008; Muraguri, 2011) have been found to influence individuals in career choice process. Particularly, a review of studies conducted in Turkey (Sürücü, 2008; Ulaş & Yıldırım, 2015) shows that family and close relationships factors are among the variables most influential

on individuals' important decision such as career decisions. In the current study, individuals were asked about the unplanned events that they could not control. In the situation, particular to Turkey, participants were found to describe the impact of their social circles on their career path as uncontrollable events. As Turkish culture is more focused on external control, it is an expectable conclusion that they thought to have no control on external career directions (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2013). In other words, external consideration is accepted and supported more or interpreted in a faster manner.

Some of the participant responses fall under the *individual factors* theme. A male participant stated the following about uncontrollable events in his life:

While attending a previous university, I began to participate in voluntary activities. We would go to rural areas to help children prepare for social life. We would also tutor them. Then, I knew that I was attending the wrong department and left that university; I transferred to classroom teaching. If things did not develop this way, I would have a job earning more money but I would have an unhappy life.

A review of the participant's statement shows that past voluntary activities enabled him to notice his own individual characteristics and he transferred to a different major leading the way to a more matching job for himself. A female participant stated the following about the negative impact of test anxiety on her: "*particularly before the Higher Education Entrance Test (HEET), I was sick due to stress following studying much; I had never been so sick. I took the test in*

that condition. Books nauseated me. I still cannot say I like them much." Also, individual characteristics such as sickness are considered uncontrollable events for individuals.

A review of the relevant literature shows that variables such as individuals' personality (Aytekin, 2005; Bayraktar, 2009; Kerka, 2002), interest areas (Erdemir, 2010; Genç, Kaya & Genç, 2007; Kerka, 2002; Malakçioğlu, 2009; Mikkonen, Heikkilä, Ruohoniemi et al., 2009), abilities (Genç, Kaya, & Genç, 2007; Malakçioğlu, 2009; Kerka, 2002), values (Bayraktar, 2009; Genç, Kaya, & Genç, 2007), self-concept (Kerka, 2002), and achievement level (Ayık, Özdemir, & Yavuz, 2007; McQuaid & Bond, 2004) are examined and influential on career choice. In the current study, participants stated that they were not able to control some individual factors and those factors impacted their career choice. It can be said that this finding in the study is parallel to some study results in the relevant literature. In other words, the individual factors in participants impact their career developments and they also perceive that they cannot control this impact. Also, Bright, Pryor, & Harpham (2005) stated that an individual factor such as the locus of control was a variable associated with reporting chance events in career choice. This could be based on, as indicated previously, cultural orientation as well as lack of knowledge about individual factors that could impact individuals' careers. A review of efforts associated with career counselling, particularly in Turkey, shows that mostly services focusing on test application and sharing test results are provided (Korkut, 2007). In other words, rather than assisting individuals to successfully complete their career development tasks, experts in this area provide both individuals and families with limited services during

the career choice phase. Hence, participants may not have an adequate number of opportunities to notice and control their individual factors.

The last theme included in the current study is about political/legal factors. Individuals considered the changing system or rights obtained in Turkey as *chance*. A male participant stated the following about the impact of the system of preferences changing during high school years on him:

I was a numerical learner in high school...When I took the Higher Education Entrance test, I had timing issues due to anxiety based on taking the test for the second time. Therefore, I failed the Science section...what I consider chance is about the provided opportunity to choose a major beyond area preferences. Hence, I enrolled in psychological counseling-guidance. I aimed at law in the beginning; however, now I think I fortunately did not get it.

Occasionally changing educational policies in Turkey may pose a vague situation for students. In the above example, the individual could not previously imagine choosing a major beyond his area; however, he was able to re-structure it as chance. For instance, in a study conducted by Ozsari (2008), it was found that students' anxieties increased more due to unclear test content in the Public Personnel Selection Examination (PPSE), a test given to select teachers among candidates to be employed in public schools, no correspondence between test content and school curriculum, and vague numbers of appointment. Similarly, Çelikten, Şanal, and Yeni (2005) stated that students experience anxiety about success in PPSE as well as whether or not they will be appointed to a position.

A male participant in the current study stated the following about the impact of the changing scoring system on his career: *"As I was a graduate of teacher training high school, I had some bonus points on my preference for teaching and I picked that major. Without those bonus points, I cannot know where I would end up."* For students at teacher training high schools when choosing the teaching profession, receiving some bonus points, in Turkey, could be considered a special right. This right allows students' university preferences to be directed towards a different and higher position. For students in those schools, this is a positive experience; in other words, graduating from such schools increases students' options. On the other hand, a female participant emphasizing the favorableness in university entrance tests stated the following about picking a major based on scores and not ending up in a department as she wished: *"What was negative about career choice was inadequate score to attend the department I wished for."* A male participant emphasizing the impact of scores in university entrance tests stated the following about picking a major based on his score: *"My career choice was not difficult. I took the university test; the results were announced and I picked whatever was available based on my score..."* Another male participant emphasizing the scores stated the following: *"I was lucky in my career choice. This job required high scores when I included my preferences. However, later, out of luck, the required scores were reduced and I got this major."* In Turkey, although the occasional changes that cannot be estimated and can be fast developing in testing system in education impact the students negatively, these changes can occasionally increase students' opportunities and the unfavorable situation may medi-

ate into favorableness. Studies (Korkut-Owen, 2008; Korkut-Owen, Kecipir, Özdemir et al., 2011) conducted in Turkey found that often changing education and legal processes impacted individuals' career development. Individuals are expected to perceive those conditions and events as uncontrollable events because individuals cannot be influential on changing education and legal processes.

Finally, while most of the participants noticed chance events in their career development ($n = 69$), it was observed that some of them did not ($n=33$). As the legal and educational process has changed frequently in developing countries such as Turkey was observed, it was surprising that the 33 of the participants did not indicate that chance events affect their career development. Krumboltz (2009) indicated that unplanned events are a constant in life. Instead of letting these events go by, career counselors can help students learn to experience unplanned events and sensitize them to recognize the potential opportunities available to them (Krumboltz, Foley, & Cotter, 2013). From this result of study, it can be said that some participants were less conscious about unplanned events and they may need help to become more conscious one becomes of unplanned events, the more one can be attentive to potential opportunities.

In conclusion, a review of those conditions and events perceived by the participants as unplanned events shows that those conditions in fact can be controlled. Krumboltz (2011) indicated three steps in controlling unplanned events: (1) Before the unplanned event, you take actions that position you to experience it, (2) During the event, you remain alert and sensitive to recognize potential opportunities and, (3) After the event, you initiate actions that enable you to benefit from it. Since happenstance is

not passive in this theory, but instead something that is achieved through actions and thoughtful reflection (Krumboltz, 2009). However, considering that participants attended a university in eastern Turkey and mostly lived in the same area, they can be considered to have more collectivist tendency and not to have improved those competencies adequately. Thus, participants are found to consider themselves passive during the career development process by perceiving some actually controllable social and individual factors as uncontrollable. Based on this, planning some preventive and rehabilitative interventions can be recommended during childhood in order to develop competencies required to transform unplanned events into opportunities in Turkey.

Limitations

Despite the important contributions of the present study noted above, it has a few limitations. In qualitative research, research quality influencing by the researcher's personal biases is one of the limitations (Anderson, 2010). Even though independent researchers coded the data, one should consider the biases of the researchers in interpreting the results. Also, it should be noted that the participants of the study composed of university students who receive education at a mid-size university. Therefore, this limitation should be considered when interpreting the findings, as the findings cannot be representative of other people such as young adolescents, adults or individuals that have not received a university education.

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What Inspires Career Professionals In Ontario's Non-Profit Employment Agencies to Remain Intrinsically Motivated?

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Abstract

This exploratory case study sought to find out what motivates career professionals in Ontario's non-profit employment agencies to reach and exceed their pre-set targets. Unlike profit-earning organizations, career professionals of non-profit employment agencies in Ontario do not get any additional financial incentives for exceeding their targets of helping job seekers find sustainable employment. In this study, seven mid-level managers and seven career professionals of non-profit employment agencies were interviewed. The research used a transformative learning theory lens (Mezirow, 1991), and also an interpretivist framework (Merriam, 1998) to understand the data. A semi-structured interview format was used for the one-on-one interviews. Additional data were collected via document perusal, field notes, and the researcher's reflective journals. The data were coded and analyzed thematically using a content analysis method. Triangulation and member-checking were performed for ensuring reliability of data (Yin, 2009). The study suggests that the career professionals of the seven non-profit employment agencies are by and large, intrinsically motivated, and three of their key motivators are "passion for their jobs", "empathy for the clients" and "changing other people's lives" in a positive way.

The three tiers of government of Canada make various efforts to reduce the rate of unemployment in

Ontario, which is considered a major political, social, and economic issue. CBC News (2018) reported that Canada lost 88,000 jobs during January 2018, and the largest employment declines were in Ontario and Quebec. CBC News (2018) noted that in Ontario, which increased its minimum wage in January 2018, employment rates fell during the month of January, due to losses in part-time work opportunities. CBC News (2018) also indicated that the unemployment rate in the province of Ontario saw very little reduction at 5.5 per cent as fewer people participated in the job market. In response to issues relating to the actual or possible unemployment of Ontarians, a number of not-for-profit organizations in Ontario are delivering various government-funded programs and service to help people find sustainable and meaningful jobs, which means jobs aligned with job seekers' relevant professional fields and/or educational/training backgrounds. These services are tailored to meet each individual job seeker's needs and can be provided to their clients one-to-one or in a group format (Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development, 2014).

Non-profit employment agencies help job seekers find meaningful employment through the support provided by employment counselors and job developers. While employment counselors provide employment preparation services to job seekers, job developers continuously promote job seekers to local employers, ideally helping newcomers, foreign trained professionals and any local job

seekers find meaningful jobs. In the main, employment counselors assess job seekers' employment needs, refer them to appropriate programs and services, assist them in preparing and targeting resumes, and help navigate their job search efforts. Job developers build professional relationships with employers for promoting job seekers to them. They also organize job fairs and recruitment events so that the job seekers can get opportunities to meet with employers. In this study, employment counselors and job developers were operationally termed "career professionals". According to the National Occupational Classification, Government of Canada (2016), employment counselors provide assistance and information to job-seeker-clients (people who are looking for jobs) on all aspects of employment search and career planning. Career professionals also provide advice and information to employer-clients (employers who want to hire candidates through non-profit employment agencies) regarding relevant employment issues and human resource matters. As well, employment counselors are employed by human resource departments of organizations, employment service agencies, consulting firms, correctional facilities, and by federal and provincial governments.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to explore why career professionals of non-profit employment agencies in Ontario are intrinsically motivated to

reach and many times exceed their targets. In addition, the researchers for this study were keenly interested in understanding the impact of the leadership approaches used by mid-level managers on career professionals' intrinsic motivation in non-profit employment agencies in Ontario. At present, non-profit employment agencies help a large number of job seekers including immigrants, youths, and people with multiple employment barriers. They also assist local employers to find suitable candidates for various positions. Hence, not only do they help job seekers find employment, but they also indirectly contribute to the economic growth of the country by assisting employers in filling their vacancies, which in turn leverages the smooth functioning of the manufacturing, service, construction, engineering, financial, information technology (IT), accounting and many other sectors. Many small and medium size businesses benefit from the services rendered by these agencies.

Research Question, Collection and Triangulation of Data

This study sought answers to the question, "What aspects of their work inspire the intrinsic motivation of career professionals in the non-profit employment agencies to reach and sometimes exceed their targets? Typically the employment counselors have a target to serve a certain number of job seekers every month among whom certain portions need to find employment or start training. The job developers' have to meet the target of building business relationships with a certain number of employers, holding employer-events and placing a certain number of job seekers in relevant employment. The perceptions of mid-level managers

and career professionals were drawn upon via one-to-one interviews to respond to research questions. As well, document perusal was drawn upon to provide triangulated data. Triangulation is the process of corroborating evidence from different individuals (e.g., a participant and another type of participant), type of data (e.g., field notes and interviews) or methods of data collection (e.g., documents and interviews) in descriptions and themes in qualitative research (Creswell, 2002).

Literature Review

For this study, research was drawn from peer-reviewed works on motivation of employees of non-profit and government organizations in general which had been published in local and international journals of education, management, and psychology. A literature search was also performed on transformative learning theory (Mezirow, 1991) because that theory was used as the theoretical framework for this study. Mezirow (1991) points to the view that significant learning in our lives involves 'meaning making' which can lead to a transformation of our personality or worldview (Anfara, & Mertz, 2006). Calleja (2014) described the evolution of Mezirow's (1991) transformative learning theory (1991) and pointed out that the theory is grounded in robust theoretical traditions, and presents a process of transformation among adults which leads the learner through a process which sometimes begins with a moment of disorientation and ends in transformative self-reflection that result in the transformation of one's perspective. Literature was also searched on the interpretivist framework (Merriam, 1998). Harrison, Birks, Franklin & Mills (2017) informed that Merriam (1998)

upholds a constructivist approach to case study research, whereby the researcher presuppose that reality is constructed intersubjectively through meanings and understandings build up socially and experientially. The authors also pointed out that, according to Merriam (1998), when information is abundant and concepts abstract, it is important to utilize processes that help interpret, sort, and manage information and that adapt findings to convey clarity and applicability to the results.

After finding literature relevant to the main research question, the findings were reviewed and information was synthesized in the body of the literature review. Key findings from the literature review are briefly discussed below:

In terms of leaders' relationship with frontline staff in non-profit employment agencies, some leaders stay close to the frontline staff and some leaders choose to stay away or be somewhat removed from them. Such leadership tendencies, one way or another, may have an impact on employee motivation. For example, Buskey (2014) pointed out that, in many instances, the further up the organizational hierarchy one goes, 'the more removed from the ground' one becomes. Buskey (2014) defined servant leaders as people who view themselves as instruments of those they serve. Servant leaders tend to rely on expertise and informational power to support and influence others more than the power of their position. Buskey (2014) also indicated that, metaphorically, those who act as servant leaders remain closest to the ground, which in turn, often acts as a motivating force to their followers. This finding was potentially of relevance to the study, which in part, focused on leadership approaches used in Ontario's non-profit employment

agencies and the relationship to employee-motivation.

Vandenabeele (2014) assessed the impact of one particular aspect of transformational leadership behavior - which was, promoting public values on public service motivation in work settings. Public service motivation refers to the motivation to “do good for others and shape the well-being of society” (Perry & Hondeghem, 2008, p. 3). Transformational leadership is popular in public administration as a means to establish a form of “values-based” management in the public sector.

In their paper exploring the impact of leadership on climate and performance of workshops in a non-profit organization, McMurrray, Islam, Sarros, and Pirola-Merlo (2012) asserted that transactional leaders usually work within existing organizational culture(s) to progress and complete goals, while transformational leaders usually try to change culture(s) as they attempt to achieve the organizational goals and mission. Tebeian (2012) conducted a literature review aimed at presenting a new approach to motivating and increasing employees’ performance. His approach was based on the assumption that the leader is the key factor, the generator, and sustainer of a healthy and productive work environment. Tebeian’s (2012) research focused on identifying how two leadership styles, namely transformational and servant leadership are used by existing leaders to achieve desired team performance. Findings from Tebeian’s (2012) study suggest that there is interdependence between the degree of satisfaction and the motivation of employees.

According to Gagne, Forest, Gilbert, Aube, Morin, and Malorni (2010), in broad terms, intrinsic motivation is defined as doing something

for its own sake because it is interesting, meaningful, and enjoyable. This definition was derived from the findings of a study where data were collected through convenience sampling, which, according to Creswell (2002) is the selection of participants because they are willing and available to be studied. The researchers sampled participants from Canadian workers in different industries. Gagne et al. (2010) defined several terms relating to intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Extrinsic motivation was identified in the study as doing something largely for instrumental reasons.

Studies conducted by Becchetti, Castriota and Tortila (2013), and Dwyer et al. (2013) suggest there is a strong presence of both intrinsic motivation amongst employees and transformational leadership in the non-profit sector. Intrinsically motivated workers often find superior non-financial compensation when working in the non-profit industry, and therefore, in effect, agree to sacrifice a part of their wages in return for that work satisfaction (Becchetti, Castriota & Tortila, 2013). Dwyer et al. (2013) also examined the extent to which personal motives and their own or others’ leadership behaviors influence general volunteers’ perceptions of how meaningful their work is, which may subsequently affect higher levels of satisfaction and contribution. Findings of the study of Dwyer et al. (2013) suggest that organizations seeking to enhance employees’ intrinsic appreciation of their work amongst formal and informal leaders should cultivate transformational leadership.

Extrinsic incentives can sometimes be counterproductive in some organizations. Research conducted by Benabou and Triole (2003), and James Jr., (2005) implied that rewards, which are considered im-

portant components of extrinsic motivation, are not necessarily capable of strongly reinforcing people for protracted periods of time. Benabou and Triole (2003) conducted a study to analyze the ‘hidden costs’ of rewards and punishments from an economic and cognitive perspective. Benabou and Triole (2003) showed that rewards might be only weak reinforcers in the short term and that they might have hidden costs, and also that they sometimes became negative reinforcers once they were withdrawn. They also showed in the study that explicit incentives may, but need not, be negative reinforcers; the analysis by Benabou and Triole (2003) actually suggests when, how, and why rewards and punishments work, and when, how and why they backfire. These were useful concepts and background information for the study, which attempted to assess how employees of non-profit employment agencies in Ontario are motivated, and how their intrinsic motivation is influenced by the leadership approaches used by their managers.

While studying the variation in levels of employee intrinsic motivation across 51 countries, Cowley and Smith (2014) found that there is a tendency for public sector workers to have a higher level of intrinsic motivation than private sector workers when there is corruption, which refers to dishonest or fraudulent conduct, at play in the organization. Clearly this finding is far from being a universal or all-encompassing situation/explanation however it also points to value that public sector employees place on pursuing outcomes that are for the public’s benefit.

Also, although Ontario non-profit employment agencies that were studied in this research are not known to have experienced corruption, the research of Cowley and

Smith (2014) brings important aspects of intrinsic motivation to light. Their investigation suggested that the level of corruption in the public sector was likely to affect its mission – a more corrupt public administration was likely to be less attractive to intrinsically motivated workers. The authors showed that corruption had a negative effect on the (average) leader of motivated workers in the public sector relative to the private sector. Cowley and Smith (2014) also showed that intrinsically motivated workers were less likely to work in the public sector when levels of corruption are notable.

Baines et al. (2014) drew on data collected as part of a larger study of the experience of employees of restructuring in the non-profit social services sector in Canada and Australia. This research explored the responses of employees in the non-profit sector to four overlapping interview questions. The questions examined (i) their motivation drawing them to the non-profit sector, (ii) the positive aspects of working in this sector, (iii) the negative aspects of working in the sector, and (iv) if given the power, what would be the main element that they would change in the sector. The study found that working in a job consistent with their values was a major motivation drawing the employees of non-profit organization to the sector. Some participants indicated that an opportunity to work with service users/clients and providing the necessary supports to them was a source of motivation for employees. Findings about negative aspects of working in the non-profit social services included lack of helpful supervision, absence of the opportunity to ‘live their own values in their work’, routine types of tasks in serving people, the presence of increased workplace violence and harassment, intensity of crises and delayed interventions, and stressful

experiences of dealing with other peoples’ experiences. In response to the last question regarding one change that the participants wanted, most respondents nominated increased funding for the sector. However, other respondents also prioritized higher wages for employees, more training for supervisors, and development of leadership capacities, and more focus on management’s priorities with respect to service users and staff.

Overall, findings of the study suggested that values-based practices draw and keep workers working in the non-profit sectors (despite many of the limitations that this sector now commonly faces). Some of the findings of the study of Baines et al. (2014) echo several findings of our study. For example, the literature review revealed that leaders of educational organizations frequently use elements of a transformational leadership style, and this study found that mid-level managers of Ontario’s non-profit employment agencies mostly use elements of transformational leadership. As noted earlier, there are similarities between the educational organizations and non-profit employment agencies in terms of their broader goal of serving the public as the major priority instead of making profits. The literature review pointed out that leaders’ close relationship with frontline staff can motivate employees; similarly, this study also indicated that mid-level managers of non-profit employment agencies maintain a close relationship with career professionals, and this often helps career professionals stay motivated. Further, the literature review suggested that employee motivation is stronger in non-profit organizations than other organizations, and this study showed that generally that these career professionals are intrinsically motivated. The literature review also

pointed out that extrinsic motivation can be counterproductive under certain conditions. Employees’ intrinsic motivation in public and non-profit sector is stronger compared to other sectors. Jobs that are, in effect, consistent with employees’ values can be a major source of motivation, drawing prospective employees of non-profit organization to the sector.

Methodology

An exploratory case study methodology was used to investigate what motivates career professionals in Ontario to reach and exceed their targets. This study also examines the impact of leadership approaches used by mid-level managers on career professionals’ intrinsic motivation in non-profit employment agencies in the province. Yin (2009) indicated that if all the cases turn out as expected, these cases, in aggregate, would provide compelling support for the initial set of propositions. As noted above, this qualitative case study was conducted to explore the reasons why career professionals of non-profit employment agencies in Ontario are intrinsically motivated.

Gay, Mills and Airasian (2012) define case study research as a qualitative research approach in which researchers focus on a unit of study known as a bounded system (e.g., individual teachers, a classroom, or a school). By contrast, Yin (2009) claims case studies can be qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-method research. According to Eisenhardt (1989), case study is a research strategy which focuses on understanding the dynamics present within single settings. As well, the case study method potentially allows investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events (Yin, 2009).

The research term used for the particular sampling approach employed in this study is termed purposeful sampling, in which, researchers intentionally select individuals and sites to learn or understand the central phenomenon (Creswell, 2002). Qualitative sampling is a process of selecting a small number of individuals for a study in such a way that it is hoped the individuals chosen will be good key informants who will contribute to the researcher's understanding of a given phenomenon (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2012). Sampling in case study research is often purposeful, because it includes the selection of information-rich cases for in-depth study. The case study approach offers flexibility in terms of the justification of sampling choice, the number of investigated cases, and sampling techniques (Mills, Durepos & Wiebe, 2010).

As previously noted, the interviews for this study were semi-structured rather than fully structured or entirely pre-set and fixed in nature. This interview technique was helpful in building a rapport with the participants because it easily enabled an opportunity to ask tailored follow-up questions to each individual's responses.

The documents collected for this study included printed, published, and online information about the Employment Ontario program and different bridging programs delivered by non-profit employment agencies in Ontario designed for helping job seekers find sustainable jobs, along with policies and procedures of respective organizations, and various online and printed reports on such programs.

As noted earlier, career professionals (employment consultants and job developers) and mid-level managers of Ontario's non-profit

employment agencies comprised the units of analysis. Patton (2015) stated that one or more groups are selected as the units of analysis when there is some important characteristic that separate people into groups and when that characteristic has important implications for the particular setting or program. Only those mid-level managers who supervised career professionals were considered for inclusion in the study. Other managers responsible for functional areas of management including finance, marketing, HR and IT were excluded.

Data Analysis

This section briefly outlines the plan that was used for analyzing data. Yin (2009) suggests four general strategies of analyzing data for case studies, such as relying on theoretical proposition, developing a case description, using both qualitative (and quantitative data if relevant) and examining rival explanations. A theoretical proposition shapes the data collection plan and therefore gives priorities to the relevant analytic strategies. The following steps were taken for analyzing the data of the study:

Transcription: Transcription is the process of converting audiotape recordings or field notes into text data (Creswell, 2002). First the audiotape interviews were transcribed verbatim in word processed documents. The transcriptions were returned to participants for checking, and possible amendment or additional comments. Field notes were taken during the interview process, and later these field notes were read when analyzing data. The transcribed data were placed into several tables for organizing them.

Organizing Data: Two matrices or tables of sources were used to help organize data. For example, all audio-taped interviews were

transcribed first, and then relevant information was entered in the first table named "Data Analysis Organizer for Codes". On that table, all interview questions were listed on the first column in the left side; answers from each participant to each question were listed in the next columns. Similar answers were colour-coded and collapsed into patterns or codes. The other table listed all codes in the left hand column, recurrence of each code was listed in the next column, emerging themes were listed in the next column, and the pertinent leadership approaches were listed in the last column (to the right).

Data Analysis: A preliminary exploratory analysis in qualitative research consists of obtaining the general sense of the data, memoing ideas, thinking about the organization of the data, and considering whether more data are needed (Creswell, 2002). Also, in the analysis of the data, researchers sometimes need to use a 'window' (Guest, McQueen & Namey, 2012), a process of focusing on some of the data and disregarding other parts of it (Creswell, 2002). In broad terms, content analysis method was used in analyzing data, which, according to Patton (2015), refers to searching the text for and counting recurring words or themes. Patton (2015) stated, "Even more generally, content analysis refers to any qualitative data reduction and sense-making efforts that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempt to identify core consistencies and meanings" (p. 541). Patton (2015) referred to an example of case studies, which can be content analyzed. The researchers have deployed content analysis method as the 'window' for focusing on important data for this case study.

The transcripts of 14 participants were read and recurring phrases or words were identified, which

helped us to code information. We combined similar codes together to obtain important themes. This process has been graphically shown as below in Figure 1. Figure 1 shows the three phases of data analysis that were used for obtaining themes of the study from the raw data. In this exploratory case study there was no statistical generalizability possible due to the design (and especially the sample size). However, this type of case study offers analytic generalization (Yin, 2009).

An Interpretivist stance was adopted in this research whereby there was a clear attempt to understand phenomena through the meanings that people assigned to them. Interpretive research focuses on the complexity of human sense-making as the situation emerges. According to Thanh and Thanh (2015), it is theoretically understood that the interpretive

paradigm allows researchers to view the world through the perceptions and experiences of the participants in this study. An interpretive approach provided a view of the world through the perceptions and experiences of the participants of our research, namely career professionals and mid-level managers of Ontario’s non-profit employment agencies.

Findings and Discussion

As noted earlier, the analysis of data revealed seven themes obtained from career professionals’ data: passion, change other peoples’ lives positively, empathy, putting in a lot of efforts, exceeding targets to help the community and for their own satisfaction, past experience brings career professionals to this profession, and sticking to this profession because of loving this job. Data obtained from

seven career professionals were analyzed by taking the following steps: Table 1 depicts how the themes were generated on the basis of recurring patterns/themes.

Passion

All seven career professionals who took part in the interviews indicated that they are passionate about their work. It is noteworthy that each of the participants faced challenges in finding their own jobs, which, in part, made them motivated to work in the non-profit employment agencies because they could relate to the grief of being unemployed and joy of eventually finding employment.

As depicted below, the participants were passionate about their work. All of them greatly valued the fact that they were serving the community and changing the lives of

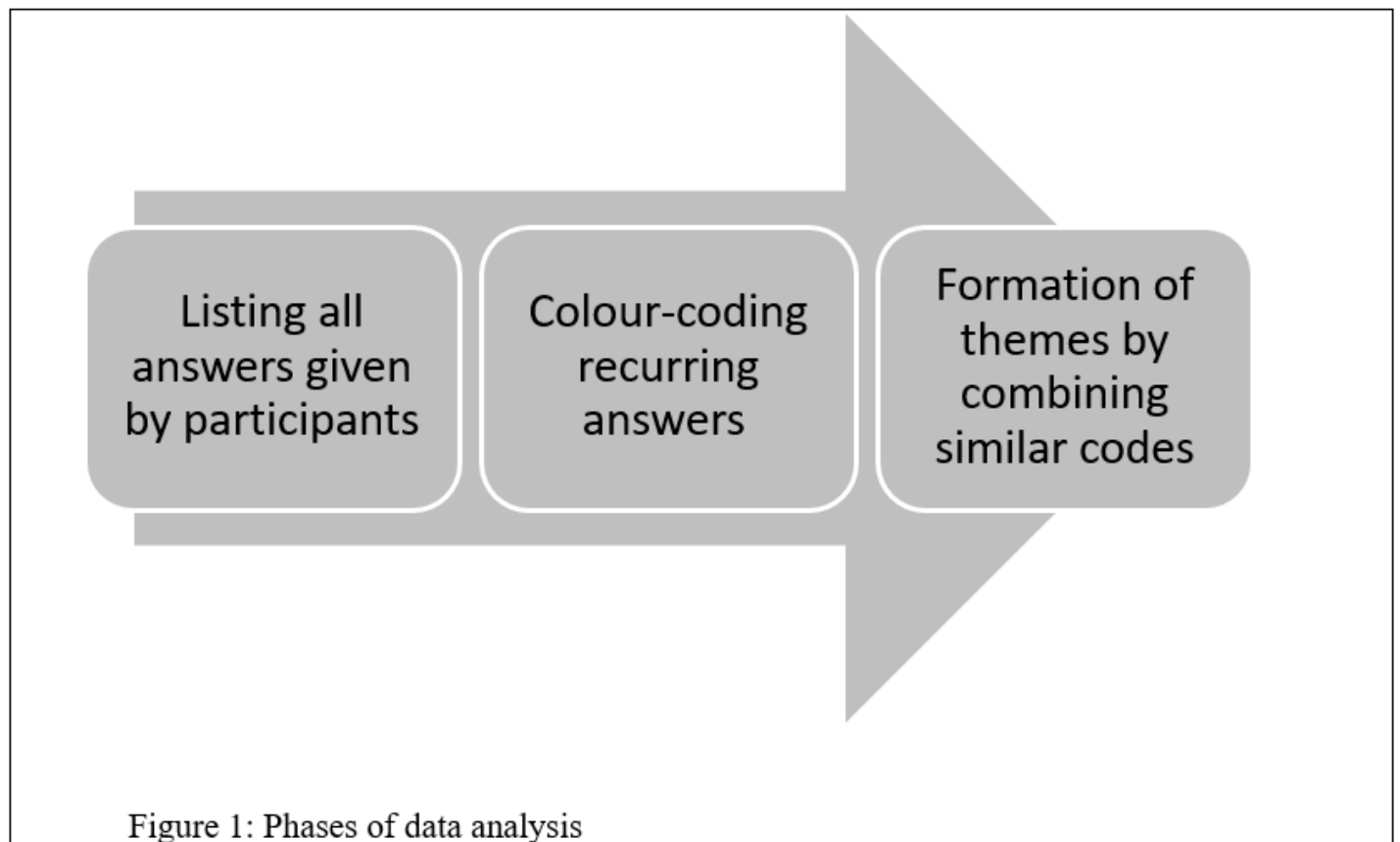


Figure 1: Phases of data analysis

Table 1

Patterns/Codes, Recurrence of Data and Themes from Career Professionals' Interviews

Patterns/Codes	Recurrence	Themes
Passionate about work	7	Passion
Change other people's lives	4	Changing other people's lives
Empathy	4	Empathy
Putting in a lot of effort	5	Putting in a lot of effort
Past experience	3	Past experience brings career professionals to this profession
Exceed targets to help the community	5	Exceed targets to help the community, and for their own satisfaction (as employees)
- Love this job	3	Sticking to this profession because of loving this job
- Do something meaningful	4	
- How work tasks contribute to organization's vision is clear	4	
- Inner peace	7	
- Managers recognize good performance	4	
- Managers delegate authority	6	

their clients. One of the career professionals said, "Yes I am very much passionate about my work because I am working with newcomers in particular." She also described how she loves her job, "I mean I love what I do and why, I believe this is the only thing I could do ..." Another career professional announced, "Well, serving people is my passion". Another participant said, "This is the work that I like. I liked it from the beginning. And to what degree, I can say it is the most like ... the top level of my career ... like I always wanted to be to work with [the] employment sector." Gagne and Deci (2005) indicated intrinsic motivation involves people doing an activity because they find it interesting and derive spontaneous satisfaction from the activity itself. All career professionals indicated that they love their jobs, because of what they help to create, namely opportunities for unemployed individuals to

secure employment in their respective fields and this, in a substantial way, suggests that they were all largely intrinsically motivated.

Changing Other People's Lives

All participants shared the same perception, namely that they were passionate about their work because they potentially changed other people's lives positively through their work. One of the participants said, "I have been working in this field for a long time, and it is a hugely rewarding opportunity for me to work with people and add value to other people's lives." Another participant, who has been passionate about helping others and changing their lives since his childhood, commented about this by saying that as he grew older, his habit of helping others also grew bigger. Another participant reflected on the fact that he himself had struggled

to find a decent job. At that time, employment services were not as available in Ontario as they are now, and the lack of support services made it harder for him to obtain a sustainable job. Referring to his experience, he said, "20 years ago I'm talking, when there were not that many services for newcomers (people who came to Canada within the last 3 years), I felt so lost and confused. So many complications! I joined this sector, in order to have others not repeat those horrible experiences that newcomers [often experience]. What happened to me should not happen to them." Another participant, who had prior experience working as a recruiter in the private sector, elected not to take on higher paying jobs because she loved changing other peoples' lives in a positive way via what she could achieve in her current role. Those perceptions suggest that these career professionals had chosen this field, and were work-

ing contently (at least in part) because they were not only doing this for their clients but also their own sakes as it was an interesting, purposeful and enjoyable work. The perceptions of all these career professionals showed they were largely intrinsically motivated in terms of their work.

Empathy

Out of the seven career professionals who were interviewed, six had an experience of immigrating to Canada and personally facing the struggle of looking for a job. They understood the complexity of what it took to move to a different country permanently in order to start a new life. Hence, it was not difficult for them to put themselves in the newcomer job seekers' shoes. One of the career professionals stated, "At one stage I had a similar situation, I was looking for jobs so I know how valuable it is to give some kind of guidance to the newcomers, job seekers and foreign-trained professionals." The one career professional who was born and raised in Canada, faced this issue in one respect namely that she had also experienced unemployed many years earlier. She experienced what unemployment did to her self-esteem, self-efficacy and her entire perspective on life. Another career professional reflected, "... when I landed myself, nobody helped me, nobody guided me in those days ...". So all of the career professionals empathized with newcomers (as well as others) looking for jobs in this province or other parts of the country. This may be one of the reasons why this sector employs so many foreign-trained-professionals. Career professionals' empathy towards their clients (job seekers) can be viewed from two different perspectives. First, those instances of empathy can be

considered (together) as an example of intrinsic motivation because the respective career professionals helping others to find employment. Second, almost all of the career professionals experienced the same challenge when they immigrated, or graduated from an educational institution, and started to look for work.

Putting in a Lot of Effort

All seven career professionals confirmed that they put a lot of effort into their work. One of the career professionals indicated that he did not only put his effort to meet his numeric targets, but he also tried to set a high standard overall for his quality of service: "I do put a lot of effort, and I always try to meet my targets...not only the quantitative targets but also the qualitative aspects of my service." Another career professional stated, "Yes, I do definitely put in a lot of effort to ... meet my targets, because it's ... not that everything is like a financial issue ... I mean money is an important issue; however, it's also something you believe in and you contribute to and ... it depends on overall work ethics, I believe." Becchetti et al. (2013) stated that intrinsically motivated workers who find that their motivation is satisfied through the work they do and in the mission of their organization, are willing, in effect, to donate labour to them by putting in longer hours, shortening lunch-time, and being very work-focused. In light of the claim made by Becchetti et al. (2013), and the quotes from participants, it is evident these career professionals can be positioned as being largely, intrinsically motivated.

Each of the seven career professionals shared that they exceeded their respective targets to help the community and the unemployed in-

dividuals concerned. Those reasons make sense because, in the absence of additional financial rewards other than salary and benefits, career professionals found meaningful work in helping as many unemployed clients as possible and in that effort, exceeded the agency imposed targets. That said, some of the non-profit agencies may also want their career professionals to exceed targets for ensuring that the funding- ministry continues to provide funding. One of the participants stated, "That's my target, a personal target". Her statement referred to being intrinsically motivated because of her own love of doing the job. Another career professional's answer to the question of why he exceeded his targets was similar, "... I feel this is a very satisfying role I am playing right now and it gives me huge pleasure and absolutely I feel good when I can see that some of my clients, or the clients of my organization have found jobs, ...they are settled in their respective fields, ... there is a huge value-adding ... and also the demand is increasing from the job seekers' point of view. It is not that I limit myself with certain numerical targets ... I always try to increase targets both in terms of quality and quantity." Another career professional's answer to this question could be viewed from a different perspective. That participant said, "... we work to exceed our targets, that's not only because it's like we have extra time, or we want to work late hours, that's because we have clients who are looking for jobs. It's not that we only achieve our targets and we sit back. We feel there's still more needs like, the need for work". Only by exceeding his target would it be enough to get sufficient employment opportunities for most of his clients.

According to one of the career professionals, helping clients find

jobs is a valuable activity, and Gagne et al (2010) described such a scenario as one where people accept the regulation of the activity because it is judged valuable/useful and it fits their value system. This type of motivation has been described by Vallerand and Ratelle (2004) as one which makes people perform an action out of obligation to avoid anxiety, shame, and pressure.

Past Experience Brings Many Career Professionals to this Profession

When asked why they decided to become a career professional, one of the career professionals said, “The first reason is that I have over 25 years of experience in the non-profit sector mostly focused on human potential development.” Two other career professionals mentioned previous relevant experience as being a reason for choosing this profession. One of the career professional’s reasons for choosing this profession was because, “... personally I have a strong desire to help people, and I have a strong desire to feel that I am doing something meaningful.” Another career professional noted that although his job in Canada paid his bills, he did not see much prospect for promotion or career advancement there. He said, “... so forget about promotions, or ... incentives, or ... any increases [of] any kind. The reason again, it’s my pure commitment, and dedication, and passion to do something different, and bring some positive changes in the lives of newcomers.” Hence, one of the reasons why he chose this profession was to help people, which implies he was intrinsically drawn to the work. One participant also mentioned that he did not intend to leave his job (despite not having much potential for career prospects), because

of perceived limited employment opportunities for himself in the labour market.

In responding to a question about why they remain in this profession, three career professionals said that they stayed in this profession because they loved this particular job. In one of the career professionals’ words, “I always wanted to become a career professional”. Another career professional confirmed that working as a career professional was something that she truly valued. According to Deci and Ryan (1987), intrinsic motivation means that the task itself is a reward, and intrinsically motivated people thus consider themselves as initiators of their own behavior, select desired outcomes, and choose their own ways to achieve them. Six out of seven participants indicated that the major reason for their sticking to this profession was their love of being a career professional. One of the career professionals indicated that she continued to help different community agencies to assist their clients in finding jobs. When helping people to find employment, she did not care whether the job seekers were clients of her organization or other organizations.

Career Professionals’ Expressions of Intrinsic Motivation through a Transformative Learning Theory Lens

Findings from this study suggest that by and large, career professionals of non-profit employment agency were generally intrinsically motivated. While describing the reasons for working in Ontario’s non-profit employment agencies, career professionals talked of passion, gaining satisfaction by changing other people’s lives, having empathy for job seekers, helping the community, and

loving their jobs. They also pointed out that they put a lot of efforts in to performing their work because they found this job rewarding. Most of them also reflected on their previous experience of looking for job in Canada as newcomer, or as a Canadian graduate, “starting out” and indicated that they found it rewarding to help people get jobs and reduce their struggles to enter the labour market. As indicated earlier, intrinsic motivation involves people doing an activity because they find it interesting and derive spontaneous satisfaction from the activity itself (Gagne & Deci, 2005). One of the career professionals interviewed for this study (a job developer) commented,

I am extremely passionate about my work. As a matter of fact, I am a 24/7 job developer, and employment advisor ... because you want to know why? Because once upon a time, I too, was unemployed, and ... what that did to my self-esteem, my self-efficacy, and my entire perspective of life was detrimental. So I was a client of [name of the agency where she sought employment services], I came in because I was having ... for 25 years I was having the most painful career process ... ever ... I just couldn’t figure out what I wanted to do, where I wanted to be and it’s not like I didn’t go to school, I still went to university, I made it through - but it was just brutal, and it was just taking such a toll on every aspect of my life. That [unfavorable job search experience] motivated me even further for my passion and to make sure that everybody has an opportunity to have the dignity of an employment, for sure, meaningful and long-time sustainable employment ... so

that's kind of what led me into this whole world.

The same career professional shared at one stage of her interview that she could have easily taken a job as a recruiter and made a lot more money had she wanted, but she decided to stick to this profession because of being intrinsically motivated toward the job.

One statement by the Career professional pertains to her capacity for empathy. Most of the responses of the career professionals showed a sense of empathy and how the quest to help achieve employment opportunities for clients was intrinsically motivating for the participants. As we look through the lens of transformative learning theory (Mezirow, 1991), the above statements imply that the career professionals, in broad terms, are transformative learners, because, according to Mezirow (1997), transformative learners move toward a frame of reference that is self-reflective and integrative of experience. The career professionals above reflected on their previous experience of facing multiple barriers while job searching in Canada, and indicated that those experiences motivated them to become career professionals so that they could help job seekers in finding sustainable employment. Another career professional said:

When I was younger, I enjoyed helping my mom with household works. As I grew older, that habit grew and I wanted to help others as well. I like helping people find solutions that met their specific needs. Working as a career specialist is a rewarding job, and I like it. On a scale of 10, 1 is lowest, and I would say I like it as 9. I am passionate about making a difference. When I am involved

with a project at work, I want most of all to achieve success. I feel the same way about what I do in my personal life.

The above statement illustrates how this career professional's values, and relational tendency to help his mom as a child gradually shaped employment choices, and eventually led him to choose job development as his career. As he grew older, he extended his passion to encompass helping people in a larger context. One process of learning for adults, according to Mezirow (1997), is to elaborate an existing point of view and expand the range or intensity of that point of view enactment.

The career professionals also referred to some management practices that were indicative of their receiving intrinsic motivation through the leadership of mid-level managers. One of the career professionals informed that she receives clear guidance from her manager regarding her target, what to do to meet the target, and how to meet her target. Her supervisor explained to her the importance of meeting targets, and also points out how the survival of the organization depends on reaching, and often exceeding targets. When required, her supervisor showed her how she should do her job so that standards are met. Her supervisor also provides some on-the-job learning opportunities for career professionals. One of the career professionals indicated that she found such support, guidance, and opportunities for open communication very helpful for her to strategize how to reach and exceed targets. At the same time, she enjoys some autonomy in using her own judgment and discretion about doing her job. Her supervisor delegates some projects or tasks to her sometimes. She observed, "... we

sometimes get small funding from here and there, and that funding has to be utilized and ... [to] introduce new things, and I believe I'm the ... one of the most versatile one in the agency. I'm always picked up ... and this is easier on their employers' perspective as well because, for a small project prospect like that it's not easy to hire a new person."

Another career professional said that he enjoys his work environment, where he can seek suggestions from his supervisor whenever needed. He pointed out that the career professionals are given the opportunity to discuss different barriers they faced in helping clients, how to overcome them, and how they can attain success in achieving targets. His supervisor delegates important tasks to him and provides him with necessary autonomy to carry out the task, and also demonstrates how to do the job. When career professionals achieve success, his supervisor, a mid-level manager, recognizes that by arranging occasional potluck or pizza lunch, or dinner for the team. He stated: "...so [those] who have performed well get recognition in terms of ... like most of ... all get gifts or we can say they [get] some recognition awards and all those things were distributed in that annual dinner." Therefore, success in his organization is celebrated during annual work dinners, and by providing recognition awards to team members. Two more career professionals' experiences echoed the above description. They both commented that their supervisors, who are mid-level managers, play a supportive role and provide them with necessary supports so that they can reach and exceed targets without any issues. Those mid-level managers maintain an open door policy for career professionals which enhances career professionals' intrinsic motivation.

Through the analysis of information and discussion of findings, it became increasingly evident that the career professionals in this study of several non-profit employment agencies in Ontario were largely intrinsically motivated and had themselves been shaped by transformative learning experiences.

Conclusion

The key research question asked what motivates career professionals of Ontario's non-profit employment agencies to reach and exceed their targets. The study showed, on the basis of data including voices obtained from career professionals of Ontario's non-profit employment agencies, that, by and large, they are motivated to reach and exceed their targets because they love their job, are able to empathize with the circumstances and needs of the job seekers, and want to help those people improve their lives via the gaining of employment. Notably, the career professionals' intrinsic motivation was shaped, in part, by their own past experience of struggles in finding employment. More pragmatically, the career professionals remained grateful to be working in a job where there was ongoing need for such services. Each of the career professionals' perceptions revealed considerable empathy, and a strong willingness to help job seekers find employment. The career professionals emphasized that they loved changing their clients' lives by assisting them to find meaningful jobs.

Ontario's non-profit employment agencies play a crucial role in building Ontario's economy by bridging the gap between job vacancies and job seekers, and by preparing and connecting skilled professionals with Ontario's major employers. Career

professionals impact the lives of job seekers, and mid-level managers impact the lives of career professionals. Hence, it is imperative for non-profit employment agencies to build and sustain the intrinsic motivation of career professionals for agency productivity purposes, helping the economy of Ontario grow, by reducing the unemployment rate in the province. Ontario's non-profit employment agencies also provide opportunities to unemployed or underemployed individuals to gain employment or new career work experience.

Several limitations were encountered in conducting this study. As noted before, one of them concerned the small sample size. The perceptions and experiences gleaned from seven career professionals and seven mid-level managers cannot be considered as typical representation of the population; however, the data obtained through semi-structured interviews provided us with the opportunity to obtain deeper insights into the concepts of Ontario's career professionals' intrinsic motivation. Despite the study's limitations, it is clear that this sector and the employees of these agencies are contributing significantly to the well-being of thousands of Ontario residents, and indirectly the prosperity of the province and indeed Canada as a whole. As a result, it is important for Ontario's non-profit employment agencies to maintain an environment where career professionals' intrinsic motivation is supported, so that they can continue to be highly generative in their work and engage meaningfully with both clients and their own career purposes.

The elements of transformational leadership employed by mid-level managers complement the intrinsic motivation of the career professionals and in that respect are an important consideration for

those leaders who wish to support colleagues who are passionate about their work and the positive impact they have on their clients, job seekers and employers.

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Another Story to Tell: Outcomes of a Single Session Narrative Approach, Blended with Technology

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Abstract

The present outcome study of an initial session of career counselling using a narrative framework and method of practice builds on findings of an earlier outcome study that examined multiple sessions of the same narrative framework. Career development professionals frequently struggle to engage clients in an initial session and may lose opportunities to help clients more by continuing on to further sessions. The purpose of this study is to illustrate the effectiveness of a narrative framework blended with technology, within a single career session with a client. This study found statistically significant increases in all study variables including optimism, clarity, confidence, organized thinking, and internal and external search instrumentality from the beginning to the end of a single session. These results, coupled with monthly client return rates of up to 85%, suggest that career professionals seeking to engage clients in an initial session and have them return for future sessions – to tell another story – should consider utilizing some of the strategies and interventions included in this study’s narrative framework. Recommendations for career professionals seeking to increase client engagement in and after an initial session are provided, such as: elicit client stories, embrace evidence-based approaches, and utilize tools to help clients organize their thinking.

Keywords: career planning, career counselling, narrative career counselling, narrative career development, career management, outcome study, single session, blended delivery, counselling technology

Purpose of Study and Literature Review

Narrative frameworks for career counselling and coaching such as life design (Savickas, 2012), the storied approach (Brott, 2001), and OneLifeTools/CareerCycles (OLTCC) narrative method of practice (Franklin, 2014), among others, continue to gain popularity in the career development field. Moreover, numerous benefits of narrative methodologies exist as described by scholars who explore narrative approaches and qualitative assessments from diverse perspectives (Abkhezr, McMahon, Glasheen, & Campbell, 2018; Busacca & Rehfluss, 2017; McMahon, Watson, & Lee, 2018; Stebleton, 2010).

In parallel, there is a growing need to evaluate the effectiveness of these frameworks through outcome evaluations leading to evidence-based approaches among the career development community (Stebleton, Franklin, Lee, & Kaler, 2019; Taylor & Savickas, 2016). Following from these two themes, the primary purpose of this study is to build on the previously published results of a retrospective outcome study of a narrative method of practice across multiple sessions by focusing on outcomes of a single career counselling session using the

same narrative method (Franklin, Yanar, & Feller, 2015). The purpose of this inquiry is to answer: “What works in an initial, single session? Do clients experience significant increases in confidence and optimism, clarity and organized thinking, internal & external search instrumentality?” This inquiry evaluates the outcomes of a single narrative career counselling session different from the 2015 study which evaluated programs of, on average, five sessions.

A secondary purpose of this study is to respond to a common and frustrating phenomenon among career professionals that clients frequently end their engagement after a single session. This is particularly prevalent in post-secondary settings. For example, Whiston, Li, Mitts, and Wright (2017) found that the number of sessions and hours in career counselling were significant predictors on career decision-making self-efficacy measures as well as support for counsellors to engage in psychoeducational approaches; a narrative strategy is one such example.

Practice Setting and Overview of Initial Session

This outcome study was carried out at CareerCycles, a fee-for-service career management practice based in Toronto, Canada, with associates based across Canada. All associates utilize the same narrative method of practice animated by the two linked processes of “career and life clarification” and “intentional

exploration” described and illustrated in a case study in Franklin and Feller (2017). Associates have counselling or coaching training, and are assigned to clients based primarily on fit, and secondarily on availability. When working with clients, career professionals operationalize the narrative method of practice using a web-application called Online Storyteller, thus offering clients blended-delivery, including human intervention and technology. To clarify, CareerCycles is a practice known for using narrative tools and methods. OneLifeTools is a separate entity providing tools to helping professionals including Online Storyteller and Who You Are Matters!, a gamified intervention built around the same narrative framework, and offered monthly in CareerCycles’ practice. The suite of narrative tools and methods have been referred to as OneLifeTools/CareerCycles or OLTCC in several publications.

In an initial session, the career professional uses a flexible structure to guide the hour to accomplish seven tasks: elicit the client’s presenting question and initial career possibilities, explore career and life wants and dislikes, introduce the OneLifeTools/CareerCycles clarification-and-exploration framework, begin to use the Online Storyteller to populate the client’s Clarification Sketch with initial items, reflect together with the client on one or more client experiences or stories while adding more content to Clarification Sketch, generate new and context-sensitive possibilities, and finally, recommend next steps. These steps and the way the practitioners use the narrative framework to help clients find their way – a term called wayfinding – are described in more detail by Franklin, Botelho, and Graham (2017). In this setting, the rate at which clients return after an

initial session for a paid program of five to eight sessions has reached 85% in some months, with the majority of months reaching above 50% (Franklin & Mackey, 2018).

Four aspects of these initial sessions are noteworthy, providing context for the present study and outcomes. First, sharing with the client a graphic “roadmap” of the process gives the career professional a sense of direction for the session, which, in turn, the client notices and feels confident that there is a structured and understandable method. Second, the practitioner aims to shift negativity and complaints to positive language. For example, a client complaint about “boring tasks” is transformed into a future desire for “intellectual stimulation.”

Third, every initial session moves toward the client sharing at least one story or narrative with the career professional. A client story may be any experience such as a job, role, volunteer opportunity, travel and so on. In initial sessions, the career professional elicits a story that the client feels good about, with the intention of increasing positive client affect thus invoking Fredrickson’s (2001, pp. 219-220) “broaden and build” phenomenon. To gather and organize elements from client stories into a Clarification Sketch, open-ended questions are used such as: “What did you like about this story? What skills and knowledge did you use? How would people have described you? What interests were revealed? What possibilities come to mind as you reflect on this story?”

Finally, new and context sensitive possibilities are generated collaboratively in response to the client’s issue or question, stories, and needs. Although unique from some career assessments with which a client may be familiar, these future possibilities

align with the client’s situation, and are approved by the client for addition into their Clarification Sketch. In this way, clients do not encounter occupational suggestions which often accompany test-and-tell results that clients may describe as “silly” and are therefore dismissed, such as “funeral director,” “vending machine replenisher,” or “potato farmer,” all real occupational recommendations identified by CareerCycles clients.

Methods

Participants

Sixty clients (we use the term clients for study participants) who had completed the initial consultation responded to the online survey. Fifty-six percent of clients identified as women and 63% of clients were aged 25-44. Almost all had at least a bachelor’s degree, with 36% having a graduate degree. There were no significant differences in the study variables as described below among different demographic groups.

Design and Procedure

CareerCycles clients who completed a single, initial consultation of one hour were sent an online survey for the purposes of evaluating the effectiveness and impact of the consultation. The survey provided information on confidentiality and consent and included questions focused on three items: exploratory consultation quality, exploratory consultation effectiveness, and internal and external search instrumentality (Stumpf, Colarelli & Hartman, 1983). The survey also included three open-ended questions to elicit qualitative responses about what clients found helpful and how the session compared with their expectations. Specific measures

and reasons for choosing them follow.

At the time of the survey, all clients had completed the first consultation. Using a number of measures, clients were asked to reflect on how they think and feel in relation to their career at the time of the survey as well as how they thought and felt about their career before the exploratory consultation session. This post-pre or retrospective assessment approach has been recommended for career intervention evaluation and has strengths and weaknesses (Hiebert & Magnusson, 2014), including the practical strength of being a single point in time survey thus increasing likelihood of completion.

Exploratory consultation quality was measured by two statements. Clients were asked to rate their overall exploratory consultation experience and their working relationship with their CareerCycles associate on a 5-point scale of 1=unacceptable to 5=exceptional.

Exploratory consultation effectiveness was assessed by four items using the 5-point scale (1=unacceptable to 5=exceptional) recommended by Hiebert and Magnusson (2014): “Optimism I feel about my career,” “Closeness to achieving clarity about my career question or challenge,” “Confidence I feel in my ability to manage my career,” and “Organization of my thoughts about my career situation.” Optimism and confidence were selected to align with two of the four subscales of psychological capital (Luthans, Youssef, & Rawski, 2007), which was measured in the 2015 outcome study (Franklin, Yanar & Feller, 2015). Clarity and organization of thoughts were chosen as key variables clients seek in response to their presenting questions related to lack of clarity and confused thinking, respectively.

Internal and external search instrumentality were measured by sub-scales of the Career Exploration Survey (Stumpf, Colarelli & Hartman, 1983). Internal search instrumentality measures beliefs about the usefulness of self-exploration activities in obtaining career goals using four items: “Assessing myself for the purpose of finding a job that meets my needs,” “Learning more about myself,” “Understanding a new relevance of past behaviour for my future career,” and “Focusing my thoughts on me as a person.” External search instrumentality measures the usefulness of occupational exploration in obtaining career goals using three items: “Obtaining information on the labour market and general job opportunities in my career area,” “Initiating conversations with friends and relatives about careers,” and “Initiating conversations with other professionals about careers.” Clients were asked to rate the probability that internal and external activities will result in obtaining their career goals after the session and before the session using a 5-point scale: 1=not probable to 5=very probable.

Three open-ended questions further explored clients’ experiences with the initial session. Clients were asked to briefly describe what they found most helpful about the initial consultation, how it was helpful, how their experience with the initial consultation compared with their expectations, and how and in what ways the initial session was different than other career counselling/coaching programs. Clients’ responses to open-ended questions shed light on their experiences with the consultation.

Results

Overall, clients reported high satisfaction with the exploratory consultation service ($M=4.50$) and their relationship with the CareerCycles associate ($M=4.52$). An open-ended question explored clients’ experience with the exploratory consultation session. Table 1 below shows the means, standard deviations, and correlations of all study variables.

Overall, clients found the holistic, client-centred focus of the session helpful. Examples of responses, shown below and throughout this section have been selected to illustrate findings: “Information about me was discovered through conversation rather than questionnaires” and “This is more about me as a person and finding a job that fits me not about making a resume to fit a job” offer a sampling of client experiences.

Most clients reported that the initial session exceeded their expectations, and many mentioned how different it was from expectations because it was narrative and structured. Many clients mentioned the good listening skills of the CareerCycles associate and found the session productive. One client responded: “My experience exceeded my expectations because I was able to formalize a career search idea with the online profile and I left with a small amount of hope for change, which I haven’t felt in years.”

Also, several clients shared that they found the Online Storyteller helpful in mapping out the discussion: “Online Storyteller tool helpful in providing snapshot of breadth of achievements and skill sets.”

Paired-samples t-tests were conducted to assess the differences in clients’ attitudes about their career before the initial session and after they completed it. Compared to earlier

assessments, clients reported feeling more optimistic about their career, feeling closer to achieving clarity about their career question/challenge, feeling more confident in their ability to manage their career, and having better organization of thoughts about their career situation after the first consultation session (See Table 2).

The changes were all statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). These results were reflected in the patterns emerging from clients' responses to the open-ended questions. For example, a client shared feelings of career hope and optimism: "Showing me that there's hope that I will figure out what sort of job I want and then get it" and "Great, at the end I was feeling that there is hope in taking next steps."

Some clients shared that the conversation they had with their associate helped them gain more clarity about their career. One client reported that the initial session "allowed me to identify and define some of the things I'm looking for in a career,"

Another client noted:

I liked that by the end of the session I recognized that there is a light at the end of the tunnel. I can see the possibility of having clarity with my career path and that made me feel confident moving forward.

Some clients reported that after the session they felt more confident about their strengths and abilities:

It was able to help me be more confident that I could get a career I wanted just by looking at myself as well as helping me change some things about my lifestyle that would help me grow as a person.

Clients also shared how the initial session helped them organize their thoughts about their career. Some clients shared that the conversations they had with the CareerCycles associate helped them voice concerns about their career situation and focus on their needs. In particular, one client noted "having someone external to myself gave some insight and instructed new ideas and confirmed some things that I had already thought about." Another client shared how the initial session helped "the way the coach could draw questions from my stories. It was helpful for me to see a different perspective."

Overall, there was a significant increase in internal and external search instrumentality after experiencing the initial consultation as referenced in Table 2. Regarding internal search instrumentality, there was a significant difference in clients' beliefs in the usefulness of internal search activities, such as understanding one's self and focusing on self, needs, and how one's past behavior is related to future career. Open-ended questions also reflected that clients gained a clearer

Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations, Correlations of All Study Variables

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Overall satisfaction	4.50	.61	1										
2. Careercycles associate	4.52	.58	.66**	1									
3. Optimism	3.90	.79	.26*	.21	1								
4. Clarity	3.62	.96	.30*	.31**	.50**	1							
5. Confidence	3.51	1.0	.20	.26*	.52**	.62**	1						
6. Organized thinking	3.63	1.04	.27*	.25*	.46**	.61**	.67**	1					
7. Internal search	4.26	.76	.17	.15	.27*	.31*	.31*	.44**	1				
8. External search	3.89	.87	.11	.10	.33*	.37**	.40**	.41**	.59**	1			
9. Age	2.87	1.10	.08	.23	.06	.03	.13	.04	-.16	-.13	1		
10. Gender	1.56	.50	.01	.03	.01	.05	.12	-.09	.27*	.12	-.04	1	
11. Education	4.27	.71	.30*	.07	.10	.03	.09	.03	-.01	.22	.08	-.11	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 2

Paired Sample T-Tests

Study Variables	Before Exploratory Consultation		After Exploratory Consultation		n	95% CI for Mean Difference	r	t	df
	M	SD	M	SD					
Optimism	2.48	1.15	3.86	.83	60	1.12, 1.64	.52	10.6	59
Clarity	2.18	1.14	3.55	.96	60	1.08, 1.65	.46	9.6	59
Confidence	2.46	1.19	3.41	.99	60	.65, 1.24	.48	6.5	59
Organized thinking	2.25	1.16	3.57	1.08	59	1.00, 1.64	.41	8.3	58
Internal search	3.12	1.06	4.26	.76	54	.84, 1.40	.41	8.0	53
External search	3.15	1.15	3.89	.87	53	1.41, .99	.49	4.9	52

view of their personal strengths, more insights about themselves, and the ability to see how their interests and skills can transfer into a job possibility. One client shared that the session helped “draw from past experiences to build a story that will help [me] achieve employment.”

Several clients noted that their CareerCycles associate asked questions about their past experiences which helped them see how these experiences shaped their skills, desires, and interests. Furthermore, several inquiries were useful in “determining what experiences I can draw from for my future career” as described by one participant.

That same client described the overall experience with the initial session as “the reflection on past stories to help identify and contain some characteristics that compose my character. I believe this can help illustrate some of my career avenues I’d like.”

Finally, there was an increase in clients’ perceptions of the effectiveness of search strategies such as obtaining information on the labor market, initiating conversations with friends and relatives about careers, and initiating conversation with other

professionals (external instrumentality). For example, one client noted that the consultation session, “helped me realize that what I knew would work best is the right way to focus my job search, namely, calling upon former colleagues and contacts and asking for referrals.”

Recommendations for Career Practitioners

Career professionals seeking to improve engagement in initial and follow-up sessions may find it helpful to draw on the following three methods and strategies related to this outcome study.

First, career educators and career development practitioners should elicit client stories. Asking clients to tell a story from their experiences tends to engage them (Savickas, 2011). Drawing out the story with open-ended questions gets the client talking, and through their storytelling, they reveal strengths, values, personal qualities, interests, and influences that may otherwise be missed by asking for them directly or using traditional assessments. Storytelling is often easy for clients as it draws on epi-

sodic memory and builds vital verbal communication skills. As clients learn from their own stories, they build confidence in the richness of their lived experience, and develop their reflected best self (Roberts, Dutton, Heaphy, & Quinn, 2005). When positive stories are shared, clients harness the “broaden and build” phenomenon (Fredrickson, 2001), which includes broadening their possibilities, and building internal resources such as optimism, clarity, confidence, and organized thinking, as shown in this outcome study.

The positive emotions that accompany positive storytelling are not just indicators but also generators of change according to Fitzpatrick and Stalikas (2008) who further suggest positive emotions as an alternative gateway to therapeutic change. By focusing on positive emotions, clients gain therapeutic insights and increase motivation and inspiration; Wagner and Ingersoll (2008) link this to an increase in interest and curiosity within motivational interviewing, which in turn supports exploration of how life could be better in the future. Findings from this outcome study build on insights from the two articles

cited above in the following helpful way: previously rejected or overlooked possibilities, and new possibilities, emerge in client interactions within an upward spiral of positive emotions fueled by storytelling and story listening.

Second, career professionals should find and use evidence-based approaches for career development and emphasize this fact to clients. Career clients across the spectrum, from high school students to college or university students, to later-career clients, are getting more sophisticated in understanding the importance of an evidence basis for interventions. Career professionals who can confidently utilize and communicate an evidence-based narrative framework gain credibility in the eyes of clients and others who often support them in accessing or funding career services.

Third, career professionals are encouraged to use tools that support clients to organize their thinking. For example, the Clarification Sketch tool utilized in the OLTCC narrative framework makes in-session narratives come alive with clients' own text entries for all elements that emerge from their stories and experiences: strengths, desires, personal qualities, interests, assets, influences of others, thoughts and feelings, and possibilities. Having these items organized and visible to clients supports all aspects of their career session experience, including career idea generation and co-creation of future narratives aligned with life design principles (Savickas, 2012), as well as a positive feeling associated with a shift from chaos to order.

Conclusion

The purposes of the present study were to build on the results of a multi-session retrospective outcome

study using a narrative method of practice (Franklin, Yanar & Feller, 2015) by focusing on outcomes from a single, initial career counselling session using the same narrative method, and to identify which outcomes encourage clients to continue with career services beyond that initial session. The study found statistically significant increases in optimism, clarity, confidence, organized thinking, internal search instrumentality and external search instrumentality. Such results, coupled with a return rate reaching 85%, suggest that career professionals seeking to engage clients in an initial session and have them continue past that initial session to tell another story, should consider utilizing some of the OLTCC narrative framework strategies: elicit client stories, embrace evidence-based methods, and find and use tools that support clients to organize their thinking.

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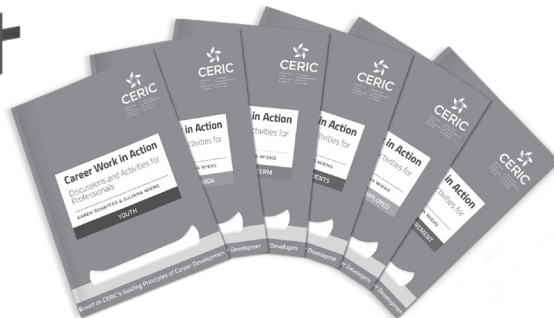
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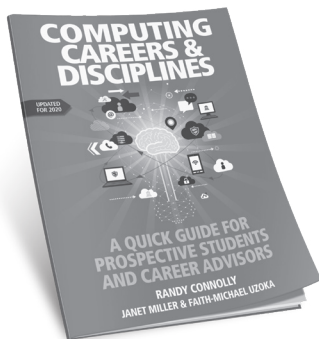
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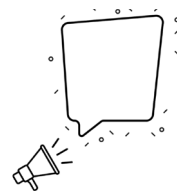


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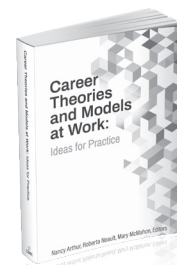
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Career Theories and Models at Work: Ideas for Practice

Advancing Older Workers: Motivations, Adaptabilities, and Ongoing Career Engagement

Jennifer Luke. University of Southern Queensland
Roberta A. Neault. Life Strategies Ltd

Abstract

There is international government, private sector, and not-for-profit interest in the aging workforce and how to retain or re-engage retirement-age workers to address skills gaps and strengthen productivity. Traditionally, however, the career development sector has paid relatively little attention to this demographic. Published Australian research (Luke, McIlveen, & Perera, 2016) has examined the motivations of individuals who have retired (or are considering it) to stay engaged or re-engage in the workforce. Grounded in developmental and constructivist career theories, this article provides an international (trans-Pacific) perspective on the value of older workers, how to meet their workplace needs and expectations, and what it will take for them to achieve and sustain an optimal level of career adaptability and career engagement. Analysis of vignettes based on interviews with post-retirement-age workers from the aforementioned published research, demonstrates how the career engagement model can provide a practical conceptual framework for influencing policy and supporting career decision-making and lifelong career management for this cohort.

An aging population is not isolated to individual countries. Globally, there are skills gaps within the workforce and an urgent need to regenerate these skills (United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2017).

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2015), the International Labour Organisation (ILO, 2015), and the World Economic Forum (Jenkins, 2019) are all aware of a rapidly aging society with workforce productivity needing an injection of skills from older workers, including those in retirement.

This article provides a review of existing literature on an aging workforce and theoretical concepts within vocational psychology that present a foundation for proactive career strategies for older workers who have either remained within, or re-entered employment.

In successive Intergenerational Reports produced by the Australian Government's Treasury (2010, 2015), a changing demographic was acknowledged in response to Australian Bureau of Statistics data. This data indicated that Australian society is aging and, during the next decade, over a quarter of the population will be approaching retirement age while fewer younger people will be entering the labour market (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2016). Similarly, the Canadian government has also demonstrated an aging population driven by fertility rates below replacement level and increased life expectancy, accelerated by the large cohort of aging *baby boomers*, many of whom are delaying retirement (Statistics Canada, 2017, 2018). Australia and Canada have followed similar growth in their older (65+ age) workforce with both recording 13% participation rates in 2015 (Australian Institute of

Health and Welfare, 2018). With a growing mature-age workforce, this creates great opportunities for employers to first understand and then harness the wealth of knowledge and experience that this cohort of workers offer. Unfortunately, mature-aged job seekers still face many hurdles in today's highly competitive and fast-moving job market, including how to engage (or re-engage) successfully with a multigenerational workforce. Additionally, barriers can also include age discrimination in the workplace, relocation concerns, arranging flexible work schedules or necessary accommodations, and out-of-date job search skills (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2016; Government of Canada, 2016; Taylor & Lebo, 2019).

The authors' published research into the motivations and career adaptability of those in retirement seeking an encore career (Luke, McIlveen, & Perera, 2016) and career engagement (Neault & Pickerell, 2019; Pickerell & Neault, 2016, 2019) is used as the scaffold from which vignettes based on interviews conducted with retirees (Luke, McIlveen, & Perera, 2016) can be understood. Case analyses examine how the Career Engagement Model (Neault & Pickerell, 2019) can be an effective bridge between career counselling of older clients and employee engagement.

The trans-Pacific perspectives in this article, along with the literature review and previous international research findings, illustrate the global (ILO, 2015; OECD, 2015) nature of challenges associated with an aging

workforce. Understanding the future of work, employment, and employability, requires a perspective that is based within vocational psychology theory and research, to ensure policy and practices are informed (McIlveen, 2018). It is hoped that the theoretically grounded, contextualized career strategies offered here will inform both local and global policy as well as stimulate professional practice conversations about the value of older workers, their career development needs and search for meaningful work, as well as how to support their career engagement.

Literature Review

Due to the advances in science and technology, the demographics of countries are changing with their older populations living longer and continuing to learn and actively contribute to society (Casey & Gullo, 2019). Understanding the requirements and characteristics of workforce policies that target older workers has emerged in government discussions both in Australia (Taylor, Earl, & McLoughlin, 2016) and Canada (Employment and Social Development Canada, 2018; Government of Canada, 2016) as well as in many other countries (OECD, 2015), amid concerns about labour shortages and the increase of social welfare due to aging populations. Taylor (2019) cautioned, though, that a public policy focus on prolonging working lives might be detrimental for any older workers who experience low quality work as it can produce adverse consequences for a person's mental state. This is, of course, consistent with the argument that sustainable, decent work is a human right and source of well-being (Blustein, 2013).

This concern for the individual and their wellbeing is aligned

with Luke, McIlveen, and Perera (2016) who recommended that, in regards to integrating older workers, the focus must not be initially on policy but instead on the individual so as to understand what motivates a person in retirement to re-enter the workforce. Stating that retirement could no longer be conceptualised as the final stage of a person's career, this research made the first attempt to understand this phenomenon through the conceptual lens of the Career Construction Theory (Savickas, 2005) and its construct of career adaptability of individuals and understanding their unique narratives. According to Savickas, Career Construction Theory examines vocational personality types, the psychosocial adaption of how a person copes with vocational development tasks or transitions and also the reason for vocational behaviour (life themes).

Motivations to Re-Engage With Career

Before looking at national workforce capability solutions and how to encourage employers to recruit older workers, it is important to focus on the individual (Luke, McIlveen, & Perera, 2016). With an increasing older workforce (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2018; Statistics Canada, 2017, 2018), the following questions are relevant to ask. What are the needs of older workers? Why are they looking for a career transition or change? If they are retirees, why do they want to re-enter the workforce?

In 2012, Schlosser, Zinni, and Armstrong-Stassen investigated the factors that influence a person of retirement age to either be pulled into full retirement or pushed back out into employment or *unretiring*. Based on survey data collected from 460 Ca-

nadian retirees, their research findings highlighted financial security, missing the professional social connections, or a wish to upgrade skills (lifelong learning) as reasons given for returning to work. The consideration of these pull factors regarding the decision of unretiring can also be related to an unemployment theory regarding well-being, known as the *deprivation perspective* (Jahoda, 1982).

Jahoda's (1982) focus on well-being and the latent benefit of personal identity in employment corresponds well to Sterner's (2012) observation that career transitions may cause an individual to feel the loss of a significant part of their identity, due to leaving the routine of their current stage in life. Super (1990) theorized that individuals go through different life stages and developmental tasks as part of their career decision-making process. The Life-Span, Life-Space (Super, 1990; Super, Savickas, & Super, 1996) developmental career model accommodates the various influences an individual encounters at different stages and roles within their life and can help researchers understand how a retiree's decision-making processes and self-belief in their abilities, impacts a decision to transition from retirement back to an employment stage (Pleau & Shauman, 2013).

Successful transition from one life stage to the next, as conceptualized by Super (1990), involves physical and psychological development issues such as a person's perception of themselves (i.e., self-concept). Blustein (2006), in his psychology-of-working perspective, added that the impact of institutional and social barriers (e.g., age, gender, race, and social class) must be also considered at each stage.

In research completed by the first author (Luke, McIlveen, & Perera, 2016) that investigated the motives

of retirees deciding to return to work, the highest ranking response (over 80%) from 17 individual retiree interviews (10 male, 7 female), was not financial reasons but, instead, the desire to stay active, have purpose, and be involved in meaningful work. Recent Dutch research that investigated preconditions and motives influencing work beyond retirement age (Sewdas et al, 2017) also highlighted similar findings; financial benefit was rarely mentioned by their retirement age participants as the sole reason for prolonging work participation – instead, health, work characteristics, skills and knowledge, plus social factors all rated high.

Individuals of all ages seek meaning from their various life and career roles in order to connect themselves into meaningful paths, where both their personal values and perceptions of mattering contribute to give purpose (Blustein, 2011). In the following section, we explore how this specifically plays out in older workers, asking, “How does an older worker engage (or re-engage) with career and effectively adapt in the face of challenges they may encounter during their search for meaningful work?”

Career Adaptability in Older Workers’ Career Transitioning

Research into later life employment pathways is dispersed across a range of disciplines including gerontology (van Solinge et al., 2017), organizational psychology (Rudolph, Rauvola, & Zacher, 2018), and human resources (Adams & Rau, 2004). A focus on actual vocational psychology based career development strategies for older workers and retirees re-entering the workforce is minimal. Van Loo’s (2011) research into older workers recommended that

career guidance and counselling needed to further expand in today’s world of work with a holistic approach focusing on self-management of career paths. Savickas’ (2012) notion of career adaptability can facilitate this self-management through a focus on resilience in the context of change and with individuals relying on self-regulatory processes and social resources in adapting to change.

Savickas (2005), in his Career Construction Theory, defined *career-adaptive* individuals as those who become concerned about their career futures, take increasing control over their vocational future, display curiosity about possible future selves and scenarios, as well as strengthen their confidence to pursue their career aspirations. When embedding the concept of career adaptability within Super’s Life-Span, Life-Space Theory, Savickas (1997) identified the concept of adaptability as the ability to alter, without great difficulty, as circumstances changed. Regarding career development, Savickas stated that such career adaptability provides an individual the readiness to cope with both the predictable tasks as well as unpredictable adjustments that will occur in work and working conditions.

The findings of initial research by Luke, McIlveen, and Perera (2016) regarding the motivations of retirees re-entering a career, provided recommendations for policy makers to first understand the importance of the self-efficacy and career adaptability of this cohort when providing opportunities for them within the workforce. The post-retirement age participants, interviewed about their motivations to re-enter career, expressed a concern for their future, displayed control with respect to keeping active and engaged, had curiosity to learn new skills and knowledge, and

were confident in knowing that they could make a positive contribution. Thus, the initial study (Luke, McIlveen, & Perera, 2016) highlighted that career adaptability (Savickas, 2005) was evident in adults not only in the early stages of the developmental life span but as a lifelong resource; this adaptability, therefore, is a relevant area of focus for career practitioners and policy makers. Exploring retirement from the perspective of Career Construction Theory (Savickas, 2005) was unusual; vocational psychology theories have predominantly focused on the career life span before Super’s (1980) final developmental life stage of disengagement. Finding evidence of career adaptability in those in post-retirement provided scope to continue a research focus in the conceptual extension of this stage of disengagement.

Many mature age jobseekers have worked in a particular industry for many years and have substantial knowledge and expertise. Assisting these job seekers with a career development approach that focuses on vocational development tasks (Super, 1980) provides opportunities for them to utilize and share these skills. Fugate, Kinicki, and Ashforth (2004) stressed the central role Savickas’ career adaptabilities played in a person’s employability. In subsequent related research, Fugate and Kinicki (2008) highlighted the importance of resiliency if one is to remain highly employable. Employability is also strengthened by an individual understanding their value to an employer, such as skills and knowledge previously gained from paid work and other life experiences (Luke, 2018).

Venter (2016) reinforced the need for effective communication between generations, advocating open-mindedness from all age groups and encouraging the older population

to be curious and identify opportunities to learn from the younger age groups rather than seeing them as threats. This can link back to individuals of any age being curious about learning activities associated with their occupational aspirations and deciding to take a proactive approach in controlling their career decisions (Savickas, 2012). Such career adaptabilities strengthen employability and provide stronger foundations for successful career engagement (Neault & Pickerell, 2019). Career *engagement*, as will be described below, is the antithesis of *disengagement* – the label Super (1990) used for his final stage of career development.

Career Engagement

The career engagement model (Neault & Pickerell, 2019; see Figure 1) is based upon a holistic notion of “career” comprising all significant life roles (i.e., one’s career may comprise paid and unpaid work, caregiving, studying, periods of unemployment, and participation in other roles, interconnected and constantly changing). Career engagement is conceptualized as an optimal fit between challenge and capacity, both individual and organizational/contextual. Generally, challenging activities are both meaningful and motivating. Capacity is influenced by such personal characteristics as skills, abilities, and wellbeing, but also by organizational or contextual factors such as budgets, time, equipment, staffing, supervision, and policies. With this in mind, it is not inevitable that aging workers would become disengaged and remove themselves from the workforce. Rather, integrating Super’s (1990) notion of career adaptability, it makes sense that by consciously re-aligning challenge and capacity, they could remain engaged and productive well

past the typical age of retirement. This can be illustrated in the following vignettes with individuals in their sixties and seventies, who participated in interviews conducted for the author’s previous study (Luke, McIlveen, & Perera, 2016). Within the career development sector, such lifelong engagement has been role modelled by several well-known thought leaders such as John Holland, John Krumboltz, Richard Bolles, and Donald Super, all of whom were working into their eighties and some into their nineties.

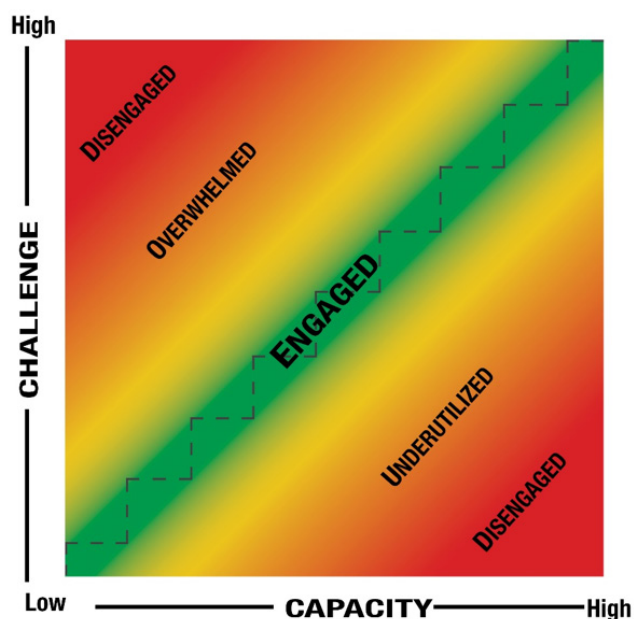
Strategies for Career Engagement

Case 1: Semi-Retired Industrial Chemist (78-year-old male)

Background. Jake (pseudonym) is a well-educated and highly qualified chemist and engineer, retired

after 45 years of professional experience. During his first three years after leaving his job in a large organization, Jake thoroughly enjoyed consulting to 20 to 30 diverse organizations, sharing his technical skills and expertise in management and marketing. He is still open to further consulting work but has begun to second-guess his ability to contribute. His concerns include lack of industry-specific knowledge beyond his own corporate setting and sector, as well as wondering whether “20 somethings” think he has any wisdom to offer. He is worried about tarnishing his positive professional reputation if he demonstrates any lack of understanding, recognizing that in a relatively small professional sector, word travels quickly if clients are dissatisfied. At 78, Jake is also experiencing health concerns that preclude taking on any long-term contracts. He recognizes that in to-

Career Engagement



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Figure 1: Career Engagement

day's workplace it is now considered a bonus to have worked for multiple organizations; on the other hand, when he was building and sustaining his own professional career, staying with one employer was more highly respected.

Analysis. Through the lens of the career engagement model, Jake finds himself concurrently overwhelmed and underutilized, potentially moving towards disengagement in two different directions. Unpacking his concerns and strategically resolving them can help him shift back into the zone of optimal engagement, regardless of whether or not he chooses to return to work.

Jake's concerns about his lack of sector-specific knowledge, being respected by younger workers, and his declining physical health can all be conceptualized as capacity issues; in the career engagement model, capacity comprises both individual and organizational factors that include personal characteristics (e.g., health, age) and contextual variables (e.g., co-worker relationships, time, money). On the other hand, consulting work can be very challenging; Jake wants to do it well or not do it at all.

There are two approaches to resolving such a mismatch (i.e., high challenge and decreasing capacity) – reduce the challenge or increase capacity. A career professional working with Jake might ask whether Jake might find it more appealing to return to work as a consultant in a less stressful setting, unpacking with Jake what exactly is holding him back from pursuing his goal to continue working as a consultant. They might explore together which of the 20-30 organizations he'd served felt the least stressful and what sectors felt more like "home," offering a good fit.

On the other hand, it might

be helpful to support Jake in building capacity to meet the consulting challenges he anticipates. A career practitioner might enquire about Jake's health challenges and whether or not he is under a physician's care; it may be possible to stabilize or improve his health or recommend some workplace accommodations that will make returning to consulting work a more manageable option. Jake's concerns about lack of relevant knowledge suggest that some skill development or strategic partnerships might be helpful; Jake may be unaware of increased access to professional development through webinars, online learning, and even YouTube videos. Jake's concerns about interactions with younger workers and having his knowledge respected by them might benefit from some structured mixed-age group interactions, facilitating opportunities to collaborate across generations in a safe environment to help him regain confidence. It's likely that a combination of strategies, concurrently building capacity and reducing challenge, will equip Jake to re-enter his consulting career at a level that maximizes his engagement at work and in other life roles.

Case 2: Recently Retired High School Teacher (60-year-old female)

Background. Sandy (pseudonym) recently retired after 40 years of teaching in high schools, with the final 25 years in one school where, along with teaching home economics and hospitality, she also had some middle management (i.e., Department Head) responsibilities. Describing teaching as "the only career I have ever had," Sandy chose her retirement date but acknowledges that in the early days post-retirement she began thinking, "Oh my goodness, what have I done?" She realizes now that

she hadn't carefully thought through what retirement would look like for her; nor had she done much planning with her husband about how they would spend their time once retired. Instead, her motivation to retire had been less about her and more about creating space for others to move their careers forward. She reported with a laugh and a comment about it sounding silly now, "when it was time to retire I felt it was time to let the younger people have a go. I really felt I had a long career and that I didn't need to work and shouldn't be taking someone else's role. But then you give up work and think, 'but I really want to keep going!'"

Since retiring, Sandy has felt that she is missing out on opportunities to grow as a person, professionally and socially. She has witnessed others lose their edge and not have their heart in their work anymore; she really doesn't want to become like them and recognizes needs within herself to feel like she is doing something worthwhile, to be entrusted with responsibilities, and to get out and mix with people. She does thoroughly enjoy the flexibility that has come with retirement, appreciating her ability to engage in pleasurable non-work activities such as participating in a yoga class or going out with friends.

Recently, Sandy has taken on a part-time job as a consultant within a kitchen appliance business. Her colleagues are all younger women who are "really supportive and really nice." Sandy reported, "I don't feel as though I have vast experience and knowledge in what I'm doing . . . [but] I don't think they think 'oh, she's the old lady. Hope not.'"

Analysis. Using the career engagement model, Sandy's experience immediately post-retirement thrust her into the *underutilized* zone. With-

out a post-retirement plan, much of the structure and responsibility in Sandy's life had been removed; her capacity remained the same but her daily work-related challenges vanished overnight, leaving her with excess capacity for the challenges that she encountered.

Sandy's part-time job in the appliance store, however, quickly brought on new challenges – challenges that may have felt overwhelming without the added capacity of supportive co-workers. The right mix of challenging work, supportive co-workers, and a flexible schedule that provides space for additional pleasurable activities such as joining a yoga class have, together, returned Sandy to the zone of optimal engagement. As she becomes more knowledgeable about kitchen appliances, however, it's possible that her part-time work will feel less challenging. Although this may suit her by that point, if she is able to find more challenges in her other life roles, it may also result in her moving towards feeling underutilized again. At that point, Sandy may find it helpful to speak with her employer (and/or a career development professional) about new challenges that she can take on to stay optimally engaged.

Case 3: Semi-Retired Artist Who Started as a Flight Attendant (77-year-old female)

Background. Myrna (pseudonym) is frustrated in thinking that everyone now sees her as elderly. Fiercely independent, her career evolved throughout various chapters in her life and she doesn't like the feeling now that people see her as less capable than in previous life stages. She began her career as a flight attendant and loved working for the airline. However, back then, she had to give up her position when she be-

came married, in an era with no union protection and no maternity leave options. Myrna subsequently stayed home, caring for her children, spouse, and household responsibilities; it was only when her husband was nearing his retirement that she decided, with his full support, to attend university and complete a degree in Art and Painting. Creating and teaching art continue to bring her joy and are, combined, a big part of her identity; however, she recognizes that she is competing with others in the art world and that art is very personal.

In their semi-retirement, Myrna and her husband are living off a small pension and gradually whittling away at their nest egg – a big worry for them both. However, Myrna doesn't see herself as having relevant skills for today's workforce and, also, doesn't like the idea of people thinking that she needs to work for money. When asked about her beliefs about how others would see her as fitting into the workplace, she reflected, "They would obviously feel I was too old or too slow. I love children and would be interested in a kindergarten, but I'm sure they don't want elderly people."

Analysis. From a career engagement perspective, Myrna and her husband's current financial situation feels a bit overwhelming to them both (challenged by more expenses than their pension has the capacity to cover). However, thinking of getting paid work is also overwhelming; Myrna seems to have internalized beliefs about aging that make it difficult for her to imagine that others would value any contributions that she could make within a workplace. The career engagement model is useful to conceptualize the dynamic interaction between challenge and capacity – too little challenge and one begins to feel

underutilized; too much challenge, on the other hand, can be completely overwhelming. At the moment, Myrna appears to be paralysed in place; she recognizes their limited financial capacity but does not believe in her ability to earn the extra income that they need.

A career development professional might work with Myrna to concurrently reduce the challenge and build capacity, with the aim of helping Myrna to re-attach to the workforce in a meaningful and manageable way. Providing a supportive environment in which Myrna can demonstrate marketable competencies to herself and others might help to bolster Myrna's optimism; in the second author's earlier research (Neault, 2002), optimism was the most significant predictor of both career success and job satisfaction. In Canada, there are some community-based career development programs (e.g., In Motion and Momentum, Ontario Centre for Workforce Innovation, 2018) that are designed to prepare individuals for the workplace and to build motivation, optimism about the future, and self-esteem. Although generally designed for the unemployed and individuals who are more marginalized than Myrna, a similar program could provide the opportunity for her to interact with younger individuals, mentor them by sharing her valuable life experiences, and receive respect and appreciation in turn.

Other ways to build capacity for Myrna (and her husband) include exploring financial supports that they may be eligible for within their community (e.g., housing subsidies for seniors), reverse mortgages if they own their own home, or alternate sources of income through the sharing economy, such as hosting homestay students, listing available rooms in their home through Airbnb, or registering

as a driver with a ride share company. Myrna might also benefit from small business training that would equip her to earn more income from teaching and selling her art – work which already brings her joy in a sector in which she feels confident. Staying focused on a sector and occupation within which she feels comfortable would concurrently decrease the challenge associated with re-entering the workforce; any of these additional income sources would decrease the couple's financial challenges as well. The career engagement model is holistic, and considers the interactions between capacity and challenge across multiple life roles.

The Challenge and Implications for Practice and Policy

A major emerging theme during the initial research by Luke, McIlveen, and Perera (2016) was the exploration of career adaptability and how it was associated with those in retirement who re-engaged with career. Career adaptability was yet to be explored within vocational psychology research of re-engaged post-retirement age workers and Luke, McIlveen, and Perera (2016) were the first to qualitatively explore this cohort's career adaptability via individual interviews and thematic analysis to uncover themes.

To encourage the mature age and retiree population to remain in, or return to, the workforce, it is imperative that the needs of this demographic are considered carefully and thoughtfully before any policy recommendations or employment programs are produced and implemented. Throughout the research of Luke, McIlveen, and Perera (2016), retirement-age participants illustrated via their interview responses that they had an overall desire to know that

their work and life experiences were of value and worth to the workplace. If governments and employers recognize and learn from the valuable experience and knowledge provided by retirees who reengage with work, this will only serve to fuel the career adaptabilities of this age cohort and provide opportunities for them to fully engage in meaningful work.

In research focusing on the transition of work to retirement from a life design perspective, Froidevaux (2018) concluded that it is important for researchers and career practitioners to explore how late-career workers and retirees can design their lives in a socially productive and rewarding way. The recommendations presented in this article agree with this sentiment and provide scope for career development interventions that would encourage older workers to be active players in creating and sustaining their ongoing career engagement and provide them opportunity to discover meaningful work as they adapt and advance in today's rapidly changing workforce landscape.

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Preparing Undergraduate Students for Tomorrow's Workplace: Core Competency Development Through Experiential Learning Opportunities

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Abstract

The rapid evolution of today's workplace requires employees to possess a diverse set of sophisticated cognitive and psychological competencies, thus prompting post-secondary institutions to reconsider not only *what* is taught but *why* and *how*. Our paper proposes a three-faceted model of core competencies that undergraduate students can develop through participation in experiential learning (EL). We describe three EL opportunities at Mount Saint Vincent University that engage students in authentic experiences and encourage critical reflection: service learning (SL) in the Department of Psychology, co-operative education in the Bachelor of Public Relations (BPR) program, and a co-curricular recognition program (CCR) in Career Services. We also provide supporting evidence that EL facilitates the development of core competencies and career readiness. We conclude with recommendations that may help post-secondary institutions better prepare students for the competency-based workforce of tomorrow.

Keywords: experiential learning, model of core competency, career development, undergraduate education

As a result of a confluence of factors, including increasing globalization and technological advances, today's workplace is rapidly evolving, with even entry level employees increasingly expected to possess a rich and varied set of knowledge, skills,

and attitudes. The core competencies expected of tomorrow's workers extend well beyond disciplinary knowledge to include sophisticated cognitive, metacognitive, and socio-emotional skills (e.g., self-regulation, cultural awareness). In preparing students for the reality of the 21st century workplace, post-secondary institutions must consider not only *what* is taught and *why* but also *how best* to do so. In this paper, we advocate that universities more fully embrace experiential education as an instructional strategy that supports the life-long learning of core competencies.

Considerable research on the science of human learning demonstrates that high impact educational practices (HIEP) facilitate learning and personal development (Kilgo, Ezell Sheets, & Pascarella, 2015; Kuh, 2008), likely because they emphasize engagement, active learning, academic challenge, student-faculty interaction, and critical reflection (Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2018; Elon University Center for Engaged Learning, 2014). Examples of HIEP include capstone and writing intensive courses, research mentorship, and experiential education, with the latter encompassing service learning, co-op placement, co-curricular participation, internship, and study abroad programs (Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2018). As conceptualized by David Kolb (1984, p. 38), experiential learning is a pedagogical approach "whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience", thus helping students

"develop skills, clarify values, and develop ... capacity to contribute to their communities" (Association for Experiential Education, n.d.)

Driven by increasing student diversity and changing workplace needs, universities must continue to identify and implement opportunities that encourage high-level learning outcomes. Accordingly, the purpose of our paper is to describe how experiential education can facilitate the development of core competencies in undergraduate students, thus supporting their career development goals and workplace preparation. In what follows, we describe three EL opportunities that we oversee in our roles as faculty or staff at Mount Saint Vincent University: service learning in the Department of Psychology, co-operative education in the Bachelor of Public Relations program, and a co-curricular recognition program in Career Services. What these programs have in common is the engagement of the student in an authentic "real world" experience combined with opportunities for critical reflection and constructive feedback. Our paper will demonstrate how the process of learning through the interplay of "action and reflection" carried out within the context of university-community partnerships can build the knowledge, skills, and values consistent with career success in a fast-changing world.

Employees of Tomorrow: Expected Core Competencies

With the assistance of a librarian, we conducted a literature search of EBSCO databases using subject terms such as undergraduate student, core competency, experiential learning, work-integrated learning (WIL), and career development. We also reviewed the standards, learning outcomes, and best practices for undergraduate education identified by various professional associations and educational bodies in North America (e.g., American Psychological Association, Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education). While the literature identifies a broad range of desirable student characteristics and abilities, there exists considerable overlap of perspective as to the nature of the competencies that underlie career success in the 21st century. In what follows, we first summarize the findings most relevant to the Canadian post-secondary context and then propose a new model of core competencies that emphasizes intra- and inter-individual capacities.

Several organizations within Canada have identified career competencies as well as approaches to support the development of competencies in students and, hence, increase employability prospects. The Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (Deller, Brumwell, & MacFarlane, 2015) categorizes the competencies as consisting of basic cognitive skills (e.g., numeracy, literacy), discipline-specific skills (i.e., specialized skills), higher-order cognitive skills (e.g., communication, critical thinking), and transferable skills (e.g., resilience, initiative). Canadian employers surveyed by Trent University also report valuing communication and initiative, as well as problem solving, flexibility/adaptability, and trainabil-

ity (Hart, 2013). In their view, these skills develop largely through experience: work experience was most highly valued, followed by academic achievement, and then co-curricular experience. Similarly, a large scale survey of 920 employers carried out by the Canadian Association of Career Educators and Employers identified verbal communication and problem solving as valuable competencies, in addition to teamwork, analytical ability, and work ethic (Smith & Lam, 2013). While degree program and field of study were the most important pre-screening criteria for evaluating applicants, employers reported weighting WIL (i.e., co-op, internship) and co-curricular involvement (e.g., sports teams, community service) more heavily than academic performance (Smith & Lam, 2013). Similarly, Finch, Hamilton, Baldwin, and Zehner (2013) report that five of the six highest ranked employability factors are soft skills (i.e., listening skill, interpersonal skill, verbal and written communication skills, and professionalism). While having pre-graduate work experience was less important than possessing soft skills, work experience was more desirable than either academic performance or program reputation. Although Finch et al. (2013, p. 696) recommended that “learning outcomes linked to soft-skills development should take priority in the development of both academic programmes (e.g. degrees or majors) and specific courses”, the reality is that they are typically reserved for training graduate students (Lee, 2018). Finally, the Royal Bank of Canada (2018) assessed the changing demand for occupations in Canada and then developed an innovative approach that clustered occupations by their required skills and the likelihood for disruption by automation in the future. The Royal Bank of Canada

(RBC) predicted an increased demand for foundational skills (e.g., active listening, critical thinking, social perceptiveness, problem solving), digital literacy, and global competency (e.g., cultural awareness, language, adaptability). Significantly, workers possessing foundational skills within each cluster will be more job mobile. In their call to action, RBC suggested that post-secondary institutions implement WIL for all undergraduate students.

While consensus exists regarding employer-preferred core competencies, students possess less insight into the determinants of career success. The Conference Board of Canada reported that while most Social Sciences and Humanities graduates eventually achieve career success, they initially struggle to identify the competencies gained from their degree programs (Edge, Martin, & McKean, 2018). The Conference Board urged post-secondary institutions to better support career preparation, such as by creating more EL opportunities (e.g., co-op, internship, courses with a community service component) and by encouraging personal reflection as a tool to increase awareness of degree-related skills.

Reflection on our experiences in teaching, counseling, and research combined with analysis of the published literature led us to propose a model of core competencies (knowledge, skills, and attitudes) to be developed during undergraduate degree programs, entitled the *Conceptual Model of Core Competency Development Through Experiential Learning*. Two competencies are situated within the individual and draw upon psychological, cognitive, and metacognitive domains. In contrast, the third competency reflects socio-emotional skills that facilitate healthy social interaction with others and the broader com-

munity. These capacities are likely to be interconnected (such that growth in one domain facilitates growth in another), with experiential opportunities combined with critical reflection providing the impetus for their development (see Figure 1).

- (1) **Self-awareness and regulation:** We believe that self-awareness underlies the development of a coherent sense of who we are, and facilitates success in school, work and, ultimately, life. Self-discovery includes the realistic appraisal of personal thoughts, feelings, values, interests, and abilities, including recognition of areas of relative strength and weakness. Self-understanding, when combined with the psychological qualities of motivation, persistence, and resiliency, underlie goal setting (planning), monitoring, and achievement. Moreover, self-regulation helps individuals to act with integrity when faced with personal and professional opportunities that carry both risk and reward, thus contributing to a workplace environment built on fundamental values of honesty, respect, trust, and responsibility.
- (2) **Cognitive and metacognitive processing:** These capacities are foundational to learning, permitting the accumulation of disciplinary knowledge and skill needed for success in many occupations. Students should possess intellectual curiosity (including open-mindedness), critical thinking (including skepti-

cism), and reflective ability (including responsiveness to constructive feedback). These qualities help the individual to broaden and deepen their knowledge, question assumptions and biases, derive meaning from experience, and create new opportunities for growth.

- (3) **Social awareness and responsible citizenship:** Interpersonal skills draw on the above competencies and allow individuals to develop social connections and communication skills, which are at the heart of working with, motivating, supporting, and managing others (e.g., cooperative teamwork, leadership, consensus building, and negotiation). The cognitive skills of perspective taking, active listening, and fair-mindedness support cultural awareness, respect for diversity, and empathy from which community engagement and a compas-

sionate global worldview are fostered.

Together, these three competencies help promote a “growth mindset” (Dweck, 2006) and commitment to lifelong learning, contributing to career and life satisfaction. While these competencies are neither easy to teach or to measure as learning outcomes, we believe that they should be explicitly described, modelled, and encouraged within the undergraduate curriculum as a means of helping students identify and prioritize skills and values intrinsic to their sense of self, educational pursuits, and future careers. The next section describes the process by which experiential education provides a context to facilitate core competency development in students.

Theory of Experiential Education

Experiential education is a philosophical and methodological approach to the teaching-learning process that is derived from the work of notable educators, psychologists,

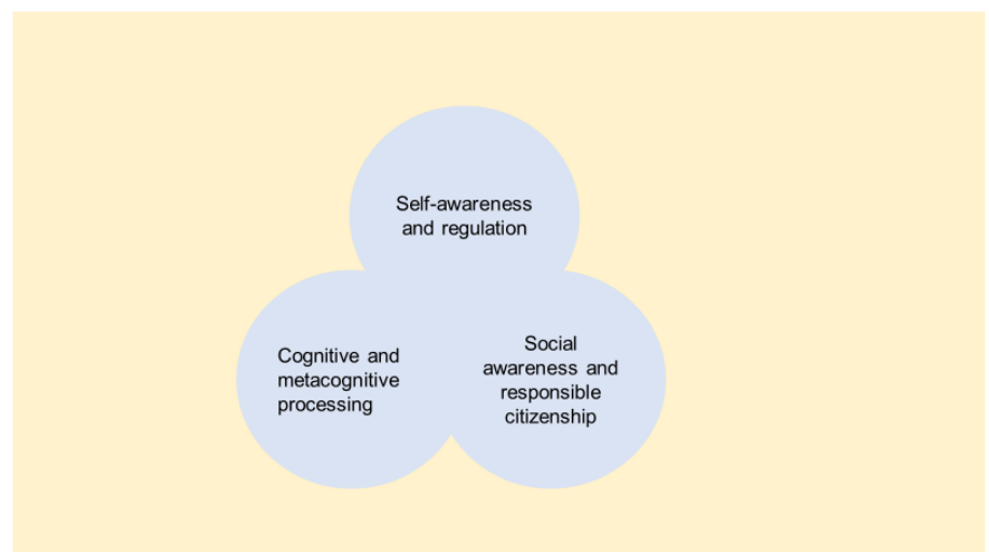


Figure 1. Conceptual model of core competency development through experiential learning.

and philosophers including John Dewey, Jean Piaget, Kurt Lewin, Paulo Freire, and David Kolb. One of the better known approaches is that of Kolb, who views learning as “the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience” (Kolb, 1984, p. 38). For Kolb, learning reflects a cycle of four stages of concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. That is, learners have an immediate experience, reflect upon the experience (e.g., What happened?), draw abstractions (e.g., What does it mean?), and then test out (apply) their hypothesis (e.g., to solve a problem). These four stages are present during participation in field-based initiatives (e.g., service learning, co-operative education, co-curricular participation) and hands-on classroom activities (e.g., labs, simulations). Different types of experiential activities bring about distinct learning outcomes (i.e., core competencies). For example, volunteering at a soup kitchen or food bank may strengthen social awareness as students question stereotypes while contemplating issues of food insecurity and social inequality. Alternatively, participation in varsity athletics may strengthen ethical conduct, cooperative teamwork, resiliency, and time management.

While Kolb emphasizes the importance of all four stages, reflection upon the experiential activity is essential to learning as it stimulates the process of meaning-making by the student. As expressed by Kolb, “how individuals learn shapes the course of their personal development” (Kolb & Kolb, 2005, p. 195). While several theoretical models and definitions for the construct of reflection have been proposed, the following two perspectives are especially helpful. Boud, Keogh, and Walker (1985, p. 19) directly

connect EL to reflection, with the latter described as an “activity in which people recapture their experience, think about it, mull it over and evaluate it”. Here, the individual returns to the experience, attends to feelings and, most importantly, re-evaluates the experience, which may bring about cognitive, affective, and/or behavioral changes. Alternatively, Moon (2005, p. 1) views reflection as “a form of mental processing ... applied to gain a better understanding of relatively complicated or unstructured ideas and is largely based on the re-processing of knowledge, understanding and possibly emotions that we already possess”. However defined, reflection on experience requires sophisticated mental processes that include “self-awareness, description, critical analysis, synthesis, and evaluation” (Atkins & Murphy, 1993, p. 1190). As such, students may require instructional scaffolding in order to thoughtfully appraise their experience, connect and reconcile it with disciplinary knowledge and concepts, and then construct new meaning and understandings.

Critical reflection on experience, then, is a pedagogical approach that helps students achieve curricular objectives and develop core competencies that underlie career readiness. As students learn how to better “think about their own thinking” (i.e., metacognition), authentic experiential activity has the potential to promote *lifelong learning*, a desirable trait of 21st century life. In what lies ahead, we describe how career counselling facilitates core competency development, including self-awareness.

Shaping Career Development Through Experiential Education

While most theories of career development recognize the influence

of environmental factors, such as significant others, class, culture, personal situations, and occupational stereotypes (Gottfredson, 1981; Holland, 1959; Krumboltz, 2009; Super, 1953), research is increasingly examining how EL shapes career development in undergraduate students. Collectively, the literature has examined different forms of EL during post-secondary education, especially within social science and professional programs.

Man-Nor Hoi and Hiebert (2005) assessed how well Astin’s theoretical model of career development, with its four constructs of work motivation (e.g., the drive to contribute to society), structure of opportunity (e.g., job requirements), work expectations (e.g., the type of work that one is capable of), and sex-role socialization predicted the career goal choices of first year university students. They determined that students with prior work experience were “aware of their own interests, strengths, and needs and were more likely to have selected an occupational goal” (p. 28), and recommended that students receive career-related support and faculty mentoring within their degree programs. Other avenues of career support include academic advising, the use of career planning assignments within the academic curriculum, and interaction with the career advising center (Schwartz, Gregg, & McKee, 2018). Whatever its specific form, career support is more effective when counsellors recognize that the client’s cognitive maturity shapes their processing of the counselling experience. As pointed out by Fisher Turesky and Gronich Mundhenk (2008), younger students may expect the counsellor to identify the sole “right” career pathway while mature clients more easily synthesize complex material and make independent career decisions. Fisher Turesky and Gronich

Mundhenk (2008) further suggest that Kolb's EL Theory frames the process by which students grow cognitively, make career decisions, and achieve vocational identities. As career counsellors support critical reflection on experience, students have opportunity to correct and reinterpret prior misunderstandings and challenges, thus benefitting cognitively and emotionally.

In emphasizing the need to reflect and grow from experience, career counselling theories mesh well with those of experiential education. In particular, Krumboltz's Learning Theory of Career Counselling (Mitchell & Krumboltz, 1996) emphasizes that the career counsellor must encourage students to explore new activities, expand their interests, and learn new skills in preparation for the changing landscape of careers. This is particularly salient in an era where individuals are expected to change careers multiple times over the course of their working lives. In proposing Happenstance Learning Theory, Krumboltz (2009) expanded on his original theory to include the importance of taking actions to generate unplanned events that may lead to new opportunities. For example, engagement in WIL provides career clarification and networking opportunities through access to professional communities (de Villiers Scheepers, Barnes, Clements, & Stubbs, 2018; Zegwaard & Coll, 2011). Krumboltz (2009, p. 151) suggests that his theory can be applied to the educational process by having students "perform valuable learning tasks. Students learn best from their own actions, not from lectures" and to "assess the outcomes of education by the performance of students and graduates in the real world". Perhaps not surprisingly, students who participate in EL opportunities report increased satis-

faction with their college experiences (Schaller, 2005), are better able to articulate and connect their undergraduate program skills to the workplace (Schwartz et al., 2018), and are more likely to be admitted to graduate or professional programs and/or secure employment at graduation (Coker & Porter, 2016). Indeed, employers are responsive to work experience when hiring, typically valuing relevant experience over candidate academic transcripts.

Extrapolating from the above research allows us to make a link to the philosophy of EL: that students become increasingly self-aware and identify career-related goals through their own actions and real world experiences. Career theories in combination with EL theory encourage students to take actions that foster self-awareness, prompt new skills, and set meaningful goals in their quest to find satisfying careers throughout their lifetime. Studies like the ones above demonstrate the growing need for post-secondary institutions to more widely implement EL to encourage core competency development and, ultimately, career success and mobility.

Mount Saint Vincent University employs course-based service learning, program-based co-operative education, and the institutional co-curricular record initiative. These examples provide a nuanced portfolio of opportunities for students that are context specific. Through describing each opportunity and highlighting how they map to our theoretical model of core competencies, we begin the dialogue concerning an aware and contingent deployment of the most appropriate EL opportunity to the pedagogical needs.

Experiential Learning Opportunities at Mount Saint Vincent University

Established in 1873 by the Sisters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul, Mount Saint Vincent University was the first institution in Canada dedicated to the higher education of women and, as of 1925, the only degree granting women's college in the British Commonwealth, offering education, nursing, and arts-based programs. These offerings have expanded over time to include undergraduate degrees in Arts and Science as well as graduate and professional degree programs (e.g., Child and Youth Study, Public Relations), including the first Business co-operative education program in the Maritime provinces (established in 1979). While men were admitted to the university beginning in 1967, approximately 80% of today's student body of 3600 are women; moreover, students are typically young (on average, 25 years of age), first generation (66%), and Nova Scotian (17% are international students) ("University Profile", n.d.).

A recent environmental scan reveals a range of individualized EL paths (e.g., practicum, internship, co-operative education, research mentorship, study abroad). Though there exist different types, for different purposes, for different outcomes, at different times, and in different weightings, these experiential opportunities can be generally understood within the framework of Kolb's theory. In the next section, we describe three examples of innovative experiential methodologies during which students can come to better know themselves as individuals and future workers.

Service Learning in the Department of Psychology

Service learning is increasingly advocated in higher education as a high impact educational practice that engages students and facilitates their deep processing of complex academic material, resulting in gains in academic knowledge, communication and leadership skills, as well as awareness of social issues (Celio, Durlak, & Dymnicki, 2011; Eyler, Giles, Stenson, & Gray, 2001; Yorio & Ye, 2012). During SL, students work on real world problems with a community partner (the *service* component) and then reflect on that experience (the *learning* component). As they do so, students apply their knowledge and skills and learn from others who may be dissimilar from them. By definition, SL is distinct from job shadowing, field education, and an internship, all of which are intended to primarily meet the needs of the student. SL also differs from volunteering, which is intended to primarily benefit the recipient. Rather, SL is an experiential opportunity couched within an academic context that provides benefit to both the student and community partner (Eyler et al., 2001).

In 2014, the university formed an EL Subcommittee in support of the Academic Plan, which recommended an increase in “the range of applied learning opportunities so that all undergraduate students can access at least one applied learning experience during their degree” (“Academic Plan”, n.d., p. 7). While a number of WIL experiences (e.g., practicum, internship, co-operative education) were available for students in the Faculties of Professional Studies and Education, fewer opportunities existed in the Faculty of Arts and Science, especially for first year

students. Recognition of the importance of the first-year experience for a successful transition into academic studies, combined with the popularity of Introductory Psychology as an elective course, provided impetus for developing the following SL opportunity.

In 2017, the first author implemented a mandatory SL activity in an Introductory Psychology course. Here, students engaged with international students new to Canada and then linked their experiences to the academic curriculum through reflection on the relationship between culture, language, and behavior. Specifically, small group “Conversation Circles” and a panel presentation were held (five hours in total) during which international students described their assimilation to university and to Canada, including social, cultural, and academic challenges. At each session, the Psychology students actively listened, questioned, and conversed with the international students. As the sessions were intended to allow international students to connect with domestic peers and also practice their oral language skills, SL targeted a genuine need within the university, thus enhancing its authenticity as a learning activity.

As “reflection is the soul of service learning because it connects service with learning and maximizes the effects of both” (You & Rud, 2010, p. 40), the learning activities (i.e., readings, videos, discussion, assignments, statement of learning goals) were intended to foster cognitive, metacognitive, and affective development. For example, assignment questions encouraged disciplinary knowledge by linking concrete experience to the academic curriculum (e.g., How does Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs help contextualize the experiences of the international students?).

In addition, group discussion on topics such as similarities and differences between Canadian and other cultures was intended to foster social and cultural awareness.

The first author queried whether the SL experience, as described above, would foster general empathy development in her students. This question, answered via questionnaire measures, became the basis of the Honours thesis by Jocelyn Paul. To probe for evidence of other core competencies, the first author subsequently analyzed the in-course reflective writings. Of specific interest was empathic concern within a cultural context, defined as “feeling, understanding, and caring about what someone from another culture feels, understands, and cares about” (Rasoal, Eklund, & Hansen, 2011, p. 8). Ethics approval was granted by the University Research Ethics Board.

In contrast to the questionnaire results from students who did not participate in SL ($n = 55$ females), SL participants ($n = 16$ females) reported that SL increased their understanding of racial and cultural differences as well as their ability to imagine another’s situation and perceive their thoughts and feelings. SL participants also reported an increased desire to be kind and helpful to others. However, no improvements in general empathy (across an array of hypothetical situations and scenarios) or in problem solving, organizational, and communication skills were found (Paul & Bowering, 2018).

The reflections written by the SL participants provide descriptive evidence of our theoretical model’s core competencies.

(1) Self-awareness and regulation: The SL experience prompted critical reflection, deepened self-awareness, and encouraged socio-emotional

growth. As expressed by one student, service learning “made me re-evaluate how I look at my own life and my own challenges”. Or, in the words of another student, “When we can relate to someone, I think that it makes us realize that we can relate to our own self as well to try to better understand why we feel the way we do.”. In making meaning of their experience, participants described a range of emotional reactions. While positive emotions were primarily reported (e.g., feeling happy and inspired by the international students), negative emotion was also evident; e.g., “I was sad that the (international students) felt like (Canadian students) did not want to be friends with them”. Tellingly, some students recognized the need to continue to grow socio-emotionally: “I will take what I have learned from this experience to be a more caring and understanding person”.

(2) Cognitive and metacognitive processing: The students connected their SL experience to the academic curriculum. As they grappled with complex concepts (e.g., cultural relativism, ethnocentrism), they often questioned their personal worldview and its assumptions, reconstructed their understanding, and gained disciplinary knowledge. In so doing, students affirmed the value of open-mindedness. As expressed by one student, “Sometimes we are raised to think that the way that we do things is the “right” way ... sometimes people just stay close-minded ... I wish that more people would be open-minded.”. For some students, cognitive perspective-taking was linked to emotion: “After putting myself in my (international) partner’s shoes, I felt emotionally connected to her.”.

(3) Social awareness and responsible citizenship: Social interest and en-

gagement was high (e.g., “I think that getting to socialize with so many different cultures has been awesome.”). Empathetic feelings that were culturally situated were also evident. As shared by one student, “Empathy allows you to realize that even though someone is from a different country, they still have the same basic needs and feelings as you do.”. In brainstorming ways to welcome international students to campus, students demonstrated social responsibility and leadership. Taken as a whole, these qualities provide support for the university’s vision of being “a model of creative teaching and research that nurtures socially responsible global citizens” (“University Profile”, n.d.).

To summarize, a service learning experience emphasizing cross-cultural interaction is a promising instructional strategy to support core competency development, as described in our theoretical model. Through “action with reflection”, first year students are developing knowledge, skills, and attitudes of considerable personal and professional value (e.g., self-awareness, cultural awareness, concern for others). Despite the increasing recognition of cultural understanding as a core competency, few full-time undergraduates pursue an international mobility experience (e.g., 3.1% in 2014; Universities Canada, 2014). A domestic-international peer experience such as described here may serve to increase cultural awareness and empathetic feelings and support Kuh’s (2008) recommendation that high impact educational practices should begin as early as the first year of university study. More broadly, this service learning endeavor can inspire potential applications in other academic departments and disciplines. Service learning opportunities can optimize the learning outcomes of an academic curriculum and

build the core competencies necessary for our employees of tomorrow.

Co-operative Education in the Bachelor of Public Relations

The Bachelor of Public Relations degree has, over its forty-year history, moved from being solely course-based to include optional inclusion of co-op work terms, and then to its present state of three mandatory co-op work terms. The professional practice of public relations (PR) has long accepted the premise of a progressive career, which starts with entry-level technical skills-based practice, moving through management, and eventual expert prescriber roles. There is a de-facto sense that apprenticeship is a valuable, indeed necessary, practice within the profession. Co-operative education allows for integration of classroom learning with workplace educational partners to further not only knowledge and skills but also to inculcate attitudes that reflect the professional culture itself. Tacit and near osmotic learning are important consequences of the co-op process.

The co-operative education aspect of the PR degree at Mount Saint Vincent University is accredited and consequently has certain features that are integral and periodically audited against. Professional development workshops precede each competitive posting of job opportunities. The content of these workshops is initially focused upon resume crafting and interviewing skills. These workshops are mandatory and, along with course level prerequisites, form an initial gatekeeping function. Our educational partners who offer paid employment opportunities to our students accept applications and short list, interview, and then make offers to candidates in the typical fashion.

Thus, students are exposed to the preparation and skills required for a successful entry into the job market in their chosen field.

Students will be called upon to do a myriad of entry to mid-level public relations and communications functions in their co-operative education work terms. Our employers are considered educational partners, and provide ongoing feedback with a depth and frequency beyond typical workplace interactions. Many employers see themselves as mentors and this level of distributed pedagogical responsibility dovetails well with the mandatory work site visits, discussions via social media, and advice offered by academic staff as the work term proceeds.

There are three sequenced and prescribed semester-long co-operative education experiences in our undergraduate PR degree. These work semesters are academically situated in that they are treated as courses, complete with reflective learning criteria embedded in the reportage that each student provides to their academic advisor and, in some cases, their peers as well. Reflective learning takes different forms depending upon the particular co-op work term and there is escalating commitment in terms of how the link from reflective learning becomes demonstrably manifested. For example, in an early work term, students may be guided to consider and report upon the organizational culture, as they experience it, at their workplace. These reflections are compared and contrasted with their peers' perspectives via discussion forums. In later work terms, this type of internal cultural scan may be deployed for purposes of strategic internal communication. Consequently, what begins as observations and reflection eventually is also put into practice by the student through educational

scaffolding. The material outcome of the three work terms taken in concert is a portfolio of work, which serves to close the loop between a student's experiences, reflections upon those experiences, and the production of evidence of their capability consequential to the process.

It is not uncommon for students to be offered full time employment by educational partners at the conclusion of their work term. This "raises the stakes" of the co-op experience for students and ultimately creates two identifiable strategies which they deploy when choosing work terms. One group of students has a highly refined sense of the sector, and perhaps even employer, that they wish to target. They tend to have a narrow focus that reflects this proclivity. The other group of students is uncertain as to what they want out of employment, and they tend to undertake a range of opportunities in an effort to gain experience sufficient in breadth to openly assess what they want to do. In a sense, the student's own choice of what organizations to apply to when seeking co-operative education work terms is governed by a sort of meta-level learning goal, although this may be poorly articulated in the early stages of their job search. Regardless, this highlights that successful experiential education is structured in such a way as to allow for multiple individuated outcomes originating from a structurally similar initiative.

The co-operative education aspect of the BPR program is challenging to administer because it exists at the nexus of a complex multi-stakeholder environment. The intersection of employer and employee needs and wants, education as a growth-oriented process, and academic requirements for graduation is potentially elusive. However, this complexity is also a key feature that allows for a high

level of commitment and perceived valence on the part of the various individuals and organizations who are involved in co-operative education experiences.

Ultimately, results matter. In the most recent survey (2016-2017) of co-op graduates, more than 80% secured employment in their field of study within six months of graduation, and this rose to 91% within one year of graduation. These graduates are employed in all sectors of the economy. Of these graduates, 91% report that the co-op experience was effective in helping secure full-time employment after graduation. Most telling is that 94% of co-op program graduates felt prepared for the workforce after completing their degree. This is important because the literature regarding outcomes of co-operative education is mixed. For example, Wessels and Pumphrey (1996) suggest that there is an insignificant effect of co-operative education programs upon eventual hourly wage of graduates. If the empirical evidence is not uniform in identifying positive financial or employment outcomes for students in programs with co-operative education experiential learning, then the self-reported impressions become important markers of individual level change and utility of the experience. This understanding is mirrored in the Canadian context within, for instance, Kramer and Usher's (2011) report *Work-integrated learning and career-ready students: Examining the evidence*. Thus, we consider that evidence of the efficacy of WIL in the form of co-operative education programs need not be expressly concerned with instrumental outcomes in the workplace.

We therefore postulate that this is an example of an experiential education opportunity that broadly incorporates the three theoretical heu-

ristic categories that we explicated earlier: self-awareness and regulation, cognitive and metacognitive processing capacity, and social awareness and responsible citizenship.

Thus far, we have described course-level and program-level experiential education opportunities at our home institution. We next examine a university-wide initiative, the Co-Curricular Recognition Program.

Co-Curricular Recognition Program in Career Services

In the past decade, post-secondary institutions in Canada have moved toward documenting learning outside the classroom via a Co-Curricular Record (CCR). The Co-Curricular Record has three pillars: (1) to provide a “database of eligible co-curricular activities that is searchable by students, allowing them to peruse a broad range of opportunities”; (2) “to connect experience to learning, to encourage self-reflection and self-awareness, and highlight to the student their personal growth and development”; and (3) to provide “a formal and official institutional document that validates student involvement” (Elias & Drea, 2013, p. 2-3). Recommendations that support implementation of a CCR include identifying the activity-based competencies, formulating learning agreements and plans for activities, and providing workshops to facilitate student reflection (Stirling & Kerr, 2015).

Our university’s CCR was launched in 2010 by Career Services and the Retention Committee based on the premise that students attend university primarily for career-related reasons, and are more likely to persist if they link their education and career goals. Supporting research suggests that academic persistence is increased when students participate in educa-

tionally purposeful activities, find their studies meaningful, and apply their learning to their goals (Kuh, 2016). Moreover, career satisfaction following graduation is enhanced by exposure to a range of educational and extra-curricular activities (Campbell & Unger, 2008).

The CCR recognizes and records achievement in the categories of leadership, varsity athletics, clubs and societies, awards, professional development, volunteer work, and global engagement and, to date, approximately 1800 students have participated across 300 unique activities. To encourage self-examination, students answer reflection questions after each co-curricular activity. Here, they not only identify their newfound skills but also explain how the competency was developed (with an example) and will apply to other activities, volunteer work, education, or employment. To ensure clarity and relevance, the competencies in the most recent CCR (launched in January 2019) were revised in consultation with students and after review of other Canadian post-secondary CCRs and the CAS Learning and Development Outcomes (Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education, 2015). To support goal setting, the newest CCR also requires students to state their progress in competency mastery (i.e., developing, competent, advanced) as well as the competencies they hope to achieve in the future. Students further reflect upon the impact of their activities on educational and career plans through workshops facilitated by Career Services.

As demonstrated by the following examples, competency development through co-curricular activities relates well to our theoretical model.

(1) Self-awareness and regulation: development of intrapersonal awareness (e.g., learning one’s likes and dislikes from a volunteer experience at a local food bank), adaptability (e.g., learning to multi-task as a student leader with many responsibilities), time management/ organization/planning (e.g., learning to balance academics with the demands of being a varsity athlete), and resiliency (e.g., learning to cope after an activity failed to turn out as expected and then re-evaluating how to move forward to goals).

(2) Cognitive and metacognitive processing: development of critical thinking skills (e.g., from participation in a professional development activity, such as researching for a conference presentation) and creativity (e.g., coming up with ways to market a student society to peers).

(3) Social awareness and responsible citizenship: development of humanitarian and civic values (e.g., volunteering with a local shelter), interpersonal/team work skills (e.g., collaborating to organize a student event), and cultural awareness including respect for diversity (e.g., participation in a campus multicultural night).

The impact of extracurricular participation on student development has been confirmed through our university’s measurement of CCR outcomes in 2015 for the International Survey of Peer Leaders (Kenedy & Young, 2016). Prior to data collection, ethics approval was granted by the University Research Ethics Board. Over 50% of CCR respondents ($n = 93$) reported increases in skills desired by employers. Gains were reported for adaptability, ethical decision-making, and time management, as per our model’s self-awareness and regulation competency. Respondents also

reported increases in critical thinking, creativity, problem solving and decision-making, analysis from a new perspective, organizational and project management, and written and oral presentation skills, as per our model's cognitive and metacognitive processing competency. As well, increases were reported for interpersonal skills, leadership and team work, relationships with work colleagues, as well as knowledge, interaction, and understanding of people from backgrounds different than their own, as per our model's social awareness and responsible citizenship competency. In line with students' motivation to learn work-worthy skills, respondents also confirmed that hands-on experience allowed application of knowledge to a real world setting and connection of pieces of information from different experiences.

Benefits further extended to their overall experiences as students. Respondents (more than 50%) reported that they belonged to and were welcome at university, contributed to the campus community, experienced more meaningful interactions with professors, staff, and peers, and were knowledgeable about campus resources. Not surprisingly, involvement in co-curricular activities also supported academic success. Respondents (more than 50%) endorsed the desire to persist to graduation and to engage in continuous learning after graduation. In fact, compared to the university retention rate (2011–2015), 12% more participants in the CCR program were retained (T. MacDonald, personal communication, July 29, 2015 and November 22, 2016) with 67% later graduating (T. MacDonald, personal communication, December 14, 2018).

Together, the data suggest that students are learning relevant skills from their co-curricular experiences that support academic and

professional development. Through reflection on experience, we believe that students formulate meaning from experience, creating connections between personal interests, values, emotions, and workplace skills. In turn, students set goals less focused on choosing the “right” career, and are more at ease with uncertainty about what the future holds. We agree with Campbell and Dutton (2015) who, from interviews of young adults navigating their career journeys, emphasized the need to purposefully experiment and to keep taking steps because “they can't know the consequences of taking that first step before they do it, but the new learning that comes from it will feed the next step” (p. 81).

Recommendations

Incorporating the HIEP of experiential learning into post-secondary study is more important than ever given the context of a fast-changing world combined with the increasing diversity of students being admitted to university. Based on our first-hand observations of the beneficial impact of EL on student development, we offer the following recommendations for consideration.

(1) Role of experiential learning: EL must be viewed as an essential component of post-secondary educational philosophy and practice, and not as a “value-added” feature when circumstances permit. Institutions are encouraged to design and implement EL processes and policies that appropriately reflect their mission statement and fundamental values while addressing student, academic program, and community needs. In so doing, students, employees, alumni, and societal stakeholders need to be consulted and invited into the conversation. Experiential education presents an opportunity for an institution

to model respect and responsiveness to others through collegial and communicative partnerships.

(2) Adoption of an experiential record: The way of the future is coordinating and recording EL activities (e.g., service learning, co-operative education, co-curricular experiences) via one institutional document (“experiential record”), such as now occurs at Wilfred Laurier University (“Laurier Introduces New Tool”, 2018). An official document maintained by the Registrar achieves at least two purposes: it describes and collates student accomplishments and readiness for a competency-based workforce (e.g., for prospective employers) and supports institutional strategic planning and accountability (e.g., to government, donors, general public).

(3) Allocation of resources: Adequate resources (financial and otherwise) must be budgeted and periodically reviewed. An environmental scan of the institution's current practices and resources will identify existing gaps and shortfalls. Examples of support include an EL centre with dedicated staffing and expertise. Here, staff can connect (e.g., identify community partner needs), enable (e.g., prepare students for the EL activity, including discussion of codes of conduct, confidentiality, and boundary setting), and mediate (e.g., ensure communication flow) the relationship between students, community partner, and the university. In tandem with the institutional teaching and learning center, staff can support faculty through resource development (e.g., training videos, provision of sample syllabi and reflection assignments) and help balance demands on students who already hold multiple responsibilities (e.g., family, paid employment).

(4) Program development: When contemplating the inclusion of EL opportunities within a program, departments and Academic Deans must engage in top-down curriculum and workload planning. EL can be configured as a series of punctuated and process-oriented “stepping stones” through which to meet program objectives. As part of that, a reconfiguration of the understanding of the nature of the work and skill set of faculty and support staff is required. Faculty and staff, especially those new to EL, require mentoring in best practices for development of the course (e.g., course organization, pairing course objectives with specific EL activities) and support of the student (e.g., scaffolding instructional methods to guide critical reflection on action). Additional support through adjustment of course caps or the provision of teaching assistants may help address workload demands. Departments also will need to monitor and measure (quantitatively and qualitatively) student outcomes over time, and adjust accordingly.

(5) Student development: Permitting choice among EL activities allows the student to control and leverage holistic development (including intellectual, socio-emotional, and career-ready outcomes) and more likely results in engagement and relevant pedagogical outcomes. Whatever the choice of activity, students require preparation for, monitoring of, and debriefing to ensure engagement and growth. Students require multiple opportunities (e.g., via writing assignments, peer-to-peer discussion, and provision of constructive feedback from community partner staff) to process and meaningfully relate experience to their core values, career goals, and academic curriculum. In the journey of self-discovery, some students will require

additional support beyond what their faculty instructor can provide; liaising with student and career services may help address and resolve issues that arise. For example, a challenging experience that the student perceives as a “failure” provides a valuable opportunity to process anxiety and self-doubt and then build an “emotional toolkit” that includes tolerance for ambiguity, resiliency, coping skills, and help-seeking behaviours. Faculty and staff model emotional competencies by engaging supportively, empathically, and compassionately with students. With rising mental health concerns in today’s student cohort, EL opportunities that allow the student to know herself emotionally (not just intellectually) and learn coping skills are invaluable; this presents an intriguing opportunity for future research.

(6) Logistical issues: Successful implementation requires careful planning. For example, in advance of course registration, students should be made aware of whether a course requires EL (e.g., via calendar and time-table notations). Assessment and management of risk (e.g., student safety, safety of others, university liability) is required. Lengthy unpaid EL activities (e.g., internship, practicum) impose financial pressures on students; alternatively, the offer of well-paid employment poses a temptation for the student to leave university before degree completion.

Conclusions

When we invite serendipity into the classroom, though it may come with the unforeseen, the results can be positive. Our changing world requires openness to a variety of career paths and learning outcomes, with post-secondary institutions bearing a

responsibility to prepare an increasingly heterogenous cohort of students to be engaged *citizens of tomorrow*. We have provided an evidence-based overview of how our university has cultivated and coordinated three practices of benefit to undergraduate students, community partners, and potential employers, and have situated these examples within a competency framework that emphasize self-awareness and regulation, cognitive and metacognitive processing, and social awareness and responsible citizenship. Our data suggest that undergraduate students who participate in EL opportunities are likely to reap academic, personal, and professional benefits.

We are left to consider what it is that makes EL such a powerful tool in the university context. Central to how we understand the potential of EL is the nature of moving beyond solely fact-based didactic learning (“knowledge transfer”). EL is undertaken in the messy world of human interactions and, because of this, constitutes a socialization opportunity. Naturally, this then opens up the requirement to confront and manage uncertainty at the individual level. Uncertainty, and its close cousin doubt, are hurdles to be overcome on the path towards self-efficacy. Undergraduate students are keenly aware of contrived situations and predictably wary of situations not deemed authentic. EL exposes students to others in a relevant social context, complete with uncertainty, emotionality, and perceived social risk. Self-awareness, regulation of thought and emotion, and concern for the well-being of others are some of the tacitly learned tools for success. If it takes a village to raise capable citizens, then removal of the influence of that village during critical educational junctures in a young person’s life seems misguided.

Through our examination of a series of strategic moves toward better integration of EL in one university, we aim to enhance the dialogue concerning EL as a directed and effective intervention toward the creation of healthy, confident, and capable citizens of tomorrow. Experiential learning, whether implemented at the university, program, or course level, is a powerful educational practice that can bring about desirable learning outcomes within cognitive, affective, and behavioral domains.

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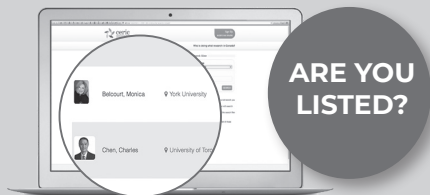
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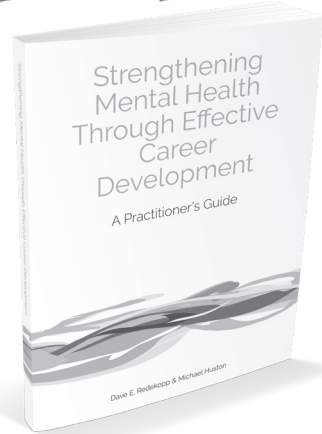
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