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The Inukshuk... *"These magnificent Stone Cairns show that you should always have hope in where to go because they are the leaders that lead the way to safety which brings food, shelter, and life. All the years that I have been traveling through the barrens, I have always been amazed how these Inukshuks can bring you to your destination and they ask nothing in return."*

David Merkuratsuk

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Editorial

It is with great pleasure that I present the Volume 8, Number 1, 2009 issue of the Canadian Journal of Career Development/ Revue canadienne de développement de carrière.

This issue is a wonderful overview of the varied and fascinating research that is occuring around the world. In this issue, we have an article written by Linda Manning and Catherine Elliott entitled, *Effective Career Services Practices: The Case of Canadian Business Schools.* While this article has at its corse business schools in Canada, it's findings are relevant for business schools around the world and will provide a richness to the literature.

Given the recent downturn in the economy, there is a renewed focus on the importance of career development to help individuals navigate the world of work. The article *New Realities in the Work World: The Impact on Workers and on the Professional Practice of Career Counsellors* is both timely and instructive for career practioners as we help our clients navigate the new landscape. This article written by Michaël Dussault, Bruno Bourassa, Geneviève Fournier, Armelle Spain, Lise Lachance, and Lilian Negura will help guide us in our work and research as we move forward in this challenging new economy.

Included in this issue is a thought provoking article on *Career Practioners' Views of Social Justice and Barriers for Practice* by Nancy Arthur, Sandra Collins, Mary McMahon, and Catherine Marshall. I believe this article will allow the profession to sit back and reflect on the importance of social justice as a foundation for our profession. From helping the marginalized in society to advocating for increased support for unemployed workers - ours is a profession steeped in social justice. This article is a scintillating and reflective piece that will challenge the reader to think about the role of social justice in our practice.

A. Dennis Dahl in his article entitled *Self-assessed intelligence in adults: The role of gender, cognitive intelligence and emotional intelligence* will allow the reader insight into a topic that is rarely assessed. The article has significant implications for our practice as career professionals in multiple sectors of the economy.

Satoris S. Culbertson, Pedro I. Leiva, Jaime B. Henning, and Shawn Post-Priller in their article entitled *The Role of Personality and Goal Orientation in Student Preferences for Job Attributes* discuss issues related to secondary and post secondary youth. The transition to the world of work for many youth is a tumultuous experience – an experience full of twists and turns. This article will allow both researchers and practioners insight into the importance of personality and goal orientation in those transitions.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the authors for their time and expertise. Without these significant and well written pieces of research our work as practioners would be significantly limited.

To my Associate Editor Ms. Lisa Russell and Administrative Assistant Ms. Yvonne Abbott I want to publicly say thank you for your many years of commitment to ensuring each and every issue is delivered to the printers in a timely and efficient manner. Producing two issues a year requires commitment and organizational skills and both of these wonderful people have those qualities in abundance.

I hope you enjoy this issue!

Rob

Robert Shea
Founding Editor

the Canadian Journal of Career Development

Etta St. John Wileman Award
For Lifetime Achievement in Career Development

Why develop this award?

This award is designed to recognize and celebrate individuals who have devoted their lives to furthering the profession of career development.

- To celebrate individuals who have established themselves as leaders within our profession.
- To recognize leaders who combine the role of researcher, educator, author, practioner and career leader.
- To encourage individuals in Canada and around the world to celebrate those around us who have contributed so much to our identity as career development professionals.
- To establish a significant and uniquely Canadian award that recognizes those individuals who have devoted their lives to the enhancement of career development practice, administration, research and education.

Who can be nominated?

Individuals who have demonstrated significant and long term commitment to the principles and experience outlined above.

When is the award presented?

The award is presented at the annual CANNEXUS Conference in Canada. The award is presented on a less than annual basis as is determined by the selection committee.

Who will comprise the selection committee?

The selection committee is comprised of the Founding Editor of the Canadian Journal of Career Development; a previous award winner; a career practioner; and the President of the Canadian Education and Research Institute for Counselling.

What is awarded?

The award recipient will be presented with a hand made Innukshuk by an Inuit artisan from Newfoundland & Labrador, Canada. The Innukshuk is made from a precious stone called Labradorite native to the coast of Labrador. Each award will be presented at the annual CANNEXUS Conference.

Submissions

To ensure confidentiality and to minimize disappointment it is requested that the nominee not know about the nomination in advance.

Submissions should attest to each of the principles outlined above in the section - Why develop this award? This is an award for significant and lifetime commitment to career development. Unsuccessful nominations will be considered for a period of two further years.

Nominations

Nomination packages should be sent to:

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Effective Career Services Practices: The Case of Canadian Business Schools

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Abstract

Perceived quality of a business school education is closely tied to student satisfaction with Career Services throughout the course of study. This is true for two reasons. First, students seek assurance that their educational investment will result in a secure future. Second, students often use business school ranks published in high profile magazines and newspapers such as Canadian Business, U.S. News and World Report and Financial Times. A significant percentage of the weight in business school ranks depends upon student and recruiter perceptions of the school's career centre (CC). In this key informant study, practices used by Canadian business school CCs are reported and presented in the context of theory of best practices and studies of CCs in the US among top performing schools. The results are meaningful because of the relative youth of CCs in Canadian business schools. We find that despite their relative inexperience, rapidly increasing demands, and limited resources, that practices used by Canadian business school CCs are in line with the most successful CCs in the US and consistent with theory of effective practices. Structured telephone interviews were conducted with fourteen directors of CCs in Canadian business schools. Through an analysis of the interview text, five essential themes of the career centre practices emerged. These essential themes are (1) Relationship Management, (2) Comprehensive Student Support, (3) Corporate Outreach Activities, (4) Continuous Quality Improvement, and (5) Technology and Facilities.

Introduction

As economic uncertainty rises, graduating students increasingly consider the marketability of their degree (Brathwaite, 2003) when selecting a business program. Business school rankings published in high profile publications such as *Financial Times* and *Canadian Business* are often used as a tool in selecting a business program. One of the most important determinants of rank is student satisfaction—in particular, satisfaction with the Career Centre (CC). A review of 6 of the top business school ranks *(Canadian Business, Wall Street Journal, The Economist, Financial Times, Business Week, and US News and World Report*) finds that at least one determinant of rank and an average of 57% of the rank calculation are associated with career services. In fact, student satisfaction with career services ranks second only to the quality of faculty in required courses among factors influencing overall student satisfaction business programs (AACSB Report, 2001).

Historically, university level career services have served business schools students. However, since career services have such an impact on school ranking, reputation, and student enrollment, we suggest that strong career service support dedicated to their own students is a strategic activity for any business school. In the U.S., and more recently in Canada, an increasing number of business schools have established dedicated Career Centres (CCs) to serve their students. The 30 highest ranking business schools world-wide in the 2002 *Financial Times* top 100 schools all have a dedicated career centre.

Analyses of effective practices at top performing career centres (e.g., AACSB (2002 and 2001) have been conducted in U.S. schools, and provide a benchmark for analysis of Canadian CCs. In these studies, four years of data for 168 schools was used to identify 5 top-performing MBA schools (2001) and 184 schools to identify 3 top performing undergraduate programs. Quantitative and qualitative analysis of interviews with stakeholders, students, alumni, faculty, recruiters and CC personnel in MBA programs (2001) revealed 6 effective practices that distinguish exemplary CCs from their counterparts:

1. Coherent business strategy
2. Relationship management.
3. Comprehensive student support
4. Corporate outreach activities.
5. Continuous quality improvement
6. Staff resource development systems

Similar analysis for undergraduate programs (2002) did not reveal effective practices, although the following key findings were reported:

1. Student satisfaction with a CC is the second strongest predictor of overall satisfaction with an undergraduate business program.
2. A strong link exists between high admissions standards and high levels of student satisfaction with CC performance.
3. A link exists between CCs with staff and resources dedicated to business students and high levels of student satisfaction.
4. Schools that view the CC as integral to achieving their mission tend to have higher levels of student satisfaction.
5. The quality of CC infrastructure, such as technology and facilities, influence the level to which undergraduate business students are satisfied with its performance.

These practices and findings reflect changes in career service offices at the university level over the past 25 years, who have shifted toward core activities focused on students' desire for work experience in their chosen profession prior to graduation, and eliminate some services that are no longer necessary (McGrath, 2002). There has been a significant increase in cooperative education, internship, and experiential education, from 26 percent in 1975 to 78.3

percent in 2000 (Nagle and Bohovich, 2000).

Data and Methodology

Sixty Canadian business schools were drawn from Erkut's (2002) study of research productivity in Canadian business schools. Websites were examined to identify schools with a CC dedicated to their own students. Forty-nine of the 60 business schools have their own websites, and from these sites a preliminary summary of web-based and in-house services offered was developed, and 18 schools were identified as having a dedicated CC. Schools without their own website were contacted by phone and 2 of them confirmed the presence of a CC. Tables 1 and 2 present the business schools with a dedicated CC and those without (respectively).

All schools in Table 1 were invited to participate in the study, and fourteen agreed to be interviewed. Table 3 presents a summary of characteristics of these schools.

A 30 minute structured telephone interview protocol was employed and telephone interviews were conducted with the director of each participating CC or a designate[1]. Interview transcripts were analyzed using NVivo software. Five essential themes emerged, all of which align with effectives practices identified in top U.S. schools:

1. ***Relationship Management:*** building and maintaining relationships with stakeholders, namely students, employers (recruiters), and alumni.
2. ***Comprehensive Student Support:*** delivery of continuous, relevant services to undergraduate and MBA students and alumni.
3. ***Corporate Outreach Activities***: participation in a number of diverse activities off-campus, complemented by events such as career fairs and information session sponsored to attract recruiters on-campus.
4. ***Continuous Quality Improvement:*** improving services through the use of informal and formal feedback mechanisms.
5. ***Technology and Facilities:*** leveraging technology by offering comprehensive, interactive web services for all stakeholders. High quality physical facilities optimized recruiters' time on campus.

Table 1: Canadian Business Schools with dedicated CC

Brock University, Faculty of Business
Concordia University, Faculty of Commerce and Administration
Dalhousie University, Faculty of Management
HEC (Université de Montréal),École des Hautes Études Commerciales
McGill University, Faculty of Management
McMaster University, DeGroote School of Business
Queens University, School of Business
Saint Mary's University, Frank H. Sobey Faculty of Commerce
UBC, Faculty of Commerce
Université du Québec à Montréal, École des sciences de la gestion
University of Alberta, School of Business
University of Calgary, Faculty of Management
University of Lethbridge
University of Manitoba, I. H. Asper School of Business
University of Ottawa
University of Toronto, Rotman School of Management
University of Victoria, Faculty of Business
University of Western Ontario, Richard Ivey School of Business
Wilfrid Laurier University, School of Business and Economics
York University, Schulich School of Business

Table 2: Canadian Business Schools without dedicated CC

Acadia University, Fred C. Manning School of Business*
Algoma University College, Department of Business Administration
Athabasca University, School of Business
Bishop's University, Williams School of Business and Economics
Brandon University, Business Administration
Carleton University, Sprott School of Business
Kings University College, Department of Commerce/Business
Lakehead University, Faculty of Business
Laurentian University, School of Commerce and Administration
Laval
Memorial University of Newfoundland, Faculty of Business Administration
Mount Allison University, Department of Commerce
Mount Saint Vincent University, Business & Tourism Department
Royal Military College of Canada, Dept of Business Administration/Administrative Studies Program
Royal Roads University, Management Programs Division
Ryerson Polytechnic University, School of Business Management
Saint Francis Xavier University, Gerald Schwartz School of Business and Information Systems
Simon Fraser University, Faculty of Business Administration
Trent University*
Trinity Western University, Faculty of Business and Economics
U du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue, Département d'administration
Univ of New Brunswick at Fredericton, Faculty of Administration
Université de Moncton, Faculté d'administration
Université de Sherbrooke, Faculté d'administration
Université du Québec à Chicoutimi, Département des sciences économiques et administratives
Université du Québec à Hull, Département des sciences administratives
Université du Québec à Rimouski, Département d'économie et de gestion
Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières, Département des sciences de la gestion et de l'économie
Université Sainte-Anne, Département des sciences administratives
University College of Cape Breton, School of Business
University of Guelph, Faculty of Management
University of New Brunswick., Faculty of Business
University of Nipissing, School of Business and Economics
University of Northern British Columbia, Faculty of Management
University of Prince Edward Island, School of Business*
University of Regina, Faculty of Administration
University of Saskatchewan, College of Commerce
University of Waterloo, School of Accountancy and Dept of Management Science
University of Windsor, Faculty of Business Administration
University of Winnipeg, Department of Business Computing and Administrative Studies

*Undergraduate program only

Two notable differences in the findings from our study and those from the AACSB (2001) emerge. It is not obvious whether Canadian business school CCs have developed a coherent business strategy, or that there are staff resource development systems in place. It may be that the relative youth of Canadian CCs is the main reason for the absence of these characteristics. One could argue that in the organizational life cycle, that these are activities associated with mature organizations. However, it is beyond the scope of this paper to address this question.

Effective Practices in Canadian Business School CCs

Results from interview and website analysis indicate that four practices correspond to MBA effective practices in the U.S. (AACSB 2001) – relationship management, comprehensive student support, corporate outreach activities

Table 3: Characteristics of the Participating Business School CCs

Size of CC (number of employees in CC)	**1-3 personnel**	**4-6 personnel**	**7-9 personnel**	**10-13**
	3 (25%)	3 (25%)	3 (25%)	3 (25%)
Size of Business School (Undergrad & Graduate student enrollment)	**<1000**	**1000-1999**	**2000-2999**	**3000 +**
	2 (14%)	4 (29%)	4 (29%)	4 (29%)
Size of Full Time MBA Program (Student enrollment)	**< 150**	**150-299**	**300-449**	**450-600**
	6 (46%)	3 (23%)	3 (23%)	1 (8%)
Ratio of all business students to CC Staff	**< 200:1**	**200-399:1**	**400-599:1**	**600+:1**
	2	6	3	2
Primary Organization of CC[1]	**Functional**: By CC job function such as "admin", "counselor", etc.	**Industry Segment:** By industry sector such as financial services, high tech, manufacturing, etc.	**Sector:** By area of specialization such as: marketing, HR, finance	**Program:** Primarily by program - Undergrad vs MBA
	4 (33%)	1 (8%)	1 (8%)	6 (42%)
CC Funding Source	**100% University**	**100% Student Fees**	**Combination: Student Fees & University**	**Combination: Mainly University + Corp Sponsorship**
	6 (50%)	2 (16.5%)	2 (16.5%)	2 (16.5%)

Source: Interview data and Websites
[1]This represents the primary organization of the CC, as indicated by the respondents during the telephone interview (12 respondents). However, many of the CCs were matrixed (i.e., organized along 2 or more of these lines).

and continuous quality improvement. Our fifth category, technology and facilities is consistent with undergraduate practices in the U.S. (AACSB 2002). We consider this a key finding because all fourteen participants leverage technology effectively to optimize CC service delivery, and because a direct link to student satisfaction has been found: "the quality of [career centre] infrastructure, such as technology and facilities, influence the level to which undergraduate business students are satisfied with its performance" (AACSB, 2002, p. 3).

Practice 1: Relationship Management (*Students, Recruiters and Alumni)*

All participants in our study indicated that effective relationship management with various stakeholders and clients, students, alumni, and prospective employers and recruiters, is key to success. The report on CC practices for MBA students by AACSB (2001) finds relationship management as central to exemplary CC performance. The customer relationship management (CRM) approach "encourages symbiotic relationships" (Fayerman, 2002: p. 58), and is a strategy that must be synchronized with the customer life cycle (CLC), defined by Meta Group (2000) as having four main elements: engage, transact, fulfill and service. Applied to the CC environment, these stages can be described as:

- ***Stage 1: engage***. Initial client awareness is created via advertising or marketing activities. This creates basic awareness, which results in client interaction with the CC.
- ***Stage 2: transact***. Actual transactions occur, such as a student registering for a workshop or signing up for an interview with an employer, a recruiter visit to the campus for interviews or a graduate searching for information on job openings.
- ***Stage 3: fulfill***. Customer transactions are complemented by an institutional response, such as conducting the workshop, arranging interviews with prospective employers or inviting alumni to CC events.
- ***Stage 4: service***. The institution continues to support clients, including students and alumni, by providing and processing information, or resolving issues on an ongoing basis.

The CC key informants reported a wide variety of activities that synchronize with the customer life cycle. Respondents in our study viewed their relationships with *students* as a continuous process that must begin as early as possible. All participants reported that getting to know their students was a top priority. The relationship can be complicated—not only are students viewed as a client of the CC, at the same time they are a product whose quality is 'sold' to employers. This corollary relationship motivates much of the long-run relationship building strategy practiced by our participants. The following practices were identified.

Orientation Sessions & Classroom Visits (CLC Stage 1) – Participants emphasized that getting an early start on building student relationships was critical. Seven respondents reported that CC staff conducted classroom visits at the beginning of the school year to introduce their services and gain exposure with students. Special orientation sessions such as "Open Houses" or "Career Breakfasts" were mentioned by 4 schools.

One-on-one meetings (CLC Stage 2) – Eight respondents mentioned individual meetings or personal coaching to become better acquainted with their students. Ability to support individual relationships depends on the size of the student population served; while some knew all of their students on a first name basis and had an "open door policy", others were able respond only to *requests* for meetings. All 14 participants reported that individualized coaching or counseling was a service available to students, on their web-site or face-to-face.

Partner with Student Associations to Organize Events (CLS Stage 3 and Stage 4) - To get better acquainted with their students' experience and interests, and to help them connect with employers, 5 schools reported that CC staff participate in student activities and frequently collaborate with student associations in hosting events. This activity allows CC staff to cultivate student relationships, build alliances with employers and gain greater insights into industry needs. Events such as receptions for alumni and/or employers, regular workshops on topics related to job search, or invited speakers and student "question period" are among the most frequently mentioned by the study participants.

The CC has a unique role in linking students with *employers* and *recruiters*. For successful CC activities and programs, cooperation and participation of employers is essential. Not only are they a 'client', but they can be instrumental in CC activities that promote career development. Employers can be a valuable resource for career counseling. Insights gained from interaction with employers add reality and credibility to CC staff assisting students with career concerns. They may participate in campus recruiting and career job fairs, serve as speakers, establish or coordinate internships and host student or faculty visits to their companies. At the same time, employers can raise their own visibility on campus (McGrath 2002).

Respondents at Canadian business schools reported that their relationship with recruiters is built upon mutual trust. They see their role as consistently delivering top quality students and providing top quality service throughout the entire customer life cycle. In return, employers provide feedback to CC staff on their recruitment needs, the current business marketplace, and their satisfaction with recruits. Recruiters participate in a variety of activities organized by CC staff: career and job fairs, workshops, open houses or breakfasts, or student association events.

Two themes related to relationship with recruiters and employers emerged from the interviews:

Strong Customer Service Orientation (CLC Stages 1-4) – Participants emphasized the need to build trust with recruiters by consistently delivering on promises. They recognized the need to stay in frequent contact, to understand employer needs and to provide exceptional follow-up, from providing a strong pool of candidates to streamlined processing of resumes, coordination of interviews, and post interview support.

Use of Relationship Managers (CLC Stages 1-4) – A number of organizational models are used to facilitate relationship management between CC staff and recruiters as well as between students and recruiters. Half of participants reported that their staff are primarily aligned to particular programs (i.e., undergraduate or MBA) to meet the different needs of those two groups. Secondary alignments included geographic, or functional (e.g., counseling and business development), or sectoral (e.g., finance, marketing, HR, etc.). One of the respondents described the CC organizational structure as aligned by industry sector, (manufacturing, financial services, high technology, etc.), in which relationship managers develop expertise in particular industries and long term relationships with certain companies within those industries. Irrespective of their primary alignments, CCs are organized to best meet their clients' needs and to foster the development and maintenance of strong relationships.

Alumni are one of the most important stakeholders for participating CCs, not only as products of the institution and clients of the CC, but also as important links in the recruitment process. Nine of the participant schools mentioned in interviews or on their websites the importance of establishing and maintaining formal links with alumni through special programs or events. A reliable, active alumni database is considered to be a critical tool in developing and nurturing a relationship with alumni. To promote alumni involvement, 90% of the respondents reported that career services are available to alumni at no extra cost. At some schools, alumni career services are limited to a particular time period after graduation, or restricted to certain services, and at other schools there was no limit. CC staff and recruiters are frequently alumni themselves, which offers synergies in terms of student and alumni relationship building.

Formal Alumni Programs (CLC Stage 1) –Five schools offer formal mentorship programs, whereby students are linked up with alumni who can provide career advice and practical insight into working in a particular field and/or industry.

Alumni Outreach (CLC Stages 1-4) –An additional 4 respondents offer alumni programs or events. They take a proactive approach, contacting alumni and fostering alumni relationships. For instance, alumni are personally invited to speak at company information sessions; they are contacted for business development activities (as "door openers" to targeted companies); and they are key participants in other networking events.

Practice 2: Comprehensive Student Support

Participants reported that a wide range of services are offered to support students throughout the entire career planning and job search process. They offer a full suite of services rather than just placement. Starting with an early self-assessment, CCs assist students in identification of career goals, preparation and improvement of resumes, conducting company research, practicing their interviewing skills, and negotiating an offer.

Student Self-Assessment – Six respondents reported that students are advised to undertake skills self-assessments as the first part of their career development activities. These self-assessments are mainly available on-line and assist students in identifying "what they want to do after they graduate".

Job Search Skills – To improve the placement success of their student clients, all respondents offer workshops or seminars on job search skills: resume writing, job search strategies, interviewing skills and networking pertinent to business school graduates. Some schools employ technologies such as videotaping to practice mock interviews with the students. Others invite recruiters to their workshops to address specific topics. At one school, an executive search firm speaks to students about their approach to sourcing and placement. Common to all, however, is the availability of additional support, as required, through individualized coaching or one-on-one counseling.

Skill development training and assistance is sometimes delivered in more informal settings (such as Brown Bag Lunches) or on-line. At four schools, special provisions are made for international students. To assist the students through their career transition, these CCs offer special workshops, assist international students in obtaining their employment authorization, and facilitate relationship building with employers, both here and abroad.

Job Postings – When asked about the services offered by CCs to assist students in identifying job openings, the most frequent response was "job postings" (9 respondents). However, a review of the CC websites indicate that, in fact, 12 schools offer this service for employers and 11 offer on-line search capability for students, to facilitate finding a "match". Four participants mentioned that they perform informal "matching" by emailing job opportunities to particular students or actively searching for opportunities. One of these participants described their role as similar to a recruiting company, whereby they perform direct matching for employers by screening candidates and recommending the best ones to meet the requirement. Two other respondents reported that they did not provide this service out of respect for fairness and confidentiality, stressing that it is up to the employers and the students to make their own decisions.

Recruiting and Interviewing Process – On-campus interviewing is a very common, popular and expected function of university career services (McGrath 2002). Career and job fairs provide a way for CCs and employers to work together to mutual benefit. Career fairs are characterized as events open to first year to fourth year students to help students find out about various job opportunities. The purpose is for employers to provide career information rather than seeking to fill current openings. Job fairs target graduating students.

Staff in all participating CCs facilitates the selection and interview process. Respondents reported that students appreciate the opportunity for on-campus interviews as it offers a convenient way to meet with prospective employers and minimizes their time away from classes. Employers also find this process to be useful, as they have access to a number of interested and qualified candidates (McGrath, 2002).

Special Events – In addition to workshops provided for students to hone their job search strategies and skills, all participating CCs host a number of special activities that support students in their career planning and job search. Worthy of mention are events such as Open Houses and Career Breakfasts, (frequently during orientation), Job Fairs, or dedicated networking opportunities such as Employee Panels, (sometimes co-hosted with the University CSO), MBA cocktail parties with employers, or company information sessions.

Practice 3: Corporate Outreach Activities

All CC participants reported outreach activities to connect with the business community. These events fulfill a variety of functions: CC staff promote their students, their school, and their services, nurture existing client relationships, develop new business, and increase their understanding of the ever-changing marketplace.

Business and Community Association Membership – CC staff increase their exposure to the external market through active membership of industry and community associations. Eight respondents mentioned their involvement in organizations as a key way to improve their networks. A common practice is to invite students to accompany them to association meetings and facilitate the student networking process as well. Associations commonly mentioned include local Chambers of Trade or Commerce, Institute of Chartered Accountants, Canadian Marketing Association, or other industry or professional groups.

Networking Events**:** Business school CCs host events aimed at bringing prospective employers together with students. Staff partner with student associations to co-organize targeted events such as dinners where they can network with employers and students and facilitate relationships between them. Eleven of the participants offer career days to attract employers to campus, which provide mutual benefits to both employers and CCs. The former may enjoy increased name recognition and publicity for both his/her company and profession, and the latter may also benefit through increased visibility to students. Other "connecting" events which bring together employers and students include: receptions, cocktail parties, breakfasts, information sessions, and golf tournaments. Thirteen CCs invite employers to campus for company information sessions. Two schools organize employer site visits.

Marketing a Strong Product – Participants reported that the products they 'market' are the school's reputation and its students. Five participants identified the necessity to "market students to employers". In addition to the techniques such as leveraging alumni contacts and hosting events already described, strategies include 'cold calls' and events organized on the employers' 'turf'. Two of the participants indicated that taking students to these events is an effective way to facilitate networks for both the students and the CC with employers.

Practice 4: Continuous Quality Improvement

Peppers and Rogers (1999) argue that one of the most significant components of the CRM theoretical framework is the process of identification, differentiation, interaction and customization. The collection of data about customer needs and preferences is essential to tailoring future delivery and communications (Fayerman 2002). CC performance can be monitored through a variety of integrated feedback systems. Quantitative data can be collected on measures such as the number of recruiters visiting campus, percent of students with job offers and jobs by a certain date, graduates average starting salaries, etc. Input can also be sought from students, through internal student satisfaction surveys, focus groups, and feedback on workshops and events. These results can be benchmarked against others by monitoring third-party survey results.

Continuous quality improvement is a key criterion in differentiating top performing CCs from their counterparts studied by AACSB (2001). Exemplary CCs used a number of feedback systems, (including AACSB benchmarking data), to identify weaknesses, develop and implement appropriate interventions, and assess the success of their efforts.

Several of the participants in this study mentioned the importance of continuous improvement in their CC. Two respondents described specific, systematic mechanisms that were used to collect feedback from employers to improve customer service. A third mentioned that this feedback is bi-directional—while the CC collects performance data from recruiters, they also provide feedback to them as they are interested in knowing more about students' perceptions of their companies and approach to recruitment. Given the number of respondents who reflected on feedback mechanisms and the relative paucity of data collection for analysis, the commitment of Canadian CCs to continuous quality improvement exists but is not yet fully developed.

Practice 5: Technology and Facilities

Client career services historically have relied on on-site delivery at the Career Centre (Mackert and McDaniels 1998). However, funding constraints and rapid changes in technology have facilitated greater flexibility in service delivery, most notably the use of the computer to provide services to customers. By 1993, a U.S. survey of career centers by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) reported that 94 percent of respondents used computers in providing services to customers (Mackert and McDaniels 1998). The Internet has become a reliable medium for service delivery and new service opportunities continue to appear.

Technology has been extensively incorporated into university career services operations and by employers recruiting students. Career counselors use computer software to help students in self-assessment and career information searches. Students typically conduct the preponderance of their research on employers electronically, and employers have recognized the importance of attractive and informative web sites. The management of the entire campus recruiting process is often handled electronically, and some employers require all applications for employment to be submitted on-line (McGrath 2002).

Technological advances are one of the most significant transforming influences on the future of career services (Mackert and McDaniels 1998). Convenience is the overarching advantage, with information available 24/7 from anywhere in the world from a computer with an Internet connection. Students and other users can take advantage of easy sorting and searching capabilities that make specific career information easily accessible. Career Centre staff can update the website easily, without paper or printing costs. Costs are also lowered because there is a reduction of repetitious tasks and client reliance on CC staff, so staff time is freed up for other activities.

In fact, the influence of the Internet is not so much on the content provided to clients, as it is a tool for decentralization that changes the way we think about how things are done (Miller and McDaniels, 2001). Since clients can do some of the work without the help of CC staff, they get a sense of ownership of their progress.

In addition to the potential for maximum quality service through web-based utilities, there are some considerations that are more relevant today as more and more CCs offer services on the Web. Fewer walk-in students is a consequence of a website (Davidson 2001). Although technology has made it easier for students to communicate with employers, it has also required a significant investment on the part of career services in terms of equipment and staff with technical expertise (Nagle and Bohovich, 2000). The results of our study indicate that participating CCs have clearly made that investment.

Our review of participating CC web-sites finds that all participants leveraged technology effectively by offering comprehensive, interactive web services for students and recruiters. Recruiters and students can reach the CC web-site either directly through the school's homepage, or through a link provided in the university's Career Services menu or Student section. The available services are well documented on the sites.

Quality Facilities – All of the participants realized their critical role in facilitating the interview and selection process for employers. A big part of this role is providing top notch facilities, to streamline the recruiting process and make a good impression on behalf of the university and the students. Thirteen schools have interview rooms (identified on the web – see above), and 3 have the capability for video-conferencing.

Conclusions

In an increasingly competitive field, business schools in North America are responding to student demand for quality career development and placement services. In two studies of business school CCs in the U.S., AACSB identified top performing programs, examined the practices used by those career services offices (CCs), and identified several effective practices at both the MBA and undergraduate levels. The results of the key informant study described here were undertaken to understand and describe the practices used by Canadian business school CCs and determine whether these practices are compatible with current theory and best practices, represented by those used at top performing business schools in the U.S.. Structured telephone interviews with fourteen key informants revealed five essential themes of Canadian CC practices emerged: relationship management, comprehensive student support, corporate outreach activities, continuous quality improvement, and technology and facilities. These themes align closely with AACSB assessment of effective practices in top performing schools in the U.S.. This result is important because in the U.S. study, only top performing schools are examined. In this uniquely Canadian study, business schools with their own CC were invited to participate. Also, the study sample included 14 schools, whereas the U.S. studies included 5 in the MBA study and 3 in the undergraduate study. Interesting questions to pursue include whether these practices can be considered effective or best practices in Canada, and whether the absence of a comprehensive business strategy and staff development program are a function of the stage in the organizational life cycle that Canadian CCs find themselves.

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- NOTES -

New Realities in the Work World: the Impact on Workers and on the Professional Practice of Career Counsellors

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Abstract

This article starts out by describing the main changes that have occurred in the work world from the middle of the last century till today. The authors then discuss the results of recently conducted research into new types of employment, the diversity of career paths, the growing complexity of career choices, the difficulty of work-family balance, and new social representations of work. Finally, they briefly analyze how these changes are affecting the professional practice of career counsellors.

Once associated with difficult situations and largely reserved for the poor, paid work began to serve, starting in the 1940s, as the main safety net for social risks and as a clear sign that a person was participating in the development of society (Castel, 1995). Modernity, which accompanied the effects of the industrial revolution, started out as a period of collective fulfillment in which paid work played an important role as a regulator of social order (Chalifour, 1997). In the last twenty years however, the work world has undergone considerable change at the economic, social, and technological levels. These changes have led to the emergence of new forms of work that are more demanding, flexible and nonstandard, and to the appearance of new issues in socio-occupational integration.

The reconfiguration of the work world is reducing, for a large segment of the work force, the chances of finding a lasting and satisfying job. Workers now have to make several transitions in this evolving, uncertain context where career paths are no longer straight, upward-bound, and lifelong. Consequently, they must re-evaluate their work market status all throughout their career and make numerous occupational and personal choices. These challenges encourage people to adopt a different view about their career and redefine the place of work in their lives. For some people, the diverse statuses and employment situations give them the freedom and space they need to fulfil themselves in other life roles. Others, however, feel it is impossible to find a stimulating, enriching job that also meets their daily needs. In certain cases, the lack of occupational and financial stability can, regardless of age and gender, result in a decline in living conditions and make it increasingly complex to manage occupational, family, and social responsibilities. These circumstances indirectly contribute to making guidance and career counselling an important social issue as well as a process likely to last from the beginning to the end of people's working lives (Guichard & Huteau, 2001). In order to maximize their chances of finding and keeping a job and their ability to deal with the related problems, a growing number of people are turning towards career counsellors. However, while the current structure of the work world affects many types of people, this structure also makes it more complicated for career counsellors to help their clients make personal and occupational choices. Counsellors must adjust to the characteristics of the people they are guiding, to the possibilities of different fields of work, and to the demands of the work world to which they themselves are subjected.

Given the above briefly outlined elements, the first goal of this article will be to discuss the results of recently conducted research into the many new forms of work that are being created, focusing, in particular, on how workers are affected and how they attempt to deal with the inherent challenges. The second goal of this article will be to analyze how these changes are impacting on the professional practice of career counsellors.

Changes in the Work World

The economic benefits of the Second World War (1939-1945) pushed Canada and most of the industrialized countries in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) into a period of prosperity (1945-1975)[1] which was without precedent in terms of its scale (Crompton & Vickers, 2000; Singh, 2004).

The relative stability of this prosperous period was characterized by full employment and facilitated by the emergence of the welfare state, all of which helped to reinforce paid work and the redistribution of wealth (Chalifour, 1997). Because the workforce was not sufficient enough to ensure industrial productivity, countless workers, many of whom came from the rural sector, seized the chance offered during this period to escape poverty and improve their living conditions (Paugam, 2004).

In addition to full employment, it was normal for workers to find a stable, permanent job (Marchand, 1998). The governments of that period likewise invested in social security policies and programs dealing, in particular, with unemployment, health, family, and retirement (Bédard & Grignon, 2000; Desrochers, 2000). Unions were most active during the 1970s, and, due to the economic stability of the time, had more bargaining power when negotiating their work conditions. Moreover, a large number of women and young baby-boomers also began to work.

Nonetheless, certain authors such as Singh (2004) have stated that 1945-1975 period, from a purely statistical point of view, was an “anomaly” in the history of industrialized countries’ economic development. The 1973-1975 oil crisis and the 1981-1982 recession quickly demonstrated that the “thirty glorious years” were nothing other than an exceptional economic period. These crises were marked, among other things, by high unemployment, loss of jobs, and increased inflation (Crompton & Vickers, 2000). The recession in the 1990s created similar effects and though fewer workers lost their jobs than during the 1980s, those who did tended to stay unemployed longer (Bédard & Grignon, 2000).

There has clearly been a considerable change in the work world when we look back over the last few decades. Currently, even though countries like Canada, and in particular some of its provinces, have full or close-to-full employment, socio-occupational paths are nonetheless becoming increasingly precarious. The upheaval that occurred in the middle and particularly at the end of the 1970s disillusioned many workers. Indeed, stable work is no longer the norm. It has given way to nonstandard work[2] which, according to Matte, Baldino and Courchesne (1998), increased by 135% between 1976 and 1995, and could even proportionately surpass standard work by 2017. People who are entering or re-entering the labour market are especially affected by the rise in this type of employment. This is particularly true for women, immigrants, younger, and older workers (Conseil permanent de la jeunesse, 2001). Many people now find it very difficult to find suitable work because of this more flexible, nonstandard, and complex type of employment. In this context where one’s educational level is no longer enough to ensure a stable career path (Fournier, Pelletier & Beaucher, 2003), workers, young and old alike, are experimenting with numerous social and occupational transitions that are often unpredictable and involuntary (Fournier & Bujold, 2005).

There are those who believe that these changes in the work world are the result of structural factors such as globalization, international competition, and technological improvements (Matte & al., 1998). At the same time that world trade is being liberalized, international competition is becoming more intense. This competition is most evident in North America and Western Europe where labour costs are high (Van Liemt, 2004). Companies have consequently adopted a series of “flexible” measures intended to increase competitiveness and confront constant, ferocious, and unpredictable competition by producing more at a lower cost (Desrochers, 2000; Vinokur, 1997). These structural changes have also made the work lives of people more complex, in particular because of the new skills and the new efficiency standards that are required (Appay, 1997).

This new configuration has led to a different view of the role of workers and greater recognition of their knowledge (Capron, 2004). Workers are no longer expected to be drones who execute a simple task (Paugam, 2003). They are required, whatever their qualifications, to play a more active role in their work (Paugam, 2000).

Even though the greater recognition accorded to employees has resulted in more work latitude, this latitude can also be attributed to a general improvement in the workers’ qualifications and the introduction of new technologies (Paugam, 2003). Improving technologies have not only made the production process more mentally demanding, they have made it more flexible and continuous (Capron, 2004). New information and communication technologies such as the Internet, e-mail, telephone, and videoconference services are resulting in an ever faster work rate. Nonetheless, while greater use of technology tends to favour an ever-more qualified labour force, it also excludes unqualified workers, thereby widening the gap between the two (Desrochers, 2000).

Even though these recent changes are making some workers’ tasks easier and more satisfying, the greater intensity, stress and fatigue has engendered more suffering for other workers (Capron, 2004; De Bandt, Dejours & Dubar, 1995). Subjected to tight deadlines and intense productivity pressure (Paugam, 2000), workers, to be efficient in their work, must deal every day with sometime paradoxical demands involving prescribed work, their expected latitude, and the real possibilities available to them in terms of the time, material, and information needed to carry out tasks (Huez, 1997).

Furthermore, more intense work and a lack of job and financial security sometimes contributes to a decline in living conditions and makes it increasingly complex to manage occupational, family, and social responsibilities (Burchell, Ladipo & Wilkinson, 2002; Fournier & Bujold, 2005; Hoque & Kirkpatrick, 2003; Lachance & Brassard, 2003; Malenfant, Larue, Jetté, Vézina & St-Arnaud, 2004; Spain, Bédard & Paiement, 2006).

Over the last few years, researchers at the Centre de recherche et d’intervention sur l’éducation et la vie au travail (CRIÉVAT, centre for research and interventions in education and work life) have conducted considerable research into the new forms that work is taking, examining, from different points of view, their impact on various clientele. Several of these studies have served as a basis for the following section, which pays particular attention to current career path challenges, ranging from complex occupational and life choices to work-family balance and changes in the social representation of work.

New Forms of Employment and Diverse Career Paths

Research that has been undertaken by researchers from CRIÉVAT in the last fifteen years among different groups of workers has led to a better understanding of career paths based on nonstandard work. Three main studies were analyzed in order to describe how these new types of employment affect people’s lives at work and outside work. The primary research method used was that of the interpretative paradigm in education research (Boutin, 2000; Poisson, 1991). Semistructured interviews were conducted with all the subjects. The first study, which was longitudinal, looked at the career entry of a group of 150 graduates[3] up to six years after graduating

(Fournier, Pelletier & Beaucher, 2003). When the researchers realized that, even after this period, almost 60% of the graduates still held nonstandard jobs, a second, cross-sectional study was conducted with a group of 125 workers from 20 to 65 years old who had held nonstandard jobs for at least three years (Bujold & Fournier, 2008; Fournier & Bujold, 2005). A third study, likewise cross-sectional, was also conducted among workers 45 and over who were on an atypical career path.

Some interesting observations can be drawn from the results of these three studies concerning the repercussions of nonstandard employment on the work and non-work lives of these people. For example, close to one third of the people surveyed considered that their career path allowed them to fulfil themselves and gain work experience that they otherwise would not have had in a permanent job. These people reported being well integrated in the labour market despite the irregularity of their work life. They had the impression, moreover, of having achieved, over the years, some mastery of a particular field of which they were proud. And even though many of them pointed out that they would like to improve their general employment conditions, especially their revenue, most of them observed that they had a certain control over their work life despite their nonstandard work status. This control allowed them, furthermore, to pursue their goals in life. Some of the participants specifically mentioned that they were able to take advantage of periods of unemployment by spending more time with their families, in community activities, or in training programs. Nonstandard work provided them with the opportunity to undertake significant projects in other parts of their lives. In brief, for approximately a third of the participants who were interviewed over the years, their relationship with work was rather positive. Far from destabilizing them, their work lives, which were punctuated by a series of relatively unpredictable jobs, helped them to keep their lives moving in the right direction by meeting their needs, motivations, and aspirations.

However, for a majority of the people interviewed (approximately two thirds), the repercussions of regularly occurring nonstandard work seemed to be rather detrimental. Some of them held jobs for which they were plainly overqualified and considered that their abilities were not sufficiently recognized, a fact which did not contribute to building a positive occupational identity. Others worked in relatively stable jobs that sometimes were even relatively well paid but which they did not enjoy. For others, each improvement in their situation was followed by a decline which gave them the impression that they continually had to start over from "scratch." These people were especially disappointed about not being accepted and integrated in a given field. They sometimes mentioned being tired of continuously having to prove themselves and depending on the good will of their employers. Their occupational situation generated considerable stress, in particular because of the uncertainty about their short and medium-term future and even, in some cases, their immediate survival. Finally, the vast majority of those who did not enjoy their atypical career path likewise reported feeling short-changed in non-work activities and projects. In short, close to two thirds of the interviewees felt that regularly occurring nonstandard work disqualified them from normal life and led to rather negative perceptions of work: self-fulfilment opportunities were limited, occupational identities took a beating, non-work life was greatly destabilized, and, for a few respondents, career paths were synonymous with failure and powerlessness. These people considered that the balance between the different areas of their lives was fragile and unstable, that non-work projects were difficult to envisage, and that atypical career paths led to a decline in general living conditions and to a very pronounced feeling of occupational and personal precariousness.

The interviewed workers developed strategies for navigating career paths founded on non-standard work, the main strategies involving a modification of their career and life goals. For example, some people decided to change from one field of work to another due to difficult work conditions that were jeopardizing their family life (e.g., irregular work hours) or that were keeping them from developing a more solid, coherent occupational identity (e.g., too much part-time work). A second strategy consisted in redefining one's life values and goals. This was particularly the case for people who described how they had completely re-evaluated their life choices and deliberately renounced the competition of the work world and its corresponding performance, efficiency, and productivity values. This is likewise true for those who chose to change the way they consumed and thereby reduce their financial needs. A third strategy involved working very hard so as to cope with occupational and financial precariousness. People who adopted this strategy frequently felt overrun by workplace demands, often feeling they had no life outside of work. From their point of view however, overworking became the only way of ensuring their financial independence and meeting employer demands, and as such, constituted a relatively acceptable compromise. The last common strategy consisted in choosing to see work from a purely utilitarian viewpoint and to no longer personally invest oneself in this area of life. This was the case, for example, for those who actively searched for personal gratification and well-being outside of work life and saw their job as a means to pursuing personal projects. It is obvious that the strategies that people developed to adapt to the new realities of the work world involved choices whose repercussions extended well beyond their work life. In a context marked by insecure, convoluted career paths, the career and life choices that people made were constantly questioned, necessitating the consideration of complex and diverse elements.

The Growing Complexity of Career and Life Choices

Given these changes in the work world, what is a person's career path now based on? In an attempt to answer this question, two successive studies were conducted, the first with 60 women from 16 to 62 years of age, the second with 12 men from 24 to 62. These studies were exploratory, inductive, and qualitative in nature, and employed a semistructured interview for data collection.

The study conducted with the women indicated that the main way that the participants shaped their identity and developed life projects was through their social relationships. Work life was not an isolated, separate aspect of their lives. All the different life roles, including in their love, family, and social lives, influenced the direction their career paths took. While participants saw work as an aspect of their lives that was essential to their fulfilment, they did not separate it from the rest. This view, which is referred to as a global perspective, led to complex, tortuous, and distinctive career paths. This type of path was composed of a series of commitments, stoppages, and rehirings in which continuity was found in the social relationships that gave meaning to the path, as described from a subjective, reflective viewpoint by the interviewed women.

The relationship dimension, as it has been progressively defined through previous research, consists in an openness to, quest for, and availability for social interactions that are made up of reciprocal relations which allow people to develop and know themselves. The relationship dimension has four dynamic, complementary aspects that motivate, initiate, orientate, and integrate the activities and values that are pursued as part of one's self-fulfilment at work.

The careers of the interviewed women did not unfold in a linear manner. In addition to being influenced by the current changes in the work world, they were also affected by conjugal, maternal, family, social, economic, financial, and technological realities (Spain, Bédard & Paiement, 2003). A typology of the strategies used by the interviewed women emerged from the first results. It was comprised of three main types, namely: the exclusive strategy, which was used by women who concentrated on one role at a time; the integrated strategy, used by those who invested in work and family life by planning various life cycle stages; and the intermittent strategy, employed by women who approached work life and family in an unpredictable and sporadic manner (Spain & Bédard, 1990).

A subsequent study explored the career paths and choices of men. There were linear paths where the initial training led to a job with one or several employers. There were also sinuous paths where the initial training set the starting direction, though several paths were then taken. Fractured paths were, however, the most frequent. They were made up of a series of career breaks where the initial training did not necessarily correspond to the subsequent choices. The participants on this path had a weakened occupational identity and difficulties making employment choices. Their career progression was unpredictable, sporadic, and interspersed with periods of unemployment. The men in this sample displayed a path diversity that was attributable not only to the new parameters of the work world but also to family, social, and economic contexts. According to them, taking other, significant people into account had affected their occupational decisions many times (Spain, Bédard & Paiement, 2004).

The occupational decisions that the men took involved pragmatic, relationship, and developmental issues. The pragmatic issues could be seen in the need to earn a living or increase one's income, the desire to seize an opportunity or be more comfortable, the wish to improve their work or living conditions, and the way they wished to spend their time and organize their lives. Relationship issues could be seen in the proximity or distance between teenagers and their parents, siblings and peers, between young workers and their colleagues, boss, and clients, between spouses, between parents and their children, and between mentors and their apprentices. They could also be seen in the citizen's view of their social usefulness and the adult's quest for recognition, influence, or power. As for developmental issues, they refer to the stimulating effect on one's personal evolution of returning to school, taking training courses, drawing lessons from colleagues, taking pleasure in one's work, being promoted, using one's skills, fulfilling one's ambitions, meeting challenges, taking on responsibilities, performing, succeeding, creating, respecting oneself, and giving priority to one's quality of life. These issues were combined in various ways depending on the person. The choices made by participants increasingly had to take into account spouses and other family members, obliging people to learn how to reconcile their occupational role with their other roles in life.

Work-Family Balance

Changes in the work world, particularly the feminization of the labour force and the growth in two-income couples, has given rise to a lifestyle in which many people have to deal with several occupational and family responsibilities (Lachance & Brassard, 2003). Given that the risk of incompatibility and conflict between the different life roles has increased, couples must now reconsider who does what in the family and house so as to respect both members' occupational aspirations. These changes led the researchers and practitioners to ask questions about the relationship between work and family life. It soon became clear that a better understanding of the factors underlying inter-role conflicts was needed due to the conflicts' harmful consequences for the participants, their families, and their workplaces.

Though the inter-sex differences in the reconciliation of life roles have been studied many times, the results have often been contradictory. A quantitative study (Lachance, Brassard & Tétreau, 2005) was conducted with 106 professionals (53 men and 53 women) who were matched in terms of age and job title so as to control for third variables that might influence the results. The results seem to indicate that there were more similarities than differences between the sexes with respect to individual, family, and organizational characteristics. The women were similar to men in terms of career concerns, life role salience, work attitudes, dyadic adjustment, and life satisfaction. Likewise, they did not report more work-family conflicts, even though the description of family roles highlighted a significant difference in work-home management conflicts. Furthermore, the considerable differences in the distribution of tasks were in keeping with the traditional model of male and female roles and suggest that family responsibilities were primarily the mother's domain whatever her work status. Even though male involvement with the children and the domestic chores has been increasing over the years, the men's participation in these activities was still less than that of the women. The results of a quantitative study conducted among 133 ophthalmologists were consistent with the above-mentioned results (Viviers, Lachance, Maranda & Ménard, 2007). The ophthalmologist study revealed, moreover, that the large number of hours devoted to parental and domestic responsibilities was related to family-work conflicts and distress, women under 45 being particularly affected. That being said, these ophthalmologists noted that work interfered with personal life more than personal life interfered with work. This result might have been attributable to the personal investment required by their profession that limits the energy and time available for their other activities. Given that there are precise professional expectations and formally prescribed roles, it was easier for the ophthalmologists to limit their family commitments since they had more control over this area of life.

Given that people invest more in roles that they deem important and that the stressors stemming from these roles have more impact on well-being, it was postulated that the risk of experiencing conflict and its consequences is greater in people who accord considerable importance to several life roles. This postulate was examined in a quantitative study of 486 adults (Lachance, Gilbert & Tétreau, 2006). Three commitment profiles for the roles of worker, spouse, parent, and person in charge of a home management were identified. The first two were characterized by a high level of engagement in either the family (FAMILY) or worker (WORK) roles, whereas the third group was comprised of people who were strongly committed to both areas of life (DUALITY). Contrary to expectations, the people in the DUALITY profile did not report more inter-role conflicts or consequences. This finding not only reinforces the growth hypothesis stating that having several roles has beneficial effects, it underlines the importance of considering the reasons why people take on their life roles. The study likewise revealed that people in the DUALITY and FAMILY profiles had greater life satisfaction, a better dyadic adjustment, and less work-home management conflicts than people in the WORK profile. The family would thus seem to represent one of the most important areas of life.

Surprisingly, gender distribution across the profiles was not significantly different. A similar commitment to work among highly educated people, as well as the modern desire to fulfil oneself both in one's work and family life could explain these results. Moreover, it is important to distinguish between commitment, which corresponds to the importance of a role for a person's identity, and participation, which refers to time invested. This distinction helps us to understand why the men and women in the sample showed similar profile distributions even though they were different in terms of work-leisure, work-home management, and family-work conflicts, as well as in terms of the time devoted to their various roles.

So as to identify the strategies that facilitate the reconciliation of life roles, three studies were conducted among populations that were likely to find it difficult to assume their occupational and family responsibilities due to the amount of time invested in the care of a child or older family member. In the first study, home-based interviews were conducted with 139 parents of school-aged children with an intellectual disability and 4 focus groups were held (Lachance, Richer, Côté & Poulin, 2004). The second study involved 159 couples from the "sandwich generation" who had to care for both children and an aging parent. Of the 159 who answered the questionnaire, 36 then participated in semistructured, individual interviews (Lachance, Maltais & Ducharme, 2005). The third, qualitative study involved 60 semistructured interviews of caregivers helping aged family members and living in 7 different environments (Maltais, Lachance, Richard & Ouellet, 2006).

The result of the quantitative parts of the first two studies showed that the average level of inter-role conflict was fairly low (Lachance & al., 2004, 2005). Indeed, undertaking several roles seemed to represent a source of personal accomplishment and to contribute to a feeling of competency. Some of the parents and caregivers stated that holding a job gave them a break from caregiving, in addition to the financial advantages.

The analysis of the focus groups and the semistructured interviews nonetheless added nuance to these conclusions. Many of the parents and caregivers, in particular the women, had lowered their occupational goals by opting for a non-standard job, taking temporary retirement, or dropping out of the labour market because it was too difficult to reconcile their various life roles (Lachance & al., 2004, 2005; Maltais & al., 2006). Furthermore, this decision was more often imposed than chosen. Insufficient social and organizational measures for work-family balance led these people to consider more personal solutions which, though they undoubtedly reduced inter-role conflicts, also put several of the respondents in more precarious financial and social positions (Lachance & al., 2004). It is thus not at all surprising that there was a disturbing proportion of participants with a high stress level in the quantitative part of the studies.

Even though the traditional family model of the male provider might seem outdated to younger generations who are entering the labour market expecting equal employment opportunities and equal sharing of family responsibilities, the research results from groups at risk of inter-role conflicts suggest that the gap between the sexes is far from having been closed.

The latest changes in the work world have thus had a considerable influence on people's personal and occupational paths, particularly on the way they see work, that is as an activity which plays a central role in their existence.

Social Representation of Work

Whether it be because of new post-materialist values (Inglehart, 1997), a social representation of work based on pleasure (Flament, 1996), the new capitalist spirit (Boltanski & Chiapello, 1999), or the promotion of self-fulfilment at work (Lalive d'Épinay, 1998), people are forming new representations of their work which are influenced by and are in turn influencing the new conditions of socio-occupational integration.

For example, a recent study of business administration students showed that these students had internalized, during their university career, the new norms of the business world (Negura, Maranda & Yergeau, 2006). Twenty-one of these students were invited to take part in a semistructured interview on "objective and subjective time." The data revealed that the students' social representation of time was strongly influenced by the ideas of excellence and productivity conveyed by the present-day managerial culture. The students' time was structured to optimize the use of available resources so as to satisfy the most demanding requirements of employers. This representation perhaps explains the excellent competitiveness of these students in the labour market. According to the research results however, their well-being was greatly affected; the students talked about the strong emotional tension that stemmed from the conflict between their perception of their internal resources and that of institutional, university requirements.

An earlier study that was carried out among 70 company managers from the Quebec City and Montreal regions shed light on the internalization of new productivity standards (Negura & Maranda, 2004). The study looked at how the managers' attitudes toward hiring of former drug addicts are produced by two «natural logics» (Grize, 1993), based on their social representations of ex-addicts and companies. The managers who had a business-related education (MBA, industrial relations, etc.) tended to refuse to hire former drug users since the latter represented a risk for the company. In the managers' eyes, the sole goals of their companies were productivity and excellence, concepts which were incompatible with the acknowledged failures of ex-drug users. On the other hand, managers who had completed non-business-related studies (work psychology, sociology, etc.) were more open to hiring these people. Their openness was based on the idea that companies had a social responsibility and that drug abuse could not be considered as a uniquely personal weakness. This study thus demonstrated that the social representations of managers gave rise to specific attitudes when hiring new employees, especially with regard to those whose profiles seemed out of keeping with the expected performance criteria.

In another study (Negura, in press) conducted with 14 independent[4] workers from the Ottawa and Montreal regions, a paradoxical perception of their general work situation was observed. Despite the fact that the participants in this study declared that they felt overloaded and distressed about their unstable work status, they also said that they were generally satisfied about their work situation. Their social representation of work could explain this apparent paradox. The fact that they saw work as a constant, disciplined effort eliminated the psychological tension created by the heavy workload that they considered to be normal. They perceived self-employment as an entrepreneurial activity that involved risk and instability, flexibility and performance, thereby leading them to put the insecurity stemming from their job status into perspective and to reduce the probability of being dissatisfied with their work. The latitude that came from this type of work was even sometimes seen as a means of self-fulfilment as well as a possibility to reconcile work with other areas of life, particularly spousal relationships.

The social representations of both employers and employees play an important role in the present-day socio-occupational integration of people, especially people who are at risk of being excluded. Knowing these representations could greatly help career counsellors in their work.

Impact on the Work of Career Counsellors

As has just been shown, the current labour market is dominated by incessant changes – some companies start up while others close down, while still others develop at such a fast pace that their employees must be able to adapt quickly and acquire new skills. Likewise, the choice in training and career possibilities has increased steadily since the 1950s (Cooper & Burke, 2002). All of this has had a direct influence on people's educational and career-integration paths. Many young people now find it hard to choose, integrate or re-integrate into careers, keep a job, deal with reassignments and new jobs, conciliate work and personal life, and prepare their retirement. Consequently, more numerous and diversified requests for professional career counselling are arising out of the complex situations created by this uncertainty, instability and questioning.

These new realities demand a broader approach from counselling. As has been noted in the literature, there is no one theory or practice in helping relations that can pretend to be universal (Hansen, 2002, 2006; Kemmis, 2005; Le Bossé, Chamberland, Bilodeau & Bourassa, in press; Polkinghorne, 1999). Counselling that is sensitive to labour market, social, and life-style changes, to the numerous personal and occupational paths, and to the ensuing difficult guidance choices does not easily incorporate stereotypical, unequivocal answers. When modern career counsellors work every day in a precise context with clients experiencing "common" problems, they must regularly reconsider the way they see and do things in order to meet the particular needs of each client even if they as counsellors prefer a certain theoretical approach. For example, the medical model,[5] which has strongly inspired the approach to helping relationships and the expectations of clients, is increasingly revealing its limitations in this regard (Le Bossé & al., in press). Indeed, another epistemology of our practice is slowly taking root (Schön, 1996) which encourages practitioners to adopt another approach that is better adapted to contemporary situations. Several studies have recently examined the evolution of professional practices – in particular those in career counselling and in education (Bourassa, Leclerc & Filteau, 2005; Peavy, 2001; Perrenoud, 2001, 2004a). The various possible implications of this new approach for career counsellors are briefly presented here.

The counsellor as guide

One thing is becoming increasingly clear when the work of present-day practitioners such as career counsellors in education or employment related services is studied: if they are to understand and resolve the specific difficulties their clients are going through, they cannot do so without their clients. Seen from this viewpoint, clients are no longer considered to be "undecided, wounded, or destitute patients" whom practitioners must treat with remedies derived from accepted theories. Rather, they are seen as being competent,[6] and this competency is just as necessary for successful counselling as that of the counsellor. Clients have a valuable understanding of their situation along with personal and even professional experience that should be put to use in the helping process. Clients also, however, ponder about where they are going, run into difficulties, and perceive needs that they cannot always satisfy by themselves. Counsellors thus become valuable allies who help clients find answers and solutions that are useful and significant. In this approach, practitioners no longer fulfill the role of specialists in the classical sense of the term, of holders of a grand theory (Polkinghorne, 1999) that is used to reveal the true nature of things and to indicate the precise measures which need to be taken to solve career problems. Rather, they act as guides (Ardoino, 2000; Beauvais, 2006; Clavier & di Domizio, 2007) who bring their personal experience and skills to a task that involves the co-construction of meaning, projects, and alternatives that will allow their clients to progressively overcome the difficulties they encounter.

The counsellor: an astute handyman

Because they cannot rely on absolute truths and unfailing procedures, and because they must continually reinvent the wheel and adapt their approach to the situations facing them, counsellors can also be seen as astute handymen (Peavy, 2001; Perrenoud, 1994, 2004b). They must work with and for their clients to find possible ways of solving problems or carrying out important projects. To accomplish this, counsellors must rely on their professional habitus,[7] modifying it when need be, draw inspiration from pertinent concepts and theories, particularly in the humanities and social sciences, turn to colleagues and other people, and develop new ideas and strategies to be tested in real life. The process and results of their work become a unique composition that is validated through its progressive adjustments and concrete effects.

From an epistemological viewpoint, this is a socio-constructivist and eclectic approach. It is deemed socio-constructivist because of its intersubjectivity and its relationship with the Other, whether real or symbolic, and also because of its attempt to develop more viable approaches to dealing with the questions and problems stemming from the personal, cultural, and social realities of their clients (Peavy, 2001). It is also deemed eclectic[8] (Hansen, 2002; Polkinghorne, 1999) because it draws, fairly explicitly, on different approaches and disciplines (Morin, 1997), and because it uses diverse means to help its clients. Nothing is neglected by counsellors to help clients develop solutions and personal abilities that can be employed to overcome their obstacles, uncertainty, and distress.

The counsellor: a complexity analyst

As we have seen, career counsellors are operating in a new socio-occupational reality by trying to find the best possible solutions for the different needs of the people and groups they accompany. Counsellors find themselves at the centre of different, complex situations that influence both their professional choices and the possibilities available to the people consulting them. To take advantage of these complex situations, practitioners must first be able to analyze them and understand the dynamic relations between the various elements and levels; in short, they must be capable of complex thinking (Morin, 2005). This is accomplished for example by: understanding how clients represent their current difficulties; taking into account the clients' specific skills and limitations; considering and even including other people involved in the problem; cooperating with other practitioners; identifying institutional and other constraints and resources likely to affect the helping process; dealing with the different, even contradictory goals of the various actors; comprehending the influence of their goals as practitioners and people; and understanding the current state and variations of the worlds of education and work (Bourassa & al., 2005).

When practitioners consent to work with a complex representation of the modern world and the counselling problems to which this gives rise, they must also then be aware of how the numerous elements at play, be they contextual (personal, interpersonal, organizational, institutional, social) or temporal (short, medium, or long term), influence the situation and each other.

The counsellor: a reflective practitioner

The counselling practice, as we have seen, cannot be reduced to a strict application of idealized intervention models, which Schön (1996) refers to as "technical rationality." Counsellors must regularly invent, review, and modify their approach. Because they must work with different actors, with unusual requests for help and, in particular, with the changing realities of the education and work worlds, counsellors must exploit the knowledge they have garnered over the years (which nourishes their professional *habitus*), and adapt and even develop it further. Nonetheless, this constant refining and adjustment of their counselling expertise does not occur without some effort. If they are to achieve this, counsellors must fully exploit their reflective abilities by seeing themselves as an object worthy of attention and analysis. As Perrenoud (2004a) wrote, drawing on Schön (1987, 1994): "Reflective practitioners are those (…) who observe their actions as if in a mirror, (…) who reflect upon these actions and strive to understand how and why they do what they do, sometimes unwillingly" (p.37-38).

A better understanding of the postulates underlying their approach to counselling can help practitioners to better understand how they accompany people, why they are sometimes ineffective, and where their unexplored, potential improvements lie. Otherwise, practitioners risk going astray themselves, subjected as they are to the numerous changes of modern-day life. They must therefore ensure they have the necessary tools to set their own course and enhance their counselling skills.

Conclusion

It is clearly evident that changes in the work world, and particularly recent changes, affect people, groups, and organizations in various ways and contribute to the emergence of new socio-occupational problems.

As the research conducted by the authors of this article shows, the reconfiguration of the work world in the last few years and the new types of employment have reduced many people's chances of obtaining or creating stable, satisfying careers. This reconfiguration has forced many people to follow irregular career paths marked by precariousness, assorted jobs, and periods of unemployment. Due to these situations and the related difficulties, people are led, at different moments in their lives, to redefine their personal and occupational projects by taking into account pragmatic, relational, and developmental issues, whether this be done explicitly or not.

Among the considerable changes in the work world, three are particularly noteworthy: the growth in the female labour force, the rise in dual-income couples, and the emergence of a related problem, namely work-family balance. Reconciliation attempts result in a constant search for realistic and efficient ways of managing the many investments and responsibilities inherent in each area of life. Some people adapt so well to reconciling the different areas of their lives that it becomes an important source of self-fulfilment. For others however, in particular women, work-family responsibilities give rise to inter-role conflicts that, due to a lack of social and organizational measures, lead them to make heartbreaking personal and occupational choices, such as opting for a part-time job, considering a relatively long absence from the labour market, or seriously reconsidering their career choices.

Other studies have shown that new ways of representing this human and social activity are arising out of the modern work world. The principles of excellence, performance, and latitude at work are increasingly transcending organizations and workers. The work practices ensuing from these principles provoke a justified feeling among workers of being overloaded, stressed, and even psychologically distressed.

The various studies discussed here have not only shed light on new problems in the work world but likewise on the unease that people feel and the imbalance they see between their life projects and career path. Some of these people will turn to career counsellors in order to better understand the difficulties they are encountering and to find relevant, adapted solutions. As might be expected, this new work world is also impacting on the work of career counsellors. Thus, the second goal of this article was to analyze the effect of these impacts on their professional practice.

We observed in our studies that career counsellors, who are subjected to many diversified, changing, and complex demands, are striving to find an approach that provides optimal support for their clients. We have thus attempted in this paper to clarify this approach by proposing four dimensions that help to characterize it, namely the career counsellor as guide, astute handyman, complexity analyst, and reflective practitioner. Since none of these general analyses and solutions can always succeed in responding to the clients' various demands, it is increasingly clear that counselling must be adapted to each person or group. Furthermore, counselling must take advantage of people's abilities by inviting them to work with counsellors to co-develop alternatives to the difficulties they face. This co-development of alternatives should take the form of a joint, improvised, and adapted response informed by different types of resources and knowledge (scientific, experience-based, technical) from various sources (practitioners, clients, and others) to meet the clients' needs as well as possible. It is also noteworthy that, to achieve pertinent results, career counsellors must be able to analyze the complexity of the problems they encounter. This requires that several elements (e.g., the clients' requests, possibilities and limits) be considered and their consequences be evaluated. All of these aspects lend credence to the idea that if career counsellors are to refine their own expertise, then they must be the object of their own analysis. In short, they must be reflective practitioners in search of constant development.

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[1]In the French-speaking world, this period is called "les Trente glorieuses" (the thirty glorious [years], Fourastié, 1979).

[2]There are many definitions of nonstandard or atypical work. Nonstandard work is generally defined as fixed-term employment whose status is poorly defined (Fournier, Bourassa and Béji, 2003; Matte et al. 1998). Job insecurity is an essential element of the definition of nonstandard work and several types of work can be qualified as nonstandard: part-time work, self-employed work without employees, multiple employment (more than one job at the same time), and temporary work (fixed-term, casual, seasonal, placement agency work, and all work whose finishing date is determined) (Vosko, Zukewich & Cranford, 2003).

[3]The three studies discussed here were conducted with samples that were equally distributed according to gender and educational level (high school, community college, or university).

[4]In this research, a restricted definition of independent work was used. It is defined as work conducted only by the worker, without the help of employed workers, and excluding an employer-employee relation with their clients. This is the most precarious category (D'Amours, 2006) of all the categories of self-employed workers in Canada. In 2004, self-employed workers constituted 14.4% of the working population (Statistics Canada, 2005).

[5]According to this model, practitioners are seen as "heelers" or "saviours," the holders of accepted knowledge and solutions that must be bestowed upon clients. Practitioners focus on the failings of their clients, who are attributed a passive role.

[6]This provides a successful alternative to the inadequacy perspective inherent in the medical model.

[7]Concept developed by Bourdieu (see especially Bourdieu, 1994), and applied by Perrenoud (1994) in his analysis of professional practice.

[8]This does not mean excessive eclecticism. It would, for example, be difficult to simultaneously support two theses that are epistemologically irreconcilable. Furthermore, practitioners can borrow ideas or strategies from other approaches to enhance those that they normally use (Polkinghorne, 1999).

Career Practitioners' Views of Social Justice and Barriers for Practice

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Abstract

Increasing attention is being paid to the value of social justice in the field of career development. Social justice has strong historical roots in vocational psychology; however, the current literature is primarily conceptual in nature, and there are few resources that provide suggestions about how career practitioners can incorporate social justice into their practices with clients. This article orients readers to the topic of social justice and discusses various perspectives that are relevant for career development practice. Preliminary research results are reported about how Canadian career practitioners (N= 151) view social justice and their perceived barriers to incorporating social justice interventions.

People's career development is strongly influenced by the social systems that surround them. Unfortunately, for many individuals in Canada and other nations, social and political forces limit educational and employment opportunities. There are also inequities in terms of who can access professional services and in the relevancy and benefits of programs designed for culturally diverse populations (Arthur & Collins, 2005b; Bezanson et al., 2007; Arthur & Lalande, 2008).

We need to consider what career development interventions have to offer individuals who are socially or economically disadvantaged, who are underrepresented in our educational systems, who may have limited access to meaningful employment, or who remain underemployed in the labour market. It has been suggested that the term, career, has been constructed around middle and upper class values, while ignoring the differential realities and experiences of people in relation to their work lives (Blustein, Kenna, Gill, & DeVoy, 2008). Repositioning career development practice to focus on work has been advocated (e.g., Blustein, 2006; Richardson, 1993, 2000) in order address the circumstances and needs of those who have significant barriers in their pursuit of meaningful employment.

As a guiding value, social justice is a strong foundation from which to consider the roles and responsibilities of career development practitioners. Trying to reduce career barriers through social justice is an old concept to be revisited with new emphasis (McMahon, Arthur, & Collins, 2008a). Social justice has been a fundamental value in helping people with their occupational choices since the work of Parsons in the early 1900s. Parsons (1909) advocated for youth, women, and people who were poor to help them to improve their lives through securing employment. Parsons' work was seminal in laying a foundation of theoretical and practical advances in the field of career development (Blustein, 2006; Fouad, Gerstein, & Toporek, 2006). However, it seems that we have drifted away from our roots in social justice to interventions that primarily focus on the individual without sufficiently considering the contextual and environmental forces that adversely impact people's career development (Arthur, 2005).

Although more literature on social justice in the field of career development has recently been published (e.g., Blustein, McWhirter, & Perry, 2005; Fassinger & Gallor, 2006; Irving & Malik, 2005), there are few examples to guide practitioners about ways to incorporate social justice into career development practices. To that end, we designed an exploratory study with career development practitioners to include their views about social justice. We first provide background information on perspectives about social justice. Following this discussion, preliminary research results are presented about how career development practitioners in Canada define social justice, how they link the concept to their practices, and their perceived barriers for implementing career interventions related to social justice.

Perspectives on Social Justice

The philosophy and meaning of social justice has been debated across academic disciplines for centuries. Although social justice has resurfaced as a guiding value for career development practitioners, we have noted that in recent literature, the concept is often not defined, or the meaning of the concept is taken for granted as commonly understood. It is also problematic when multiple and contrasting meanings are suggested, as these imply quite different implications for career development practice. For the purpose of this paper, we review a selection of key perspectives about social justice that help to locate our current use of the term.

In a just society, opportunities, resources, and services are distributed equally and fairly. However, in most societies, some individuals or groups have greater access to educational, economic, and career success than others. This is because certain groups in society hold less power than others and may experience stereotyping, discrimination, or other forms of oppression. This is often the experience of non-dominant groups in Canadian society who are positioned on the basis of cultural factors such as ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ability, age, language, religion, and socioeconomic status. Individuals from these groups may struggle with access to education and work or have limited opportunities due to power differences in our society and barriers, such as economic disparities, discrimination, or other forms of oppression (Arthur & Collins, 2005a).

The concept of social justice has a long history, dating back to Plato and Aristotle (Reisch, 2002) in the 4th century B.C. Aristotle was considered to have had a conservative view of social justice, one that was primarily concerned with political distribution amongst citizens of the state (Jackson, 2005). According to Aristotle, citizens of the state included Athenian men who owned property (Reisch). Women, foreigners, and slaves were not considered to be important and were ignored in Aristotle's discussions of social justice. From this perspective of social justice, individuals should be given what they deserve, not what they need.

Hobbes, writing in the 17th century A.D., began to acknowledge the presence of different groups in society. Believing most people were barbaric in nature, Hobbes felt it was important to give power to the state or nation to ensure peace within the society, which left the power of the state in the hands of the elite (Reisch, 2002). This provided the rationalization that certain groups needed to be *maintained* for slavery, which lead to oppression of many different groups in society (Reisch). Historically then, the concept of social justice has been associated with terms such as getting what one deserves, maintenance of a social class system, and differentials in the distributions of resources and power.

In the 21st century, the concept of social justice has been used as a way to maintain the status quo, promote extreme social reforms, and justify revolutionary action. Conservatives, liberals, radical secularists, and religious fundamentalists have used the term; all claiming their agenda is one motivated by social justice (Reisch, 2002). From a liberalist viewpoint, Rawls (1971) acknowledged that individuals may want to better themselves, but he also acknowledged this must not be done at the expense of others. In other words, just as the individual has rights that must be acknowledged, the interests of the social good must also be considered. In this way, Rawls takes more of a Marxist approach to social justice, by acknowledging that society also has a duty to the individual, which is to allow all individuals to be fully active participants of society (Marx, 1964). Rawls acknowledged the bidirectional relationship between society and the individual in social justice.

Bell (1997) addresses several of the weaknesses that are inherent in the historical definitions of social justice. Bell argues that the overriding goal of social justice is

> …full and equal participation of all groups in a society that is mutually shaped to meet their needs. Social justice includes a vision of society in which the distribution of resources is equitable and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure. (p.3)

In this definition Bell attempts to address oppressive social class structures, arguing for the importance of social participation and empowerment. Social justice would then emphasize more inclusive decision-making about ways to meet all people's needs, including providing for their physical and psychological safety.

More recently, writers such as Young (1990) have gone further through proposing that social justice should not only include people's basic needs, but also the opportunity for self-fulfillment. Young also acknowledges the role institutions play in allowing or preventing individuals from reaching their full human potential. According to Young,

> Oppression consists in systematic institutional processes, which prevent some people from learning and using satisfying and expansive skills in socially recognized settings, or institutionalized social processes which inhibit people's ability to play and communicate with others or to express their feelings and perspective on social life in contexts where others can listen. (p. 38)

From Young's (1990) perspective, a just society would be one in which the constraints of oppression and domination are eliminated, allowing people from all groups to develop and reach their full human potential. This would include lifting restrictions on participation in institutions such as education and employment.

Current views of social justice place increased emphasis on the importance of moving beyond acknowledgment of inequities to active intervention to challenge systems, institutions, and cultural norms that result in the oppression and marginalization of certain groups in society (Horne & Matthews, 2006). "This includes actively working to change social institutions, political and economic systems, and governmental structures that perpetuate unfair practices, structures, and policies in terms of accessibility, resource distribution, and human rights" (Fouad et al., 2006, p.1). Based on these definitions, three core components of social justice emerge: (a) fair and equitable distribution of resources and opportunities, (b) direct action to ameliorate oppression and marginalization within society, and (c) full inclusion and participation of all members of society in a way that enables them to reach their potential.

The focus on human development and potential is compatible with more recent views of career that emphasize helping people recognize and realize their potential through expression in vocational and other life roles (Young & Collin, 2000). Yet, as pointed out earlier in the discussion, there is debate about whether the concept of career represents the realities of many peoples' experience and relationships with work (Blustein, 2006).

Linking Social Justice and Career Development Practice

There is growing attention paid to the importance social justice as a guiding value for career development practice (Arthur, 2005; 2008). A key concern is that locating career problems within individuals does little to address social conditions that adversely impact people. Young (1990) builds on the emphasis placed on distribution of resources to examine the social structures that inhibit positive development. From this perspective,

> …justice should refer not only to distribution, but also to the institutional conditions necessary for the

> development and exercise of individual capacities and collective communication and cooperation. Under this conception of justice, injustice refers primarily to two forms of disabling constraints, oppression and domination. (p.39)

Conditions of oppression may be overt, such as public laws and institutional policies, or more covert in terms of well-intentioned help that does not take into consideration the differential distribution of resources and opportunities available to our clients or the reality of social barriers linked to education and employment.
According to Young (1990),

> …oppression refers to the vast and deep injustices some groups suffer as a consequence of often unconscious assumptions and reactions of well-meaning people in ordinary interactions, media and cultural stereotypes, and structural features of bureaucratic hierarchies and market mechanisms – in short, the normal processes of everyday life. (p. 41)

Working from this perspective challenges career development practitioners to consider how their personal and professional socialization influences their views of people's career development. This includes the nature of career issues, notions of *on track* and *off track*, indicators of success, and a multitude of possible external influences that may be relevant for viewing individuals and their circumstances. In other words, career practitioners need to consider how their worldviews may be similar or different to others and also how they may inadvertently perpetuate attitudes and actions that further disenfranchise some clients.

Young's perspective of social justice also challenges career development practitioners to not only take a broader view of people's career issues, but also to broaden the target of career interventions. Beyond facilitating personal empowerment of clients, professionals need to consider how their work inadvertently supports the status quo and be prepared to address social forces that pose as systemic barriers to people's growth and development (Arredondo & Perez, 2003; Arthur & Collins, 2005a).

It is of concern that the focus of career planning and decision-making is becoming increasingly restricted to remedial interventions (Arthur, 2005; 2008), due to funding mandates and limited resources. For example, the terms of agency funding may dictate that services be designed around short-term outcomes such as job placement of any sort, with insufficient attention given to helping individuals with plans and resources for career development to stabilize or enhance their future economic position. The unemployment and underemployment of Canadians, especially foreign trained workers, has been targeted for years in labour force planning (Dolan & Young, 2004). Yet, it will take concerted efforts to shift policies and practices that place responsibility for career planning on the individual, that emphasize *survival of the fittest* and *hiring those most like us*, to addressing multiple systemic barriers that continue to perpetuate educational and employment inequities for workers from diverse cultural backgrounds.

A key step to reaffirm the value of social justice is supporting practitioners to translate the concept into meaningful career development practices. While we can celebrate our historical roots and the contributions of social justice to the evolution of career development practice, we need to consider what our past has to offer contemporary career practices (McMahon, Arthur, & Collins, 2008a, 2008b). We believe it is important to move beyond conceptual discussions about the meaning of social justice to consider the implications for practitioner roles and responsibilities. As a point of departure, we felt that it was important to include the voices of career development practitioners in the dialogue about social justice. To that end, we conducted an exploratory study, in which career practitioners were invited to define social justice and to identify some of the barriers that they experience in implementing career development interventions related to social justice.

The Current Study

Participants were career practitioners in Canada who volunteered to participate in a larger study on the diversity and social justice competencies of career development practitioners (Arthur, Collins, Bisson, & McMahon, 2008), conducted through an on-line survey. Invitations to participate in the study were sent electronically to career development associations across Canada and confidentially distributed to members. Demographic information was collected to ascertain participants' age range, ethnicity, educational qualifications, years of experience, and setting of their career development practice. Qualitative data was collected through open-ended questions designed to help us better understand the nature of existing social justice challenges and strategies that career practitioners face in their day-to-day work. The following questions were used to determine participants' background training in social justice and their current views of the concept:

1. How familiar are you with social justice issues as they relate to career practice?
2. Have you ever attended a workshop on social justice?
3. Have you ever attended a course on social justice?
4. What does social justice in your career development practice mean to you?

Question 1 was a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from no familiarity to high familarity. Questions 2 and 3 were formatted as yes/no categories.

The inquiry also focused on career practitioners' views of barriers towards enacting social justice practices. This information was obtained in two ways. First, a check-list of barriers, conceptually driven from a review of the literature (e.g., Helms, 2003; Kiselica & Robinson, 2001) was itemized on the survey, and participants were asked to select all items that applied to their practice.

The second way of identifying barriers to implementing social justice was through critical incidents. The critical incident technique is associated with the case study method in which the specific behaviours of people are examined through open-ended inquiry about the qualitative and subjective descriptions of people, situations, interpretations of experiences (Pedersen, 1995). In essence, critical incidents are brief descriptions of vivid events that people remember as being meaningful in their experience (Brookfield, 1995). Critical incidents have been used extensively in cross-cultural research, including studies conducted pertaining to educational and employment experiences (e.g., Amundson, Borgen, Jordan, & Erlebach, 2004; Arthur, 2001).

In the larger study, participants were asked to describe an actual session with a client whose career issues were influenced by social justice issues (e.g., lack of resources, inequity, discrimination, etc.). Prompts were provided to guide participants to reflect on the nature of the presenting issues, how those issues were related to social justice, the interventions selected, and outcomes of the intervention. A summary of the results from these critical incidents will be reported in a subsequent manuscript (Arthur, Collins, McMahon, & Marshall, 2008). An additional prompt asked participants to explain any barriers to implementing their choice of intervention. This enabled us to compare the barriers identified through the checklist with actual barriers that were experienced in the design and implementation of career-related interventions.

Responses obtained from the open-ended question and critical incidents were reviewed using a constant comparison method of content analysis (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). The survey data was reviewed initially by one member of the research team to begin creating a taxonomy of emerging categories. New survey data was compared to this taxonomy, adding new categories when required. In the second review of the data, categories were reviewed by two other members of the research team and synthesized to reduce duplication. The results of this analysis produced key categories that portray how career practitioners view social justice and their experience of barriers that detract from social justice practices.

Table 1: Location of Career Development Practice

Location	N
Career and Employment Centre	32
Not-for-Profit Organization	30
Public High School	19
Public University	18
Government Department	15
Private Practice	11
Public College	7
Youth Agency	5
For Profit Organization/ Business	5
Community Based Agency	3
Other	5

Results

The selected results from this portion of the study are based on 151 career practitioners who wrote about the meaning of the social justice and the barriers they face in practice. Participants were predominantly women (77%), which is reflective of gender distribution in many helping professions. The age range showed the majority of participants in the 30-50 year old bracket, with less than 10% in younger or older age ranges. Approximately 41% of the participants had completed graduate degrees, 28 % of participants were educated at the undergraduate level, 16% of participants were educated at college or diploma levels, 13% held a post graduate certificate or diploma, and approximately 3% of the participants listed high school as their highest level of education. The majority of participants (87%) identified their ethnic background as Caucasion Canadians.

The participants had a wide range of years of experience in career development practice. Approximately 27% of participants had practised for 5 years or less, 26% of participants had practiced for 6-10 years, 32% had practiced for 11-20 years, and approximately 15% of participants had been in the role of career development practitioner for more than 20 years. Table 1 shows the distribution of settings where participants were employed in the field of career development.

Familiarity With Social Justice

Sixty-seven percent of participants checked that they were familiar with social justice, 28% checked that they were unfamiliar with social justice, and the remaining percentage of participants checked the undecided response category. With respect to prior training related to social justice, 38% of participants had attended a workshop on social justice and 27% of participants had attended a course on social justice.

The Multiple Meanings of Social Justice In Career Development Practice

From our study, it became evident that social justice holds multiple meanings for career practitioners. The responses suggest that social justice might be viewed as a larger value comprised of several related constructs. Figure 1 provides list of the top 10 main categories reflected in their definitions of social justice. The percentages in parenthesis show the proportion of participants whose responses contained the category. Selected quotes are included to illustrate how the category connects with the value of social justice.

Within the total number of responses, 96 of the practitioners mentioned specific groups of people and specific cultural influences they thought were related to social justice issues. Figure 2 provides a list of the top ten categories in participants' responses, followed by excerpts from selected participant responses to illustrate the connections with social justice.

These themes illustrate the diversity of concepts and meanings that career practitioners expressed related to social justice. Additionally, the examples from

Category	Excerpts from Definitions of Social Justice
1. Advocacy (31%)	"I think Social Justice relates to awareness of issues surrounding discrimination of various groups; helping to bring the issues to the attention of everyone; assisting in the removal of barriers; and advocating on behalf of those suffering under various forms of discrimination."
2. Equality (29%)	"Social justice is equality for all job seekers. No bias for age, religion, sex, or culture. Opening doors for new immigrants into Canada. No barriers for education and training."
3. Self Fulfillment (26%)	"Social justice, as I understand it to be, gives every individual a fair opportunity to pursue the goals one has established for himself or herself. The use of the 'fair' does not mean equal but as it relates to opportunities, should offer, depending on one's needs, the occasions to undertake steps necessary to achieve these goals."
4. Equal Opportunities (23%)	"Social justice is newcomers' ability to have access to the same opportunities as people who were born in that country. Social injustice is the country's refusal to consider newcomers' educational and work related experiences as valid or at least partly valid."
5. Inclusion (23%)	"Social justice is a way of perceiving our social milieu and a set of intelligent actions that provide a greater sense of inclusion and responsibility for each other. With in my practice social justice involves thoughtful actions that address inclusion of people who may be seen to be hindered by her/him self or by others, in contributing to their community and/or to their own well being by virtue of his or her differences..."
6. Equal Access (18%)	"Social justice refers to my clients' ability to succeed in the labour market (eg, ability to find and keep a job) and to gain access to the community supports they need to thrive."
7. Considering Contextual Influences (29%)	"A social justice perspective involves understanding the client's career concerns in the context of their life and being open to environmental factors that may be or have influenced the client's career expression. I personally have found that a dual focus on the client and the environment, once openly articulated, has been empowering for individuals. As well, I see here an overlap between career counselling and mental health counselling because often clients who are experiencing discrimination, harassment or career barriers initially present with anxiety and depression. I deliberately work in both areas so that I can integrate my interventions with what the client seems to need."
8. Client-Centred Resources (10%)	"Client centered means that I provide services that are requested in a manner that fits the clients needs and do not force him or her to jump through hoops established by some funding entity or outdated belief that the service provider knows best."
9. Education (8%)	"I think that social justice regarding career practice is two-fold it requires allowing opportunities and accommodations for those facing barriers to the Canadian workplace based on income, language, religion, lack of cultural experience and a myriad of other possible reasons. But also requires education to allow people to adapt themselves when possible and productive to a new work environment and the expectations that come with it."
10. Improving Policy (8%)	"I work with Canadian residents as well as new immigrants. For me social justice somehow equals to political issues and legislations. " "Bureaucratic assumptions made when evaluating client access to resources based on clients previous decisions, levels of education, level of motivation, etc… Fair is not always about everybody getting the same, fair is about everyone getting what they need."

Figure 1. Categories identified in career practitioners' definitions of social justice.

their responses illustrate that for many individuals from identified groups, there continue to be disparities in the options and resources available for their career pathways.

Social Justice Barriers Faced By Clients

A total of 97 of the participants noted specific barriers that inhibit clients in their career development. Note that these are the barriers to social justice faced by clients, in other words, the factors that prevent them from equal access to resources and opportunities necessary for full participation in society and career fulfilment. Later in the paper, we will explore the barriers faced by practitioners in working with their clients to promote social justice. The responses in Figure 3 are organized around 10 categories of client barriers, with the percentages in brackets used to indicate the proportion of participants who responses reflected this category.

These examples from the definitions of social justice illustrate that a number of external and internal barriers continue to limit the career development of individuals. Practitioners noted many connections between internal and external barriers. Events or conditions in the surrounding environment may be internalized negatively by clients. In turn, internal barriers such as low self-esteem or internalized racism can pose as barriers for action in trying to alleviate external barriers. These are important interconnections when considering the ways that social justice is relevant for career development.

Barriers Experienced by Career Development Practitioners

Although social justice is an appealing concept in terms of supporting people to realize their career development potential, a number of barriers have also been identified to career practitioners implementing social justice interventions. In designing the study, we generated a list of barriers that are commonly reported in the literature (e.g., Helms, 2003; Kiselica & Robinson, 2001). Career practitioners were then asked to indicate if they perceived any of these items as barriers for their practice. As indicated in Figure 4, participants perceived a lack of training, time, funding, and power as the top barriers.

We then examined career practitioners' responses in the critical incidents that detailed actual practice examples. From this material, four themes provided collaborating evidence of barriers for implementing social justice interventions. The four themes that emerged from their descriptions of their own efforts to implement social justice interventions included: lack of support from supervisors, lack of training, insufficient funding, and insufficient time to spend on social justice interventions. These themes are represented by the shaded bar graph in Figure 4. There is an overlap in the critical incident themes for four of the top six barriers.

Discussion and Implications

The results of this study indicate that, from the perspective of career practitioners, social justice is a multidimensional concept that reflects the definitional themes identified in the

Category	Excerpts from Definitions of Social Justice
1. All People (39%)	"Making sure that policy is in place, and that common practices are consistent with those policies, in order to give ALL people an equal opportunity to find meaningful employment and self-fulfillment."
2. Socio-Economic Status (39%)	"Various societal groups have different advantages and disadvantages in achieving educational and career success. Socioeconomic status obviously plays a significant role but this issue is about more than just money. SE status typically depends upon the choices made by parents re: their own education and job choices, sometimes creating a vicious cycle of "under" opportunities that is difficult to break. Intentional choice plays a role but so does the labour market and the current need for post-secondary education as opposed to years past when second education was sufficient."
3. Race (37%)	"Assisting clients who have experienced discrimination because of racial, social, psychological, economic status. It involves affirming the individuals worth and potential. Barriers may be realistic, but can be viewed as challenges rather than bars. Ultimately, each person is unique, has value and abilities to contribute to society."
4. Gender (31%)	"The issue of social justice would be in reference to low income women trying to live independently, especially after a separation or divorce. Besides the obvious costs related to searching for work, it is difficult to identify what low income women have to offer to an employer. Also, the business community is either unaware or don't care that they hire people offering low wages, and little in the way of benefits or even hours of work to provide an individual with a living wage."
5. Age (24%)	"People should have equal access to the jobs for which they are qualified. If for some reason, race, colour, age, size, etc. they are excluded without having an equal chance to prove themselves, this is not fair. If they are excluded from career assistance for any reason from our gov't funded centre, this is not acceptable. If in our minds as facilitators we have judged their ability to succeed based on these factors, we have not been appropriate..."
6. Disability (22%)	"People make career decisions based on availability of training, cost, percentage of those who become employed and the demographics involved. When looking at equity and diversity in the workplace, those are directly related to social justice. Persons with disabilities often are excluded from a lot of workplaces who do not have standards in place to accommodate needs. Those individuals would be limited in their career decision-making process. Issues of inequality greatly impact persons with disabilities for just one."
7. Immigrants (21%)	"I see social justice as a way of 'evening out' the playing field within the work domain. There are obviously many groups within Canada that experience discrimination, both in their attempts to enter the workforce, and within the workplace itself. One example is the supposed need for New Canadians to have 'Canadian experience' before they land a 'good' job; but of course, this is based on the belief that experience from other countries is somehow 'lesser' or inferior. Career practitioners need a means to help those people who face such types of discrimination."
8. Sexual Orientation (17%)	"Career practitioners have been the strongest advocates for their clients as they deal with career issues of underserved populations, including racial and ethnic minorities, those with developmental delays, those who live in poverty, new immigrants, gay, lesbian and transgendered clients."
9. Religion (15%)	"Social justice as it relates to career practice would be assisting and empowering those who may have been, or are, discriminated against, for example, based on religion, race, sexual orientation, gender etc, to be able the enter the workforce equipped to deal with and/or overcome the affects thereof. Also, advocating on behalf of clients to assist them in reaching their fullest potential and enhancing their socioeconomic status."
10. Criminal Activity (14%)	"As career practitioners we come in contact from many different ethnic respecting the diversity of our society. It requires, fundamentally, that we have compassion for others; even those who have made personal choices that we would not such as substance abuse or criminality."

Figure 2. Groups included in career practitioners' definitions of social justice.

historical and current literature. Strong emphasis was placed on the fair and equitable distribution of resources and opportunities (Bell, 1997; Constantine, Hage, Kindiachi, & Bryant, 2007; Morris, 2002), e.g., categories of equality, equal opportunities, and equal access. For participants in this study, social justice was strongly tied to perceptions that particular client populations face structural barriers in their career development. These barriers were clearly linked to the social, economic, and political systems that perpetuate oppression and marginalization within society (Arredondo & Perez, 2003; Fouad et al., 2006; Young, 1990), e.g., public policy, lack of education, finances, and other resources, Participants identified advocacy as a core component of social justice to ameliorate oppression and marginalization within society (Horne & Mathews, 2006; Young, 1990).

The participants expanded on the notion full inclusion and participation of all members of society (Rawls, 1971; Young, 1990; Young & Collins, 2000) by identifying particular groups that face barriers to reaching their potential. From a career development perspective, it is important to note that socio-economic status was the most frequently noted cultural factor, followed closely by race and gender. These results provide support for the position that social views of culture continue to be strong influences on people's career development. In essence, culture and social justice are linked because culture provides access to resources for some people, while placing restrictions and limits on resources to people who are inside or outside of the dominant cultural group (Stead, 2004).

A report by Kerstetter (2002), based on Statistics Canada data from 1999, noted that 50% of family units in Canada held 94.4% of the wealth, leaving only 5.6% to the bottom 50% of the population. Visible minorities have reported the highest level of perceived discrimination (Statistics Canada, 2003). Single women or women parenting alone have the highest rates of poverty in Canada (Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women, 2005). The focus on poverty and on groups most likely to experience poverty is a reminder to us of the issues raised by Blustein (2006) and Richardson (1993; 2000) about positioning career development theory and practice in a way that is meaningful to clients who face barriers to the very basic human need for sufficient access to education and work to sustain their lives. Practitioners in this study identified ethical practice as closely tied to meeting actual client needs.

One theme that emerged from this study that was less clear in the definitions noted earlier in the paper is the idea of consciousness raising (awareness of barriers to social justice on the part of both the practitioner and the

Category	Excerpts of Client Barriers
1. Discrimination (36%)	"Important as careers and employment opportunities may be limited based on various discriminations."
2. Poor Policy (24%)	"Client's living on institutionalized income supports/rules are often frustrated, feel powerless, live in substandard housing, eat from food banks and feel like second class citizens. They frequently proper physical and psychological/learning disability assessment, academic/computer upgrading and current professional/industry stands to compete in today's world. A national formal Social Justice group could provide objective standards and best practices to assist government bodies achieve more with their dollars and client satisfaction. Newcomers to Canada need to be included in all areas."
3. Oppression (22%)	"Working with persons with Disabilities, I often call employers and inquire about potential jobs for clients, sometimes an employer will state, no I do not want to hire any one from your organization. I believe they have a pre-conceived description of disabled individuals and they are unemployable. They may have had someone working for them in the past and had a bad experience or they just refuse to even entertain the idea of hiring a person with a disability."
4. Lack of Opportunity (15%)	"I work with very multi-barriered clients, and I believe strongly that many of my clients are denied access to potential employment because they are or have been homeless, in recovery from addictions, have a criminal record, a mental illness or a physical disability etc. I would like to see my clients given an equal opportunity to access meaningful training and employment and to find financial security and job satisfaction in a career that suits and is appropriate for them. In [province named] we provide few options for those in greatest need, and I believe it is the responsibility of a "caring society" to make such options available to all. I believe that a society should be judged by how it treats its most vulnerable members"
5. Lack of Education (12%)	"Clients are generally referred via EI or Welfare or Disability Income. The levels of past access to education/professional credentials and the current needs of the client often are key indicators to the client's current functional abilities/limitations and standard of living…."
6. Institutional Barriers (12%)	"Aspects of inequality can become hidden within institutionalized discrimination. Work and hiring practices as well as lack of opportunities for certain communities can directly relate to social justice."
7. Inequalities (10%)	"A frustrating reality that separates clients, the haves and have nots. It frustrating to work with a client who is so incredibility brilliant, talented, passionate who for financial reasons will not be able to continue or hone their talent. They get lost in the idea that they will work for a few years and come back to pursue that grad program, while knowing that ultimately they will be lost in happenstance which could be a rewarding career but we could have lost the best future doctor, lawyer, etc. It is frustrating that those people who may be able to finically (pursue their program) but due to too few positions won't ever get into their programs."
8. Lack of Finances (9%)	"I think that there are barriers related to social justice in career practice. If someone hasn't had the opportunity for education in their life due to lack of financial resources, they don't have access to higher paying jobs. If someone is truly poor, they may not have the ability to present themselves (clothes, grooming) in a favourable light to an employer."
9. Consciousness Raising (8%)	"Social justice as it relates to career practice has to do with exploring careers as not being gender or age specific nor sexual orientation or religious specific (unless it's a religious job you're looking at). Attempting to free a student from stereotypes they may have about certain types of work, for example, the trades for a woman, is an important role for the counsellor. Students needs to become aware that they have interests, skills, and values that will be a fit for a job that can give them an income, success and momentum to do their best because they feel the "fit" and want to do their best and to continue learning. Social justice related to career practice has to do with making students aware of social "themes" that confine their thinking as it relates to themselves and work."
10. Internalized Oppression (6%)	"…People's choices of education and career may be are expanded or limited, based on their education, financial situation, socio-economic status, gender, age, sexual orientation, language(s), dis/ability, visibly ethnicity (and any other factors as mentioned in your own definition of social justice). There may be rules, or unspoken rules, about who can do what in society. People may also have more choices than they BELIEVE or FEEL they have, but limit themselves because they have internalized beliefs, or unspoken rules, about what a person like themselves will be able to accomplish, or the barriers they will experience. These "rules" often come from their experiences of being excluded, harassed, bullied, etc. In career practice, we help people see their strengths, challenge or see past beliefs, learn new skills/info/perspectives, and prepare to move towards achievable goals."

Figure 3. Practitioners' views of client barriers to social justice in career development.

client). Social justice involves "…a fundamental valuing of fairness and equity" (Constantine et al., 2007, p. 24). The term *valuing* implies more than simply knowledge; it requires a shift in attitudes, beliefs and assumptions about justice and injustice. Practitioners in this study recognized this awareness in themselves; and also noted that, for some clients, the role of the social justice practitioner may be to support shifts in client attitudes and beliefs that are a result of internalizing oppressive messages from society.

From a social justice perspective, it is important to examine our career theories and our interventions models to ensure that they reflect the needs of the chronically underserved and neglected populations in Canadian society. The results of this study confirm that there are a number of internal and external barriers to practitioners enacting social justice interventions (Helms, 2003; Kiselica & Robinson, 2001). The emphasis on consciousness raising about social justice is important when we note that only about two thirds of participants rated themselves as familiar with the concept of social justice; whereas about one third noted their lack of familiarity. These disparities in training and background knowledge about social justice were evident in participants' responses.

The resurgence of literature on social justice in the career development field appears timely as we consider the relevance of professional training for career development practitioners. It is clear that more attention needs to be paid to the structural barriers that impede people's career development and to interventions that address contextual influences in people's lives (Arthur & McMahon, 2005). However, even though career practitioners may recognise the importance of environmental and systemic influences on the lives of their clients, they often lack training about how to implement related interventions. Curriculum aimed at career practitioners typically addresses theories and models directed at the career planning and decision-making of individuals, provides an overview of barriers to career development, minimal content on systems theories, and does not sufficiently prepare students for addressing

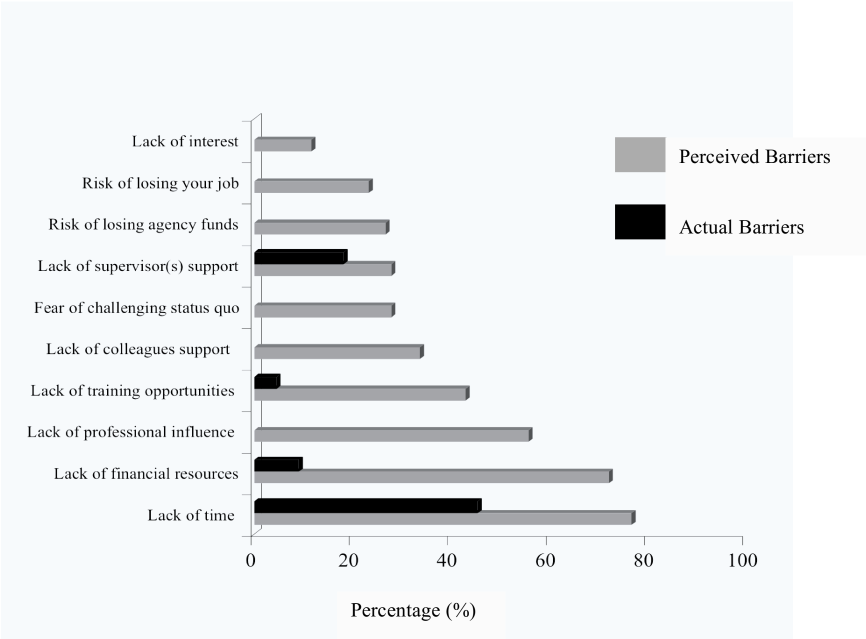

Figure 4. Perceived and actual barriers for addressing social justice in career development practices.

systemic change (McMahon, Arthur, & Collins, 2008b). Additional curriculum content to broader social and structural issues was one of the key priorities identified at a think tank on the future of career counsellor education in Canada held in November, 2006 (Burwell & Kalbfleisch, 2007).

Although we are encouraged by the positive responses of career practitioners that included specific examples of their attempts to implement social justice interventions with their clients (Arthur, Collins, McMahon, & Marshall, 2008), their responses also confirmed earlier literature about multiple barriers for engaging in social justice practices (Helms, 2003; Kiselica & Robinson, 2001). Several career practitioners in this study indicated that lack of administrative support and funding were serious obstacles to meeting the needs of clients. More alarming were accounts in which practitioners felt they would be criticized, punished, or lose their job if they were to use time at their job on interventions such as advocacy or attempting systems change. These results suggest that consciousness raising about the importance of social justice needs to extend well beyond the individual practitioner to the organizational, social-political, and professional levels where the time and money invested in career practices, which were noted as the most common barriers, are controlled. Career practitioners might also benefit from training about how to influence the systems in which they work to garner legitimate support for roles and interventions related to social justice.

Conclusion

Our exploratory study is one of the first inquiries to take into account the perspectives of career development practitioners regarding social justice. It should be noted that this study was based on a volunteer sample and, as such, cannot be considered representative of the views of all career development practitioners in Canada. However, these preliminary results highlight the multiple meanings of social justice and point to some exciting ways that practitioners attempt to integrate social justice into their views of client issues and their ways of working with clients. In turn, it is evident that many practitioners feel restricted in the roles and responsibilities that they believe would make a difference in the lives of their clients. As we consider the meaning of social justice for people's career development, we might also consider what it will take to translate that concept into practice roles and levels of interventions, along with supportive administrative and funding structures. We hope that the orientation to social justice and selected results provided in this discussion will encourage further dialogue about the connections between social justice and career development practice.

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- NOTES -

Self-assessed intelligence in adults: The role of gender, cognitive intelligence and emotional intelligence

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Abstract:

The contribution of psychometrically assessed cognitive intelligence (g)* and emotional intelligence (EI) in predicting self-assessed intelligence (SAI) was examined for both men and women. Adults participating in a career exploration program were asked to estimate their cognitive intelligence, then given an objective measure of cognitive ability followed by an ability-based EI assessment. Overall, objective measures of intelligence accounted for 30% of the variance in SAI suggesting that SAI can be a useful tool in career counselling. Gender provided 2% of variance. Men tended to overestimate and women underestimate SAI but men were more accurate estimators of their own abilities than women (r = .61 vs .48). Ability based EI provided about 1% extra variance regardless of degree of accuracy in SAI. Results suggest that EI overall does not mediate between SAI and objective measures and is likely not a good predictor of SAI accuracy.

Introduction:

The scientific study of intelligence – its definition, relationship to other constructs and real world outcomes, development over the lifespan, and, more recently, its various manifestations, has been ongoing for over a century. A variety of theories have been proposed and investigated, but there is still much that needs to be learned. In addition to these explicit theories of intelligence which are generally based on psychometric data and empirical study, Sternberg (1990) also distinguishes implicit theories – those which are held beliefs by lay individuals about what intelligence is and how it is displayed. Both of these sets of theories are important and, Sternberg argues, are often related and interactive. Lay conceptions of intelligence may give rise to testable hypotheses which, in turn, confirm or refute commonly held beliefs – beliefs which are by no means static and change over time (Shipstone & Burt, 1973).

People do not usually have access to psychometric instruments which purport to assess intelligence. However, whether lay or professional, people often, and perhaps unconsciously, assess their own and others' intelligence and make decisions based on these assessments. The impact may be felt in the areas of education, relationships, and the world of work. It is important, therefore, to try to understand how individuals arrive at their conclusions regarding intelligence and whether they are "accurate" since these conceptions have social consequences (Chamorro-Premuzic & Furnham, 2005).

Research on self-assessed intelligence (SAI) has progressed on several fronts. First, have been studies addressing how intelligence is conceptualized by lay persons as opposed to experts (Sternberg, Conway, Ketron, & Bernstein, 1981), by people of different ages (Berg & Sternberg, 1985) and in different cultures (Wober, 1973; Nevo & Khader, 1995). A second research area has investigated the relationship between SAI and psychometrically determined intelligence (g)* in the hope that there may be a significant correlation, making SAI useful as a "proxy" intelligence (Paulhus, Lysy, & Yik, 1998). Standardized intelligence tests are often time consuming, expensive, and require knowledgeable personnel for administration, and so a high SAI – objectively measured g relationship would be beneficial. However, while the correlations are significant, they are mild – usually falling in the r = .30 range - despite procedures to attempt to increase them (Paulhus et al., 1998; see Chamorro-Premuzic & Furnham, 2005). Third, factors such as personality traits or gender differences which may influence one's perceived intelligence have been examined. Chamorro-Premuzic et al, (2005) found that the Big Five personality traits accounted for between 9 and 16% of the variance in SAI and a further study (Chamorro-Premuzic & Furnham, 2006) suggests that gender and personality traits may have mediating effects on SAI. Last, and perhaps most important and largely unexplored, is research showing how SAI relates to real world outcomes in contexts such as education and the world of work (Muller & Dweck, 1998).

Gender differences

Gender differences in SAI have been observed consistently for decades. In an analysis of eleven studies of university students, Hogan (1978) found males to overestimate and females to underestimate their own intelligence, and this pattern has been found to extend to same sex parents and children as well – i.e. males overestimate fathers' and sons' intelligences while females underestimate mothers' and daughters' intelligences compared to the opposite sex parent and child (Beloff, 1992). This trend appears to have continued at least into the 1990s (Furnham & Rawles, 1995; Furnham & Gasson, 1998). Some researchers argue that this tendency is related to environmental factors – in particular societal stereotypes regarding career, family and education which affect females' self evaluations negatively (Maltby, Day, & Macaskill, 2007). Stereotypes regarding differences in intelligence, whether accurate or exaggerated, are certainly present in society (Swim, 1994; Halpern, Benbow, Geary, Gur, Hyde, & Gernsbacher, 2007). Men are seen as being better at the maths, sciences, and areas involving spatial abilities like engineering. Women are thought to be more proficient at tasks requiring verbal and personal – i.e. emotional – intelli-

*The use of "g" in this paper refers to the general intelligence factor (Spearman, 1927; Carroll, 1993) obtained by more objective assessment procedures.

gences. Likely, it is the interaction of biological and environmental factors that sways one's perception of intelligence.

Emotional intelligence

The concept of emotional intelligence (EI) has been present in the literature for many decades (Thorndike, 1920; Wechsler, 1950) but has become much more popular as a research topic since Goleman's (1995) book *Emotional Intelligence* propelled the idea into public consciousness. It has been embraced enthusiastically by many people as evidence that cognitive intelligence is not the only intelligence needed to be successful, and may, in fact, be secondary. So far, this evidence has not been forthcoming to the extent originally claimed. Various theories and accompanying measuring instruments (in brackets) have been developed, primary among them being Bar-On's Emotional-Social Intelligence model (Emotional Quotient Inventory - EQi); Goleman's Emotional Competencies model (Emotional Competencies Inventory - ECI); and Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso's ability-based model (Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test – MSCEIT). EI theories have been criticized for their lack of consistency of definition as well as lack of discriminant validity from other constructs (Roberts, Zeidner, & Matthews, 2001). In particular, EI assessment instruments that rely on self-judgment have been found to correlate too greatly with scales of personality and lack psychometric support (Conte, 2005). Research in EI is expanding in an attempt to validate the construct by showing that it is related to real-world social, work, and personal outcomes.

To date very little research exists which explores the relationship between one's realistic perception of abilities and emotional intelligence. It would be reasonable to expect that those who know themselves well, and are therefore accurate in their self-appraisals, would score more highly on measures of EI. The current study seeks to add to the SAI literature by investigating the relationship of SAI to the relatively new construct of emotional intelligence, in particular, whether accuracy of self-assessment is positively related to higher emotional intelligence. Gender differences have been found with both SAI and EI, (Furnham & Rawles, 1995; Brackett, Rivers, Shiffman, Lerner,& Salovey, 2006) and it was therefore decided that analyses for both sexes were appropriate. Self-evaluation studies have been criticized on various issues and would benefit from meeting at least two minimum standards (Colvin, Block, & Funder, 1995). First, any evaluation of a person's self-appraisal accuracy must include a valid criterion for comparison. Second, it would be more useful to examine participants more representative of the general population. One concern with social science research in general is that, because of ease of access, the preponderance of samples are taken from a university student population and such has been the case for much of the SAI literature reviewed. This practice is problematic in that students, while being adults, do not represent society as a whole in variables such as age, general intelligence level, education level, as well as life stage with respect to career. It was felt that research with adult, non-student men and women may shed a different light on how SAI, gender, and EI behave.

Traditionally, the ability to perceive one's self realistically has been considered an indicator of mental health (Vogt & Colvin, 2005). While some researchers have argued that self-deception may contribute to psychological well-being (Taylor & Brown, 1988; Colvin & Block, 1994), the majority of the literature appears to suggest the opposite. Kruger and Dunning (1999) argue that individuals who are incompetent in certain domains often lack awareness of "…how well one is performing, when one is likely to be accurate in judgment, and when one is likely to be in error" (p. 1121).

That individuals do often consciously or unconsciously misrepresent their abilities is well documented and this tendency is a major drawback to the credibility of self-report assessment instruments in all areas of client evaluation and research (Paulhaus, 1991; Paulhaus, Harms, Bruce, & Lysy, 2003). Self-report inventories, therefore, are suspect since it often is the case that those who rate themselves most erroneously compared with an objective measure are the most incompetent in performing the task (Kruger and Dunning, 1999). As a result, in order to avoid compounding self-assessment error, in this study it was decided that an ability-based EI instrument – the MSCEIT - would be the most effective way to measure EI. Current reviews of EI instruments tend to confirm this choice (Conte, 2005; McEnrue & Groves, 2006).

Frijda (1988) argues that "emotions...arise in response to events that are important to the individual, and which importance he or she appraises in some way" (p. 349). Further, emotions systems, when activated, have been found to influence cognitive processes such as attention, learning and memory leading to adaptive behaviours (Muramatsu and Hanoch, 2005). Mayer, Salovey and Caruso contend that emotions convey meanings about relationships of a person with self, others, objects, or events – in other words, matters which are personal and rise out of one's concerns, motives or goals (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004; Frijda, 1988). When these relationships change, emotions are triggered. EI, in their view, involves the ability to recognize emotions, identify and think about them, and use them to problem-solve so as to adapt to the environment. It is around this theory that the MSCEIT has been developed. Within this context, one would expect the process of self-evaluation to be an emotionally-laden experience. Presumably the act of introspection, especially in the area of cognitive abilities which are seen as being very important to success in western society, would trigger many emotions. In this study, it is hypothesized that the extent to which individuals recognize and use these emotions to manage themselves and their environments should be reflected in the accuracy of SAI. In other words, EI should contribute to the variance in SAI above and beyond that of cognitive g.

Questions

In particular, the questions of interest were these:

1) What is the contribution of gender to SAI variance above and beyond that of g?
2) Are there gender differences in SAI accuracy in an adult non-student sample?

3) In this sample, do men overestimate and women underestimate SAI as previously found?
4) What is the contribution of EI, if any, to SAI and do some aspects of EI contribute more than others?
5) Are there gender differences in the role of EI in SAI?

Method:

Participants:

Participants were 350 adults attending a 4-week government funded career exploration program. All were unemployed at the time of the research. Age ranged from 18 to 63 years with an average age of 36.4 years (s.d. = 11.5), 40% were male. The average grade level achieved was 12.6 (s.d. = 2.2).

Instruments:

Wonderlic Personnel Test (WPT): The Wonderlic Personnel Test is a short-form test of cognitive ability (g) purported to measure "the level at which an individual learns, understands instructions and solves problems" (Wonderlic, 1992). Its sizeable reliability and validity estimates are based on an adult working population. Test-retest reliabilities are reported ranging from .82 to .94, and concurrent validities of >.80 with the WAIS-R and about .80 with the GATB-G have been observed (Wonderlic, 1992). The WPT manual reports mean raw score and standard deviation values of 21.6 and 7.1 respectively compared with 24.8 and 6.7 obtained in the current investigation.

The manual makes provision for two scores – a timed (12 minute) score, and an untimed score which is considered the more representative of an individual's true ability if he or she obtains a requisite additional number of questions correct when no time restrictions are imposed.

The Career Oriented Multiple Intelligence Test (COMIT):

The COMIT is a self-report instrument (unpublished) in which persons are asked to rate their abilities in eight different domains patterned after the intelligences proposed by Howard Gardner (Gardner, 1983, 1998). Individuals respond to 64 statements (eight per domain), by rating their abilities on a five-point scale (1 = not at all like me, to 5 = definitely me!). Statements are indirect – that is, they inquire about interests, behaviours, and everyday situations rather than asking about intelligence directly. Examples of items include: "I can easily compute numbers in my head" (mathematical/logical domain), or "I can express my thoughts well on paper" (linguistic domain). The mean internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) of the COMIT's eight intelligences is >.80.

Using strategies outlined in Paulhaus et al., (1998), responses on 22 of the 64 items are weighted and used to derive a self-assessed intelligence (SAI) score which is a client's perceived estimate of cognitive ability. Correlations of the COMIT SAI score currently stand at a moderate .55 with the WPT and at .53 with the GATB-G (General Learning Aptitude) score (n = 640), which are very reasonable for proxy IQ estimates and higher than the approximate r = .30 that is normally reported in the literature (Chamorro-Premuzic & Furnham, 2005). Cronbach's alpha for the 22 items is .86.

Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT):

The MSCEIT has been designed to assess an individual's emotional intelligence using an objective or ability-based method in which test-takers are required to perform eight different types of tasks in the emotion domain. The total MSCEIT score is subdivided into two main area scores – Experiential EI and Strategic EI. Experiential EI is purported to measure more basic-level emotional processes such as "the identification of emotion and its productive use in thought" (Caruso & Wolfe, 2006). This area is further divided into two branches –Perceiving Emotions and Facilitating Thought. Strategic EI is assumed to involve higher-level emotions processing such as reasoning about emotions, managing emotions, and using this information in personal and social decision-making (Caruso & Wolfe, 2006). It is also comprised of two branches – Understanding Emotions and Managing Emotions. Raw scores on the MSCEIT are converted to standard scores having a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15.

Reliability of the MSCEIT is good at the total, area and branch levels with total scores having a split-half reliability of .91 and area score reliabilities of .90 for Experiential EI and .85 for Strategic EI. Test-retest reliability has been found to be .86. McEnrue and Groves (2006) described the MSCEIT as having high construct validity, moderate content, predictive and external validity and low face validity.

Procedure:

In a career-counsellor led brief discussion, small groups of participants were asked to share their views regarding the nature and possible kinds of intelligence, after which they were administered the SAI measure (COMIT), followed immediately by the WPT. All clients were allowed as much time as needed after the initial 12 minute administration of the WPT, and the more representative score (timed or untimed) was then used for data analysis. The MSCEIT was computer administered several days later.

Data Analysis:

WPT raw scores were first adjusted to one form (A) to correct for slight differences between the A and B forms of the test. Pearson-product correlations between overall SAI, MSCEIT total, area, and branch scores, and WPT scores were conducted and are shown in Table 1. Similar analyses were also performed separately for men and women (Table 2). T-tests were conducted to determine significant differences between sexes (Table 3). Outliers greater than 2.0 sd (10 cases) were excluded from the analysis.

Following the procedures of Chamorro-Premuzic and Furnham (2006) a regression analysis was performed using SAI as the criterion and psychometrically measured g, EI branch scores, and gender as predictors. Results are shown in Table 4.

To determine the extent to which men and women over- or underestimate SAI, raw scores for WPT and SAI were converted to standardized z-scores and the differences between WPT and SAI z-scores calculated (z-WPT minus z-SAI).

Results:

Tables 1 through 4 are shown in the Appendix.

See Table 1 for the descriptive statistics and intercorrelations for all measures used. Overall correlation of SAI with g is r = .55.

Men were found to slightly overestimate SAI (mean z = -.07) and women to underestimate SAI (mean z = .06). These differences were not significant. Overall, accuracy of SAI did show a positive and significant correlation with the total EI score of the MSCEIT, but this relationship fell to near 0 when g was partialed out.

Discussion:

The purpose of this study was to explore a) whether gender differences are observed in SAI in an adult non-student sample as has previously been the case; and b) whether emotional intelligence plays a role in an individual's ability to assess him/herself above and beyond that contributed by psychometrically measured g and gender.

The overall contribution of gender to SAI (Question 1), even though significant, was negligible at about 2%, less than what has been reported elsewhere. As seen in Table 2, males in this study were considerably more accurate in predicting their intelligence (r = .61 for males vs. r=.48 for females)(Question 2). The reason for this is not clear but it appears they generally had a realistic self-view – at least in this area. Overall, males did overestimate their intelligences and females did underestimate theirs, but the differences were not significant (Question 3). It is possible that engaging in the process of career decision-making had more of a sobering effect on the male adults in this sample than the females. In addition, as discussed earlier, lay perceptions of intelligence change over time. Perhaps earlier stereotypes of male intellectual superiority, more overt in past generations, have moderated in the past decade as people become more egalitarian in their attitudes. This hypothesis needs to be investigated more thoroughly.

The correlations of SAI with g were found to be higher than has been previously reported; the overall r of .55 exceeds the usual r of approximately .30 by a considerable amount indicating that the participants in this study had more insight – at least into their own cognitive abilities. There may be several reasons for this. First, the individuals in the study were adults seeking career direction on their own volition and may have been more focused on their abilities in preparation for career exploration. Perhaps this mind set encouraged more accurate self-evaluation. In addition, participants were prepared for the SAI by a brief discussion regarding intelligence. This, too, may have activated schemata around the topic, thereby increasing metacognition and enhancing self-evaluation accuracy. Third, it could also be that the SAI instrument used, in some way capitalized on those aspects of g that allowed the participants to judge themselves more precisely. In any event, the measured g accounted for about 30% of the variance of SAI.

Correlations of this magnitude make SAI a useful tool in the portfolio of assessments necessary for a comprehensive evaluation in such areas as career counselling. Individuals engaged in career exploration are likely to take one of two paths upon completion – go directly into the work environment, or enter training and education programs leading to a chosen vocation. In either case, knowing how individuals view their abilities compared with a standardized measure provides a good starting point for career counselling in investigating why discrepancies between SAI and g, if any, are occurring. Such a discussion could be important for all participants in this process. In particular, it may be most beneficial for those persons with low SAI and high g who view their abilities pessimistically. Subjective beliefs often become self-fulfilling prophecies, and changing the belief may have a positive effect on future endeavors. For those who are accurate and realistic about their abilities, this knowledge confirms what they already know which can be reassuring. The effect on high SAI/low g individuals could be mixed; some may benefit by readjusting their goals, thus possibly saving time and financial resources, while others may either ignore the information or be negatively affected by it. Large SAI/ g differences can also be used as a rationale to further investigate an individual's abilities, since there may be other factors such as learning disabilities, attention problems, or physical or mental illnesses interfering with cognition.

Contrary to what was expected, EI did not appear to play any role in people's perceptions of ability (Question 4), overall or for either gender (Question 5). This was observed at total, area, and branch levels of the MSCEIT . While correlations with SAI were significant for the Understanding and Managing branches (Table 1), this relationship dropped to almost 0 when the effect of cognitive g was partialed out. This suggests that the MSCEIT may be providing information regarding a person's accumulated knowledge and experience regarding emotional functioning, analogous to Cattell's (1971) theory of crystallized intelligence. Mayer et al. (2000) argue that the Understanding branch of the MSCEIT model is the most cognitive of the branches, and should therefore be related more to cognitive g as it is seen to do in this analysis.

Self-evaluation, particularly as it pertains to the world of career and further education, would seem an emotionally charged phenomenon. Ability tends to limit careers that can be pursued, and such barriers have potential for generating emotional stress. Self-assessment in any area brings to the fore discrepancies that may exist between what is and what is desired. It seems reasonable to suppose that individuals who are able to perceive this environment more accurately and adapt to it by emotional problem solving would display higher emotional intelligence. This was not seen to be the case. However, before drawing any conclusions, it is necessary to look at the contexts within which EI may have been demonstrated, and the aspects of EI required in each of these. The MSCEIT asks the individual to solve various emotional "problems", but does not – and cannot at this juncture – evaluate the "feelings" or somatic experience that occurs in any kind of emotion-laden event. Knowing "about" an emotional problem and how to theoretically solve it from a distance, as it were, and "feeling" the emotions generated in actual situations are quite different and have potentially different behavioural consequences. Despite being the most investigated and validated EI instrument so far in the nascent world of EI measurement, the MSCEIT is limited, as any paper and pencil (or computerized) test is, in what aspects of EI it can measure.

It appears that in this study, whatever component is being measured by the MSCEIT does not appear to be playing a part in self-evaluation. This in no way denigrates the instrument, but it does emphasize the fact that those who are developing EI measurement tools have a very difficult task in separating the various components of what is still a poorly defined construct.

Suggestions for further research:

SAI needs to be investigated across the lifespan to determine whether accuracy changes with age and gender. Preliminary analysis of the data in this study suggests that young males are wildly inaccurate in their self-assessments while older males are very accurate. Females appear much more moderate at every age level. This has implications for career counsellors, especially those dealing with young career-exploring men, in that the results of any other self-reported assessments should perhaps be viewed with more caution.

Replication studies similar to those reported in Chamorro-Premuzic & Furnham (2005 – chapter 6), should be carried out to determine whether past trends regarding male SAI overestimation and female underestimation are changing and why.

If the MSCEIT is found to measure more of a crystallized aspect of emotional intelligence, this implies that there may also be a fluid component (see Ortony, Revelle & Zinbarg, 2007). Investigating this possibility and attempting to measure it are still issues that need to be resolved.

More formalized procedures need to be developed around using SAI to augment and question standardized test scores. Longitudinal studies that follow individuals into career settings would provide valuable information regarding which are the more accurate predictors of success.

Appendix

Table 1: Descriptive statistics including overall means, standard deviations and inter-correlations for all measures.

	mean	sd	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1 WPT (g)	24.8	6.7	.55**	.33**	.20**	.17**	.16**	.35**	.44**	.16**
2 SAI	25.2	5.7	-	.21**	.09	.09	.07	.27**	.29**	.17**
3 Total EI	93.5	11.9		-	.89**	.75**	.75**	.77**	.67**	.62**
4 Exper. EI	98.3	13.7			-	.87**	.78**	.43**	.38**	.36**
5 Perceiving	98.2	13.1				-	.41**	.31**	.28**	.24**
6 Facilitating	97.8	14.0					-	.48**	.39**	.44**
7 Strat. EI	91.5	10.0						-	.86**	.79**
8 Underst.	92.8	11.4							-	.39**
9 Managing	93.3	9.0								-

*p<.05; **p<.01

Table 2: Descriptive statistics including overall means, standard deviations and inter-correlations for all measures.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1 WPT (g)	-	.61**	.30**	.16	.14	.11	.32**	.39**	.14
2 SAI	.48**	-	.28**	.16	.17	.06	.30*	.30**	.17*
3 Total EI	.38**	.16*	-	.90**	.76**	.75**	.77**	.67**	.59**
4 Exper. EI	.26**	.06	.88**	-	.87**	.77**	.45**	.42**	.32**
5 Perceiving	.22**	.04	.74**	.87**	-	.41**	.31**	.30**	.20*
6 Facilitating	.20**	.05	.76**	.81**	.43**	-	.46**	.38**	.42**
7 Strat. EI	.35**	.20**	.81**	.46**	.33**	.49**	-	.84**	.79**
8 Underst.	.47**	.25**	.69**	.37**	.28**	.39**	.87**	-	.34**
9 Managing	.14	.11	.68**	.43**	.31**	.46**	.79**	.42**	-

*p<.05; **p<.01

Table 3: Means, standard deviations and significance of differences for men and women.

	mean males n = 141	sd	mean females n = 207	sd	Sig.
WPT (g)	25.8	7.2	24.0	6.4	*
SAI	26.6	5.8	24.3	5.4	**
Total EI	93.1	13.0	93.7	11.2	ns
Exper. EI	97.2	15.5	99.1	12.3	ns
Perceiving	97.4	15.8	98.7	11.1	ns
Facilitating	98.7	16.0	97.2	12.5	ns
Strat. EI	93.4	10.6	90.2	9.4	**
Underst.	94.6	12.1	91.5	10.7	*
Managing	94.8	10.0	92.2	8.2	**

*p<.05; **p<.01

Table 4: Regression analysis: psychometric intelligence (g), EI branch scores, and gender as predictors of SAI

step	variables entered	R^2	ΔR^2	df	ΔF	β	t
		% of variance explained					
#1	g					.55	11.74**
		.300	.300	1,321	137.76		
#2	g					.52	9.89**
	perceiving					-.01	-.10
	facilitating					-.08	-1.44
	understanding					.06	.96
	managing					.10	1.84
		.313	.013	4,317	1.45		
#3	g					.51	9.78**
	perceiving					.02	.35
	facilitating					-.09	-1.54
	understanding					.04	.74
	managing					.08	1.50
	gender					.14	2.84**
		.330	.017	1,316	8.07		

*p<.05; **p<.01

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The Role of Personality and Goal Orientation in Student Preferences for Job Attributes

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Abstract

This study examined the relationships between personality, goal orientation, and the job preferences individuals have early in their careers. This information provides a better understanding of the contributors to individual job preferences early in one's career allowing career counselors and placement centers to better advise individuals in job seeking, and also shows organizations how to target recruitment efforts to enhance applicant acceptance of job offers. Job preferences were divided into four categories, including Long-term Security, Financial Interests, Intrinsic and Personal Interests, and Prestige. A model was tested linking the dispositional variables to the job preferences among 158 participants. Results showed that some dispositional variables can indeed predict individual's job preferences.

Early in one's career, individuals are likely unaware of the characteristics a job should have to better fit their interests and career expectations. Nevertheless, in the process of recruiting employees, even those at the start of their careers, organizations frequently emphasize certain job attributes over others in hopes of presenting a favorable impression of the organization and subsequently attracting desirable applicants (Ashforth, 2001; Ilgen, 1971; Wanous, 1977). However, not all attributes are likely to be valued equally by all individuals. For example, Johnson (2001) proposed individual job choices are based on the extent to which one values internal and external rewards of a specific job within an organization. Therefore, whereby individuals might discard interesting career opportunities based on the attributes an organization initially emphasizes, organizational recruitment efforts may fall short of expectations for potential applicants. If job preferences, or the importance that individuals place on certain attributes of a particular job or organization, are likely to vary by individuals, some recruitment efforts might attract only applicants with a similar profile because certain applicants might perceive the organization will fulfill their career expectations while others may not and therefore self-select themselves out of the hiring process.

Additionally, individual's job preferences may influence the likelihood of getting a particular applicant to accept a position once offered. This decision might depend on the type of job attributes discussed and negotiated during the hiring process. By knowing what aspects of a job an individual may prefer, an individual can more effectively identify those job requirements that will help him or her more quickly adapt to the organization. Likewise, organizations can tailor their discussions in a manner that, when an offer is made, is more likely to ensure its acceptance. Thus, in order to help individuals in their job seeking efforts and to better understand how organizational recruitment strategies can be most effective, it is important to understand what differences among individuals help in shaping their job preferences.

Understanding the links between individual differences and job preferences are beneficial for individuals seeking career guidance or searching for jobs (such as college students, the focus within the current study) and for organizations seeking to better plan their recruitment and hiring efforts. Career counselors and placement centers need to better understand the variables that guide individuals in job and career searches. Understanding these links will likely result in more successful matches between individuals and jobs, based on what one really values, and less time and money expended than might be expected without such information. Organizations that invest a considerable amount of resources recruiting the best applicants need to be aware of the type of applicants they will attract when they emphasize certain job attributes in their recruitment efforts, and the type of job attributes that need to be negotiated during their hiring process in order to ensure the applicant's acceptance.

Despite the importance of examining individual differences related to one's job preferences, few researchers have done so. Although numerous researchers have examined areas relating to applicant perspectives in the recruitment context, such as job seeking (Boudreau, Boswell, Judge, & Bretz, 2001; Cable & Graham, 2000; Rau & Hyland, 2002), acceptance intentions (Harris & Fink, 1987; Powell, 1984; Taylor & Bergmann, 1987), and employment decisions (Fisher, Ilgen, & Hoyer, 1979; Turban, Eyring, & Campion, 1993), the focus has traditionally concerned the likelihood of engaging in search behaviors or on job attributes without consideration of the individual differences of applicants that may influence their preference for such attributes. Thus, we contribute to the literature by taking a different perspective and examining the individual differences that contribute to preferences for certain job attributes early in one's career.

There are numerous factors that may help explain the differences people have regarding job preferences. One's previous work experiences may contribute to subsequent preferences at a later job. For example, Kammeyer-Mueller, Wanberg, Glomb, and Ahlburg (2005) found that personal, work-related, and professional critical events can influence whether employees remain working for an organization. These same experiences can also influence employee job preferences should they decide to exit the organization and seek employment elsewhere. For example, an employee who experiences a lay-off (a work-related critical event) may find that job stability is of newfound importance, and thus seek such attributes in future jobs. Additionally, factors other than personal work experience may influence what one prefers in a job or organization. For example, an individual's non-work experiences, such as experiences of family and friends, may influence what attributes are important. Finally, dispositional tendencies may influence what is important. For example, an individual who is highly extraverted may prefer a job that allows for social exchanges rather than one in which solitary work is required.

The focus of the present study is on the differences in job preferences due to dispositional tendencies, specifically the Big Five, a personality taxonomy that includes conscientiousness, emotional stability, agreeableness, openness to experience, and extraversion (Costa & McCrae, 1991, Digman, 1990) and goal orientation, or one's dispositional goal preferences in achievement situations (Dweck, 1986). We examine the role of personality and goal orientation on the job preferences that individuals hold early in their careers. In doing so, we explore antecedents that may be useful for individuals to consider when searching for a job that better fits their career expectations, and for organizations to consider in their recruitment and job selection process.

Job Preferences

Before proceeding, it is important to explicitly define what we mean by "job preferences." Job preferences, for the purpose of this study, refer to the valence, or importance, that individuals place on certain characteristics, or attributes, of a particular job or organization. For example, individuals may prefer a job with a high starting salary (at Organization A) to one with flexible hours (at Organization B). In this case, assuming all else is equal, they place greater importance on salary than they place on flexibility.

Distinguishing Job Preferences from Similar Constructs

Several distinctions must be made regarding job preferences and similar terms or constructs. In this section we discuss how the concept of job preferences differs from job interests, career anchors, and work preferences as well as why these distinctions are important. The first construct that must be distinguished from job preferences is job (or vocational) interests (e.g., Holland, 1997), which refer less to the attributes of a particular organization and the job at stake (e.g., salary, hours, company size, etc.) and more to activities that distinguish amongst occupations (e.g., heavy lifting, prolonged sitting, creativity requirement, etc.). Job interests, therefore, can be thought of as a proclivity for one occupation over another occupation whereas job preferences represent the inclination to choose one organization and its corresponding outcomes over another organization.

Job preferences and job interests can be further distinguished in terms of their uses. Job interests are oftentimes used to assist in career planning. Interests guide an individual toward a certain field based on the types of things he or she enjoys. For example, based on job interests, an individual may be more attracted to a job in entertainment versus a job in physics. Job preferences, on the other hand, come into play when an applicant is deciding to which organization to apply for a job and from which organization to accept a job offer. This is not to say that the jobs, in the traditional sense, will be the same for each organization. For example, an individual may apply for a job as a dishwasher at Restaurant A and for a job as a cook at Restaurant B. In terms of preferences, job type would play a role, but in part to other factors such as salary, chance for advancement, and so forth. In general, it is assumed interests are known (at least partially) by the time job preferences must be made. In this case the individual would be, presumably, applying only to jobs he or she has an interest in, so organizational outcomes become the salient issue. Yet, if interests are not established or are irrelevant (e.g., neither job is interesting but instead simply a means to necessary employment), factors other than job type still play a role because now the individual will choose between the best alternative, even if neither is the ideal job.

Another construct that has been proposed in the literature that is similar to both job preferences and job interests is Schein's (1978, 1985) notion of career anchors, or career orientation. Schein (1978) proposed that all the decisions people make regarding the development of their careers, even though sometimes arbitrary, hold a consistent pattern based on their occupational self-concept. For example, the preferences that one has in terms of a job or organization are based, according to Schein, on his or her occupational self-concept. This self-concept, which he termed "*career anchors,*" is the pattern of self-perceived talents, motives, and values that serve to guide, constrain, stabilize, and integrate the person's career. Schein proposed it as a broader construct than motivation to work or job values, which are similar to job interests. The construct of career anchors assumes that the choices individuals make regarding their careers are based not only on their job values, but also on other individual differences. An individual's self-perceived talents and abilities, and self-perceived motives and needs, interact with self-perceived attitudes and values to define one's career anchors.

Finally, caution must be taken with the terminology at hand. First, the term job is used colloquially within this paper, in one sense referring to organizations (i.e., as it is used with job preferences), and in the other sense referring to occupations (i.e., as it is used with job interests). Similarly, job preferences should not be confused with Amabile, Hill, Hennessy, and Tighe's (1994) work preferences, which refer to individual differences in intrinsic and extrinsic motivational orientations, not to preferences based on importance of organizational outcomes.

These distinctions are important because researchers in the vocational behavior literature have long been interested in individual differences and their relationships to job interests (e.g., Berdie, 1944; Darley & Hagenah, 1955; Hansen, 1984; Holland, 1958, 1999; Larson, Rottinghaus, & Borgen, 2002). Researchers interested in preferences between organizational outcomes, however, have only recently acknowledged the importance of individual differences in perceptions of importance of job attributes. This latter issue, in particular, is the focus of the current study.

Categorizing Job Preferences

Numerous job attributes have been identified and used in studies examining important characteristics for job choice decision-making, but there has yet to be a framework to describe the types of attributes a prospective employee may value. Thus, referring to the extant literature for job attributes, we compiled a list of attributes from Gleuck (1974) and Posner (1981) and divided the typical job characteristics into four categories: Long-term Security, Financial Interests, Intrinsic or Personal Interests, and Prestige. More information on how these factors were confirmed is provided in the Method section.

The first category, Long-term Security, includes preferences for attributes that help plan for and ensure a secure, reliable way of living and working in the future. For example, benefits of little use or value in the present, but which are important over time, as one ages or plans for the future, are in this category. Additionally, individuals preferring long-term security would likely look for a well-established, stable company that has less of a chance of failing or experiencing downsizing compared to relatively new, unstable companies. Specific examples would include preferences for such attributes as good insurance benefits and retirement packages.

The second category of job preferences is Financial Interests. Whereby not all individuals place the same level of importance on money (cf. Mitchell & Mickel, 1999), individuals with preferences primarily in this category tend to value monetary benefits above others. In this manner, they would tend to value a large starting salary, frequent salary increases, and any other incentive or benefit that would lead to acquiring financial gains.

The third category is Intrinsic or Personal Interests. Individuals with preferences primarily in this category value freedom in their work and the opportunity to engage in activities they enjoy. Similarly, money and location may not be important, as long as the person is doing what he or she enjoys. These preferences encompass the desire to learn and grow, with the individual valuing learning and challenging tasks.

The fourth category, Prestige, includes preferences that place importance on attributes that help create a positive, desirable image for the individual. Individuals with preferences primarily in this category place a great deal of importance on prestige, job title, and impression management, and are concerned with how others view them and their job or career.

Individual Differences in Job Preferences

Researchers have begun to examine individual differences in terms of preferences for certain job attributes. Of those studies that have examined individual differences in predicting preferences for organizations with certain types of reward systems, they examined variables such as materialism, self-efficacy, need for achievement, self-esteem, and Type A and Type B personality (Burke & Deszca, 1982; Cable & Judge, 1994; Judge & Bretz, 1992; Turban & Keon, 1993). Few studies, however, have examined job preferences with the traditional "Big Five" personality dimensions. Of those that have (e.g., Judge & Cable, 1997; Stevens & Ash, 2001) the studies examined relatively few attributes that would conceivably be important when choosing between jobs (e.g., supervisor-subordinate relationships, team-oriented organizational cultures).

There are several individual differences that would be expected to relate to one's job preferences. In this study, we examined dispositional variables in the form of Big Five personality dimensions and goal orientation. In the section that follows we will examine these variables that are expected to be related to one's job preferences.

Personality

Personality is often described in terms of the Big Five, a taxonomy that includes conscientiousness, emotional stability, agreeableness, openness to experience, and extraversion (Costa & McCrae, 1991, Digman, 1990). Conscientiousness reflects the drive to accomplish tasks and duties to the best of one's abilities while following specified rules and procedures. Characteristics of conscientiousness include such tendencies as being hard-working, dependable, achievement-striving, careful, and deliberate.

Emotional stability reflects the regulation and management of one's emotions and can be described by feelings of optimism, high self-esteem, and confidence. On the opposite end of the continuum is neuroticism, characterized by anxiety, hostility, feelings of self–consciousness, and vulnerability. Agreeableness reflects the desire to belong with and be liked by others. As such, individuals high on agreeableness are often described as being likeable, cooperative, trustworthy, modest, and helpful. The fourth personality dimension is openness to experience, which is the tendency to be open to new ideas and flexible in thinking, and is characterized by an active imagination, independent judgment, intelligence and success orientation. The final dimension, extraversion, is the basic tendency to be socially active and is characterized by sociability traits such as a preference to work with people, gregariousness, positive emotions, and warmth.

Goal Orientation

Goal orientation (GO) refers to the type of goals individuals adopt in achievement situations (Dweck, 1986; Eison, 1979, 1981; Nicholls, 1984). Individuals may primarily be either learning or performance oriented (Button, Mathieu, & Zajac, 1996; Dweck, 1986, 1989), although it is possible to be simultaneously high (or low) on both. Individuals with a primarily learning GO wish to develop competence through expanding their abilities by mastering challenging situations. Individuals may also orient toward a second set of goals, termed performance (Button et al., 1996; Dweck, 1986, 1989; Elliot & Church, 1997) goals. Individuals with a primarily performance GO seek to demonstrate and validate their competence by seeking favorable judgments and avoiding negative judgments.

Although GO was originally conceptualized as a unidimensional construct with learning goals and performance goals on separate ends of a continuum (Dweck, 1986; Eison, 1979), subsequent research (e.g., Button et al., 1996; VandeWalle, 1997) has demonstrated GO is a multidimensional construct where an individual can be simultaneously high on both learning and performance goal dimensions. Researchers have further distinguished GO into a trichotomous framework by differentiating performance goals into prove and avoidance dimensions (Elliot & Church, 1997; VandeWalle, 1997). Individuals with a performance-prove GO focus on demonstrating their competence and gaining judgments from others whereas individuals with a performance-avoid GO focus on avoiding negation of their competence and avoiding negative judgments from others.

Hypothesized Relationships

As noted, the purpose of this study is to examine individual differences for certain job preferences for individuals early in their careers (i.e., college students who have not yet gained extensive work experience) to assist in guiding their job search efforts. Figure 1 shows the hypothesized model. Rationale for each relationship is provided below.

Long-term Security. We propose extraversion will be related to preferences for Long-term Security because extraverted individuals, interested in forming relationships with others (Neustadt, Chamorro-Premuzic, & Furnham 2006) may be more likely to prefer jobs in which they can form long-term relationships. By having security in their job, they may perceive they are better able to build more meaningful and enduring relationships. Also, we propose emotional stability will be negatively related to preferences for Long-term Security because those individuals who are lower on emotional stability will feel more insecure (Neustadt et al., 2006) and have a greater need, or desire, for security in their lives.

Financial Interests. Because of the achievement-motivation component of conscientiousness (Costa & McCrae, 1991, Digman, 1990) and performance-prove GO (VandeWalle, 1997), and the success orientation of openness to experience (Costa & McCrae, 1991, Digman, 1990) we posit that individuals higher on these traits will desire jobs that will likely to lead to achievement. Many individuals equate money with success (Rubinstein, 1981). Consequently, individuals seeking achievement, and in the case of performance-prove GO, seeking to demonstrate to others that they are competent (Dweck, 1986), may prefer jobs with extrinsic rewards, such as clear monetary benefits and prestigious awards.

Intrinsic or Personal Interests. Individuals orienting toward learning goals tend to be interested in developing themselves (Dweck, 1986; Nicholls, 1984). As such, we would expect them to be more likely to pursue jobs they find personally rewarding, as they may see this as leading to further personal growth. Similarly, individuals holding primarily a performance-prove GO wish to demonstrate their competence and tend to pursue tasks in which they believe they will be successful (Dweck, 1986; Nicholls, 1984). Thus, we expect they would be likely to seek jobs that match their personal interests, as they may be better at tasks they find interesting. Conversely, we would expect that individuals who tend to avoid challenge and potential failure, holding primarily a performance-avoid GO (Dweck, 1986; Nicholls, 1984), would be less likely to seek challenging jobs, regardless of their personal interest. In terms of agreeableness, we hypothesize a positive relationship with Intrinsic or Personal Interests because individuals higher on this trait have a desire to be liked (Graziano, Habashi, & Sheese, 2007). If these individuals work somewhere they truly enjoy, relating to their personal interests, they are likely to perceive they have things in common with coworkers, and therefore believe they will be liked by them. Finally, we posit that extraverted individuals will prefer intrinsically interesting jobs or organizations because they may believe they will get along with others and be more engaging when working in a place they find personally fulfilling.

Prestige. In the same manner that conscientiousness, performance-prove GO, and openness to experience related to financial interests, they are expected to relate to Prestige because of their achievement motivation and success orientation components (Dweck, 1986; Nicholls, 1984). Similarly, in the same manner that agreeable individuals would be less likely to desire financial incentives due to their modesty (Costa & McCrae, 1991), we would expect a negative relationship with preferences for prestige. However, given that individuals with high levels of emotional stability are characterized by their high self-esteem and confidence (Costa & McCrae, 1991), we would expect they would be more likely to desire jobs indicative of prestige.

Method

Participants and Procedure

Participants were 158 undergraduate students (40.5% male) from a large Southwestern university recruited through a psychology subject pool. The average age was 19 (*SD* = 1.88), and the majority of respondents reported their race/ethnicity as White (77.6%), followed by Hispanic (11.4%), Asian (5.1%), Black (2.5%), and the remainder either not reporting their race/ethnicity or reporting their race/ethnicity as something other than those listed. In terms of education level, the number of college hours completed ranged from 0 (first semester students) to 130 hours, with an average of 31.18 (*SD* = 26.59).

In order to reduce the risk of common method variance, participants completed the measures (described below) during two separate sessions. In the first session, participants completed demographic information and questionnaires assessing individual differences, including the Big Five inventory. This session was a group testing session in which participants completed paper-pencil measures. Upon completion of the first session, participants were emailed a link to an online survey assessing goal orientation and job attribute preferences. These measures were completed individually online at their own discretion. Participation in this study resulted in course credit for all participants.

Measures

Personality. The Big Five personality dimensions were assessed with the 40–item Mini–Markers (Saucier, 2002), which requires participants to indicate to what extent they believe certain traits describe themselves on a scale from 1 (*extremely inaccurate*) to 9 (*extremely accurate*). With the exception of openness to experience which obtained an unreliable alpha coefficient of .51, the coefficient alphas ranged from .71 (for agreeableness) to .86 (for conscientiousness). As discussed in greater detail in the Results section, due to the unreliability in the openness to experience scale, no analyses were performed with this variable.

Goal orientation. Goal orientation was measured using VandeWalle's (1997) Goal Orientation Inventory. Five items measured learning GO ($\alpha = .85$). A sample item is, "I enjoy challenging and difficult tasks at work where I'll learn new skills." Four items comprised the performance-prove GO scale ($\alpha = .76$). A sample item is, "I try to figure out what it takes to prove my ability to others at work." Also, four items comprised the performance-avoid GO scale ($\alpha = .73$). A sample item is, "I prefer to avoid situations at work where I might perform poorly." Scale response options ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*).

Job Preferences. To assess job preferences, we referred to the extant literature for job attributes frequently used when assessing what is important in a job. A list of 17 attributes (shown in Table 1) was obtained, taken from Gleuck (1974) and Posner (1981). Participants were asked to indicate how important each attribute would be in their decision to seek a particular job or accept a job offer on a scale of 1 (*not important at all*) to 5 (*extremely important*).

In order to form the job preferences categories we posited, a confirmatory oblique factor analysis of the 17 attributes hypothesized to load in the four factors was computed and showed marginally good fit (X^2 *(111)* = 209.41, $p < .001$, GFI = .86, CFI = .93, NNFI = .91, RMSEA = .08). Modification indices suggested cross loading three items from the Long-term Security and Prestige factors would significantly improve the fit of the model, but we opted for the more parsimonious measurement model. The four factors were intercorrelated, with Long-term Security showing the highest correlations with the other three factors (r =.65 with Financial Interests, .55 with Prestige, and .34 with Intrinsic and Personal Interests). Similarly, Financial Interests and Prestige were also highly correlated ($r = .66$). However, Intrinsic and Personal Interests showed the lowest correlations with Prestige and Financial Interests ($r = .22$ and .16, respectively). The attributes for each factor and the factor loadings are shown in Table 1.

Results

Table 2 reports descriptive statistics, intercorrelations, and reliability estimates (coefficient alphas) for the variables of interest. Five scales obtained a coefficient alpha over .80. However, because statistical evidence suggests that the items are not at least tau-equivalent, Cronbach alpha coefficients should be considered an indicator of the lower bound of scale reliabilities. Openness to experience was particularly problematic, not only because of its low reliability, but because an exploratory factor analysis demonstrated it was not unidimensional. Therefore this scale was removed from further analyses. All remaining scales were retained for analyses.

We chose to test our hypotheses using covariance structural analysis, which allows for the estimation of the relationships of multiple independent and dependent variables while taking into account covariance with other variables. The variables were modeled with LISREL 8.3. Because of sample size limitations, we performed path analysis instead of latent construct structural analysis because path analysis requires a considerably lower number of parameter estimations, which are directly related to sample size requirements. In order to take into account the covariance among independent, as well as among dependent, variables we left free for estimation all paths among the predictors as well as among the predicted variables. In the case of the dependent variables, their inter-relationships were left free, but their reciprocals were constrained to be equal.

The hypothesized model showed appropriate goodness of fit indices (X^2 *(15)* = 15.00, $p = .4515$, GFI = .98, CFI = 1.00, NNFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .00), however the modification indices suggested adding a path between extraversion and Prestige would improve the model fit. Because we could rationally explain this link, albeit after the fact, in that extraverted individuals may value job attributes concerning prestige because they may be more apt to equate prestigious organizations or jobs with opportunities for increased social interaction (or opportunities for such interaction), we opted to add this path in the final model.

Additionally, the parameter estimates revealed that some of the hypothesized relationships were not significant. Specifically, although hypothesized to be related, conscientiousness was not related to Financial Interests, extraversion was not related to either Long-term Security or to Intrinsic and Personal Interests, Agreeableness was not related to Prestige, performance-prove GO was not related to Prestige or to Intrinsic and Personal Interests, and performance-avoid GO was not related to Intrinsic and Personal Interests. The final model excluding the non-significant hypothesized paths and an additional path between extraversion and Prestige did not obtain a significantly lower fit (X^2 *(35)* = 15.25, $p = .9985$, GFI = .98, CFI = 1.00, NNFI = 1.08, RMSEA = .00). Figure 1 shows the hypothesized relationships and the final standardized coefficients for the retained paths.

As shown in Figure 1, as hypothesized, Prestige was significantly predicted by conscientiousness and emotional stability (as well as by extraversion, though this was not originally hypothesized). Additionally, as expected, preferences for Financial Interests were significantly related to agreeableness and performance-prove GO. Finally, Intrinsic and Personal Interests were significantly related to both agreeableness and learning GO, as hypothesized.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the individual differences related to preferences for job attributes in order to gain a better understanding of the contributors to individual job preferences early in one's career. This information provides a better understanding of the ways in which individuals can identify the variables that might guide their job searching efforts and informs organizations on specific ways to target recruitment efforts to enhance applicant acceptance of job offers. This is a topic that, although recommended as worthy of examination (e.g., Gati, 1986; Rynes & Lawler, 1983; Turban et al., 1993), minus a few exceptions, has not been empirically tested.

Results indicated that, at least early in one's career, learning GO is the best predictor of the preference for jobs in which there is an opportunity to learn and develop one's abilities, autonomy is emphasized, and freedom to perform the job is offered. Additionally, our results suggest that people who are organized, systematic, and concerned with details (individuals high on the personality dimension of conscientiousness) tend to value the prestige a job can offer. Similarly, it appears that people who are not stable emotionally (individuals low on the personality dimension of emotional stability) tend to be concerned with job prestige more so than individuals who are more emotionally stable. This is not to say that individuals who are conscientious are also emotionally unstable, yet it is possible as these concepts are conceptually and empirically distinct. That is, it is possible to be simultaneously high (or low) on both personality dimensions or be high on one and low on the other. What this does mean, however, is that it appears that prestige tends to be preferred by individuals high in conscientiousness as well as individuals low on emotional stability (which could be the same individuals or different individuals).

Additional findings indicated that individuals with high levels of performance-prove GO tend to prefer monetary benefits, whereas agreeable people tend to weigh intrinsic and personal interests when assessing employment benefits and tend to de-emphasize monetary benefits. Finally, extraverted persons tend to weigh prestige when thinking about the benefits a job could provide. It is also worth noting that, at least in early career stages, long-term benefits are not predicted by the individual differences we examined.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

The findings of the present study suggest that preferences for the types of jobs individuals hold early in their careers are significantly related to stable characteristics such as personality and goal orientation. On one hand, these findings suggest that individual's personality and goal orientation should be considered by career counselors and placement centers when advising individuals in their job searching efforts early in their careers. On the other hand, given that college graduates are a large section of the job applicant pool, and organizations spend millions of dollars recruiting from this population, it would be useful to know how to target these efforts. That is, because individual differences can predict the types of preferences one is likely to have at any given time, this knowledge may be useful when attracting applicants, setting up further interviews, and preparing job offers. In this manner, the organization can emphasize those characteristics that are likely to appeal to targeted applicants, thus heightening the chances for the acceptance of an offer.

Among the relationships found, two are especially relevant: the relationship of learning GO with Intrinsic and Personal Interest and the relationship between conscientiousness and Prestige. The results suggest that career counselors and placement centers should consider that individuals high in learning GO will be more likely to seek and be pleased with jobs in organizations that offer opportunities to learn and develop one's abilities, emphasizing autonomy and freedom to perform. Conversely, individuals high on conscientiousness will likely opt for higher prestige, either in the job or the organization. These results also suggest that in attracting individuals with a high learning GO, it is especially important to offer applicants opportunities to learn and use their abilities. Thus, companies that indicate their commitment to providing these types of opportunities would recruit applicants with higher levels of learning GO than companies that do not. Additionally, once an applicant high in learning GO has been selected to join a company, the likelihood of having this applicant accept the offer would be increased if the company clearly includes in the offer the training opportunities available for the candidate. Similarly, to recruit and hire individuals high in conscientiousness, it would be more effective to promote the reputation and size of the company along with the prestige of the job.

Strengths, Limitations, and Future Research

Some researchers have noted that what people value in a job can only be determined once the individual has experience. For example, Schein (1985) has noted that the variables influencing job preferences change from the early stages of one's career to later stages, at which time they begin to stabilize. This might mean that the weight of individual differences is stronger or weaker at earlier career stages. If this is the case, what people value in a job should not be very stable at early career stages. Future research needs to address this issue to test whether the communication efforts on the recruitment of individuals with job experience would have an effect on the types of individual the company attracts as applicants, as well as whether hiring efforts should be guided by the selected applicant's individual differences in order to increase the likelihood of offer acceptance.

There are several limitations of this study that should be noted. First, reliability estimates for many of our variables were somewhat low. However, as noted, because the items were not expected to be tau-equivalent, Cronbach Alpha coefficients can be considered an indicator of the lower bound of scale reliabilities. Additionally, the job preferences measures were highly intercorrelated, which could result in biased interpretations. However, this issue was addressed by performing covariance structural analysis to control for the job preference covariance. Future researchers may wish to create job preferences categories that are less related, though the extent to which this is possible has yet to be determined. It is not surprising that preferences for organizational and job attributes would be related to some degree.

Despite its limitations, this study makes several noteworthy contributions to the literature. We contribute to the recruitment and selection literatures by taking an alternative perspective and examining applicants' individual differences that contribute to preferences for certain job attributes. Specifically, we argued that, in order to better understand how organizational recruitment strategies can be most effective, and how to ensure offers will be accepted, it is important to understand what individual differences help shape one's job preferences. We examined two individual differences, Big Five personality variables and goal orientation, and found they were related to different job preferences.

Table 1

Attributes for Job Preferences scales and their confirmatory factor analysis standardized loadings

	Long-term Security	Financial Interests	Intrinsic and Personal Interests	Prestige
Job security	.82			
Medical insurance benefits	.87			
Health Services	.82			
Life insurance benefits	.87			
Retirement plans	.88			
Opportunity for rapid adv.		.63		
Salary		.79		
Frequent salary increases		.86		
High beginning base salary		.86		
Bonuses		.82		
Challenging/Interesting job			.65	
Opportunity to use abilities			.79	
Opportunity to learn			.83	
Variety of activities			.60	
Reputation of the company				.55
Job title				.84
Size of company				.66

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics, Correlations and Cronbach Alphas for the Scales

	M	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Conscientiousness	3.56	0.64	(.86)											
2. Agreeableness	3.70	0.58	.07	(.71)										
3. Extraversion	3.52	0.80	.01	.07	(.72)									
4. Emotional Stability	2.92	0.69	-.02	.06	.06	(.75)								
5. Openness to Exp.	3.45	0.45	.03	-.15	.16*	.15	(.51)							
6. Learning GO	3.98	0.69	.29**	.17*	.21**	.12	.23**	(.85)						
7. Performance-prove GO	3.66	0.73	.09	-.05	.07	-.27**	.01	.23**	(.76)					
8. Performance-avoid GO	2.87	0.70	-.12	-.21**	-.22**	-.32**	-.27**	-.38**	.33**	(.73)				
9. Intrinsic Interests	4.21	0.68	.17*	.21**	.13	-.01	.15	.62**	.20*	-.28**	(.81)			
10. Financial Interests	3.98	0.79	.08	-.18*	-.03	-.07	.09	.07	.24**	.04	.23**	(.89)		
11. Prestige	3.50	0.80	.31**	-.09	.11	-.16*	-.02	.16*	.17*	.04	.23**	.57**	(.71)	
12. Long-term Security	4.35	0.80	.13	-.02	-.02	-.06	-.02	.18*	.12	.00	.37**	.68**	.52**	(.94)

Note. $N = 158$. GO = goal orientation. Cronbach alpha coefficients are along the diagonal. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

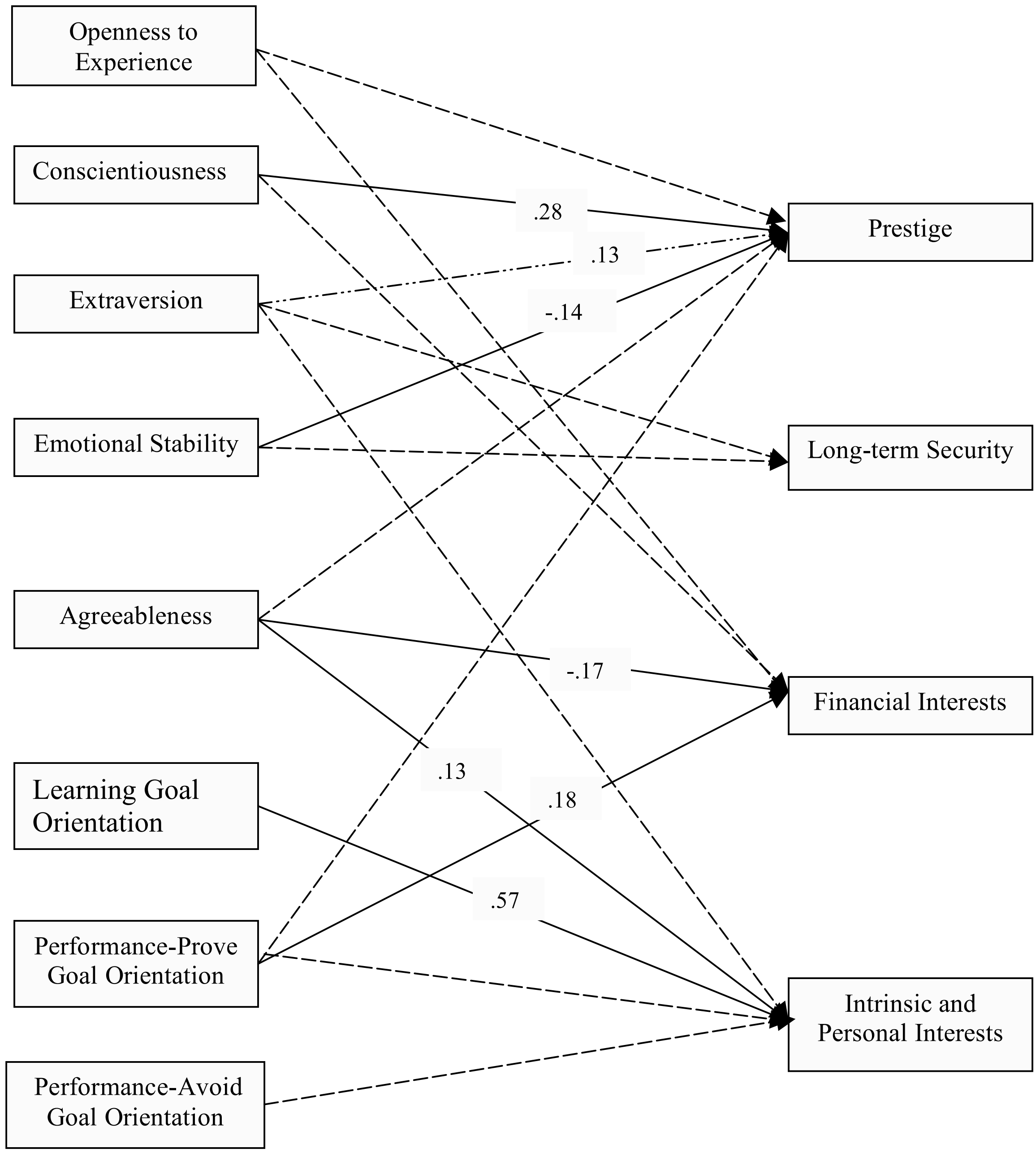

Figure 1. Hypothesized relationships with standardized significant coefficients.

Notes: Dashed lines are the hypothesized but non-significant paths, or in the case of Openness to Experience, hypothesized but not tested. Solid lines are the hypothesized paths significant at a level of 0.05. The dashed and dotted line between extraversion and Prestige is a non-hypothesized but significant relationship obtained from modification indices.

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