

**The impact that career guidance counselling has on the level of career
indecision in the career decision-making process of late adolescents in
Cape Town**

by

Bradley Charles Taylor

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ABSTRACT

Career indecision is one of the key aspects that professionals in career guidance counselling are interested in assessing. By analysing various aspects of career indecision this study was able to assess how the case of a career guidance counsellor impacted various difficulties in the career decision-making process of late adolescents. The data consisted of two homogenous groups of late adolescent learners who filled out the Career Decision-making Difficulties Questionnaire (CDDQ) on two separate occasions, roughly one month apart. One group received career guidance counselling ($N = 33$), while the control group ($N = 50$) did not receive any form of career guidance counselling in the interim. Using the CDDQ, three distinct components relating to career indecision were assessed: lack of readiness, lack of information and inconsistent information. In addition, analysis of the 10 subcategories of the CDDQ revealed that career guidance counselling had the greatest impact in reducing adolescents level of career decision-making difficulties in the major category of *Lack of Information*. The results revealed that both groups presented with similar levels of career indecision at time one, and that the level of career indecision remained constant from time one to time two for the control group. The level of career indecision experienced by the adolescents who received career guidance counselling diminished from time one to time two. This study found empirical evidence to support the notion that late adolescents who receive career guidance counselling are more likely to experience a reduction in their level of career indecision than adolescents who do not receive any form of career guidance counselling intervention.

Key words: career guidance counselling; career indecision; adolescents; narrative approach; Career Decision-making Difficulties Questionnaire (CDDQ); career choices

The transition from secondary school to tertiary level education or the job market requires adolescents to make important decisions regarding career choices. In a globalised western society the options of tertiary education and occupational choices are virtually unlimited. This variety of options means that the process of narrowing down the numerous options and selecting 'the best' one can be extremely daunting and challenging for late adolescents. This experience of having to narrow down the options can lead to career indecision, which is associated with anxiety, depression, lower life satisfaction, lower identity achievement, and maladjustment (Creed, Prideaux, & Patton, 2005). Career counsellors have a crucial role to play in this complex transitional period to help adolescents make informed decisions that reduce their level of career indecision. Numerous career counselling approaches have been developed ranging from person-job fit approaches (Brkich, Jeffs, & Carless, 2002) to postmodern constructivist approaches (Neimeyer, 1993). Research was conducted to assess whether career guidance counselling has a significant impact on reducing the level of career indecision experienced by late adolescents who are in the process of having to make various career choices.

Literature Review

In light of the school-to-work transition being described as a complex process, Borgen and Hiebert (2006) argue that the area of career counselling for adolescents is itself undergoing rapid changes. These changes are evidenced as both the expectations of adolescents, as well as educational and career opportunities are changing. Savickas (1999) argues that career counselling is crucial in this school-to-work transition because adolescents are confronted with having to readjust their perceptions of career and personal identity in order to minimise the difficulties that they may encounter during this process. Too often by focusing exclusively on academics, secondary schools neglect the need for adolescents to acquire greater competence in the knowledge and skills required for making informed career decisions (Gati, Krausz, & Osipow, 1996).

Traditionally the emphasis of career counselling focused on information dispensing from the career counsellor to the client, with little attention given to the large number of influences impacting the individual's career development (Patton, 2005). However, in today's society adolescents want to be collaboratively guided through the process of interpreting the information that they have gathered about themselves and possible career choices through various career counselling techniques.

There are consistent findings, which posit that career counselling is moderately to highly effective (Whiston, Sexton, & Lasoff, 1998). Studies have also found that individual and career classes are the most effective career counselling methods (Whiston, 2003). In contrast, there is clear evidence

that career interventions that do not involve counselling, but rather focus on simply acquiring greater knowledge of career choices or computer-based tests, are not as effective as career interventions that incorporate a counselling component (Whiston, Brecheisen, & Stephens, 2003).

Research has provided insight into the critical components of career counselling, particularly in the area of career choice and decision-making. Brown and Krane (2000) found that career counselling was most effective when it contained the following five elements: individualised interpretation and feedback; information about relevant occupations; opportunities for necessary behaviours to be modelled; helping clients make realistic career choices in light of their social network; and written homework exercises. They found a positive relationship between the effectiveness of career counselling interventions and the number of critical components included in the process. In light of these key components of career counselling it was decided to investigate the impact of a career guidance counsellor who utilizes the majority of the five above-mentioned components.

Because career indecision is arguably one of the central issues of career psychology, it was decided to measure the effectiveness of a career guidance counsellor by assessing whether there was a significant reduction in the level of career indecision experienced by late adolescents from time one to time two, roughly one month apart (Gaffner & Hazler, 2002). On the basis of prior cross-sectional findings, grade 11 and 12 was defined as an appropriate age for investigating the decision-making process of choosing a career or studying at a tertiary level (Germeijs, Verschueren, & Soenens, 2006). In grade 11 and 12 adolescents career preferences appear to change and become more realistic, whereas from grade 8 to grade 10 adolescents career preferences appear to remain constant (Harrington & Harrigan, 2006).

Career Indecision

Career indecision is a term that is commonly used when referring to career development problems, specifically problems that involve making career-related decisions (Rojewski, 1994). Research into career development has devoted much attention to the categorisation of various problems related to career indecision, suggesting that career decisions have the following features: “there is an individual who has to make a decision; there are a number of alternatives to select from; and there are many attributes that are considered in the comparison and evaluation of the various alternatives” (Gati et al., 1996, p. 511).

One of the reasons why career indecision is arguably one of the central issues in career psychology is because of the high financial and psychological costs that occur as a result of career indecision

(Gordon & Meyer, 2002). However, it is important to be aware that not all individuals who experience career indecision are necessarily anxious or uncomfortable. Furthermore, career indecision that is seen in a developmental light can serve to motivate individuals to explore numerous career options and engage in goal-directed behaviours.

In the literature on career decision-making there is often confusion regarding what constitutes career indecision versus career indecisiveness. Osipow (1999) draws a distinction between the notion of indecisiveness as a trait and career indecision. He argues that indecisiveness is defined as a chronic and permanent inability to make decisions across different situations, whereas career indecision refers to a normal transitory phase in the process of making a particular decision. However, career indecision can fluctuate from person to person depending on a number of factors, like the need for career-related information, career readiness, and self-efficacy (Creed et al., 2005). Individuals typically experience a certain level of developmental career indecision when they feel like they have limited experiences and knowledge regarding the world of work (Gordon & Meyer, 2002).

Individuals who present with career indecision should not be considered as a homogenous group, because the level of career indecision and difficulties that individuals encounter in the decision-making process is unique to each individual (Gordon & Meyer, 2002). Therefore, adopting one specific career guidance counselling approach in order to address career indecision is not always feasible, considering the diversity of career-related problems individuals face. Hence, the benefit of conducting research with a career guidance counsellor who firstly, adopts an eclectic approach to career guidance counselling and secondly, who places a great emphasis on narrative techniques.

Another approach to career counselling is narrative counselling, which differs from traditional modern approaches to career counselling in that it stems from the notion that individuals live their lives according to the stories that they tell themselves and that are told about them (Maree, Ebersohn, & Molepo, 2006). For example, a person who is rated below average on academic and sporting ability may internalise these cues as somehow suggesting that he or she is a failure. This person may then incorporate these internalised feelings of inadequacy into their own unique story of their life, in which they are viewed as being the narrator. In this way, narrative counselling helps adolescents to take ownership of their career choices and ambitions by learning the skills needed to narrate a plausible and coherent story of their life and see it through to completion. Narrative counselling also helps adolescents to identify themes and tensions in the story line in order to add meaning to their career narrative (Collin & Watts, 1996).

Narrative counselling does not seek to simply understand the events in individual's stories, but rather to ascertain how these stories are impacting the individual. However, it is not simply about telling stories, although narrative counselling allows personal experience to be expressed, rather it is the individual's construction of the content of his or her story. Specifically, it is the informational aspects of the self and the job market, and the positioning of them within the story which provides its uniqueness for each individual (Patton, 2005).

To measure the level of career indecision the researcher made use of the 34-item Career Decision-making Difficulties Questionnaire, which was developed by Gati et al. (1996), which is based on a theoretical taxonomy of difficulties encountered in the decision-making process. The CDDQ is a comprehensive measure of numerous components of career indecision (refer to appendix A to view the CDDQ).

Concluding Statements

It is clear that the transition from secondary school to tertiary education or the job market has the potential to elicit a great deal of career indecision amongst late adolescents, because they are forced to narrow down the myriad of career options in order to choose a field of study that best suits their personality, aptitude, skills and aspirations for the future. Career guidance counsellors assist adolescents in this period of transition from a variety of different approaches. However, for the purposes of this research study it was decided to assess whether an eclectic approach to career guidance counselling that incorporated principles of narrative counselling had a significant impact on reducing the level of career indecision experienced by late adolescents. The CDDQ was selected as an apparatus to measure various components of career indecision by evaluating difficulties encountered in the career decision-making process on two separate occasions roughly one month apart. The first time that participants filled out the CDDQ will be referred to as time 1; the subsequent completion of the CDDQ will be referred to as time 2. It is hypothesized that both groups will possess similar levels of career indecision at time 1, and that the level of career indecision will remain constant from time 1 to time 2 for the control group. Furthermore, it is hypothesized that the level of career indecision among participants who received career guidance counselling will be significantly less than that of the control group from time 1 to time 2.

RATIONALE FOR RESEARCH

In light of the understanding gained about career indecision it should have become apparent that there is a great need for studies to investigate the specific aspects of career indecision that are most common among late adolescents. An accurate knowledge of the common career decision-making

difficulties of late adolescents and the specific effects that these difficulties can have on their career decision-making processes can provide great insight and direction for career guidance counsellors. This knowledge could enable career guidance counsellors to readapt their methods and focus on the most relevant and essential components of career indecision. Specifically, the findings were extremely useful for Annette Miller, whose career guidance counselling practice the career guidance counselling adolescents (CGCA) came from, as they highlighted the most common difficulties in the career decision-making process that adolescents seemed to struggle with, as well as indicating particular areas of difficulty that she was able to elicit the most significant impact.

Although it could be seen as a limitation in the design of this research study that the researcher only focused on the case of one career guidance counsellor, it has the potential to offer empirical findings that could inform further research. Upon completion of this research study the researcher was able to illustrate specific areas in which the CDDQ was able to effectively measure the impact that one career guidance counsellor had on late adolescents level of career indecision. Furthermore, a deduction was made regarding the applicability and relevancy of using the CDDQ within the immediate Cape Town context, as well as to communities that have a similar demographic composition to the Cape Town sample. Future researchers should be encouraged to replicate this study with a variety of career guidance counsellors who adopt different approaches to one another in order to draw comparisons between the impact of the various career counselling approaches.

In terms of the rationale for using the selected apparatus, it was noted that the most commonly used apparatus for ascertaining individuals level of career indecision is the Career Development Questionnaire (CDQ). However, the benefit of the CDDQ is that it provides information pertaining to 10 categories of decision-making difficulties, whereas the CDQ focuses on only 5 aspects (Langley, Du Toit, & Herbst, 1996). Suffice to say that the CDDQ was able to give a more accurate understanding of where difficulties occur in the career decision-making process (Amir & Gati, 2006)

DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A two-wave, short-term longitudinal case study design was used, with the CGCA receiving the same questionnaire (namely the CDDQ) prior to receiving career guidance counselling and then roughly one month afterwards. The control group simply received the CDDQ on a one-month interval with no career guidance counselling intervention in between. The number of waves was determined largely by practical reasons (due to the time constraints of a 1-year honours program),

as well as methodological reasons (one month would allow time for participants to receive post test counselling, yet not long enough to allow changes in career indecision to be attributed to the natural process of career development).

The research design is diachronic and inherently relational, in that several variables were assessed over a one-month period by comparing pre- and post-intervention results. It was decided to only research the effectiveness of one career guidance counsellor because of the time constraints of a 1-year honours project, however future research could use the same research design and methods to compare various career guidance counselling interventions.

In the study conducted by Skorikov (2007), which also sought to measure the career indecision experienced by adolescents, he noted a significant reduction in the level of indecision over the two time measurements taken two years apart. The decline in the level of career indecision experienced by the adolescents in his study could be attributed to the natural developmental process in both identity formation (Erikson, 1968) and career development (Super, 1988) provided no control group was used in order to draw meaningful comparisons. In contrast, in this research study it was hypothesized that by reducing the time lapse between administering the CDDQ over the two time intervals, any variation in career indecision could be more accurately ascribed to the impact of the career guidance counselling intervention. This research design allowed the researcher to assess how the intervention of career guidance counselling impacted adolescent's career decision-making processes by comparing the results of the control group with those who had received career guidance counselling.

Participants

All late adolescents who received career guidance counselling with Annette Miller between April and mid September 2007 were eligible for inclusion in this study and are referred to as the career guidance counselling adolescents (CGCA) ($N=33$). In addition, any grade 11 and 12 learners attending model C schools in the Southern suburbs of Cape Town, a predominantly English-speaking region of South Africa and who had not been to any form of career guidance counselling prior to mid September were included in the study as the control group ($N=50$). Learners from the control group were selected from the same schools as many of the CGCA. This sample ($N=83$) provided a fairly strong statistical power, implying that the results held some degree of validity and significance to the hypotheses. The secondary schools represented both public and private, single sex and co-education schools. The data was obtained by either visiting the relevant schools and administering the CDDQ in the lifeskills lesson or by way of email correspondence. No learner

refused to participate in the study and a total of 212 questionnaires were filled out. However, many of these were not included in the findings as a result of incomplete answers, absenteeism or failure to complete the CDDQ at both time intervals.

Instrument

Career Decision-making Difficulties Questionnaire (CDDQ)

Throughout one's life, individuals are required to make numerous decisions. One important subset of decisions that individuals have to make at different stages in their lives involve work-related decisions pertaining to career and employment. Difficulties in career decision-making are arguably one of the most commonly identified problems in career psychology (Osipow, 1999). The 34-item CDDQ is a comprehensive measure of numerous components of career indecision (Gati, Osipow, Krausz, & Saka, 2000).

Gati et al. (1996) argued that in order to provide a unique and significant contribution to research on career indecision, a new framework was required that combined theoretical analyses and empirical tests. To do this the idea of the ideal career decision maker was conceived. Deviations from this ideal were said to either prevent the individual from making a decision or to lead to a less than optimal decision. Therefore, these deviations were described as being difficulties in career decision-making.

For the purpose of locating the difficulties individuals face when making career decisions, Gati et al. (1996) developed a taxonomy of career decision-making difficulties. The taxonomy that they proposed is based on Decision Theory, which has come to play an important role in understanding the processes involved in career decision-making. The taxonomy comprises 3 major components of difficulties encountered in career decision-making, which are further divided into 10 subcategories, each representing the mean of the responses to the items included in it. A 9-point Likert-type scale is used in the CDDQ. The arrangement and placing of these ten subcategories within the taxonomy are based on:

- (a) the stage in the decision-making process during which the difficulties typically arise, (b) the similarity between the sources of the difficulties, (c) the effects that the difficulties may have on the process, and (d) the type of intervention relevant for dealing with, minimising, or overcoming them. (Amir, Gati, & Kleiman, 2007, p. 5)

The taxonomy consists of three major components and ten subcategories:

- The first major difficulty component, *Lack of Readiness*, includes three difficulty subcategories which are typically found prior to the individual embarking on the process of making a career decision: (a) *lack of motivation* to engage in the career decision-making process, (b) *general indecisiveness* concerning all types of decision making, and (c)

dysfunctional beliefs (or irrational expectations) about career decision making. The two other major difficulty components, *Lack of Information* and *Inconsistent Information*, involve subcategories of difficulties that typically arise during the actual process of career decision-making. *Lack of Information* includes four difficulty subcategories: (a) lack of knowledge about the steps involved in the *process* of career decision-making, (b) lack of information about the *self*, (c) lack of information about the various *occupations*, and (d) lack of information about the *ways of obtaining additional information*. The major component of *Inconsistent Information* includes three difficulty subcategories: (a) *unreliable information*, which consists of difficulties related to unreliable or contradictory information; (b) *internal conflicts*, which refer to conflicts within the individual, such as contradictory preferences; and (c) *external conflicts*, which refers to conflicts involving the influence of significant others. The structure of the three major components and the 10 subcategories is summarised in Figure 1. Suffice to say that the CDDQ allows assessment of a wider range of specific difficulty categories, which are more comprehensively covered than is the case for other career indecision measures. (Amir & Gati, 2006, p. 484)

Amir et al. (2007) note that the internal consistency and the test-retest reliability, as well as the construct, concurrent, and predictive validity of the CDDQ, have been tested and supported in subsequent studies (Amir & Gati, 2006; Gati & Saka, 2001; Kleiman & Gati, 2004; Kleiman, et al., 2004; Osipow & Gati, 1998). Gati et al. (1996) report that the test-retest reliabilities of the three major components of the CDDQ, as well as for the entire questionnaire were 0.67, 0.74, 0.72, and 0.80, respectively. Furthermore, Gati et al. (1996) reported that the median Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficients of the 10-scale scores were 0.78 and 0.77 for the respective Israeli and American sample in their study. Gaffner and Hazler (2002) and Osipow (1999) support the validity and reliability of the CDDQ by saying that the CDDQ is compatible with previous research on career indecision.

The CDDQ has the potential to serve as a diagnostic instrument in individual career counselling, because it highlights areas that clients need to work on by identifying substantial problem areas. This knowledge of specific difficulties in the career decision-making process could improve the efficiency of career counselling practices. The CDDQ provides a context for how to approach each client, which enables the counsellor to better plan and guide the counselling process. Specifically, it enables counselling professionals to gain a fuller understanding of the multidimensional aspects that impact the difficulties individuals encounter in the career decision-making process (Gaffner & Hazler, 2002).

Procedure

Contact was made with Annette Miller, a career guidance counsellor in Cape Town, who practices from an eclectic approach, but places a great emphasis on narrative counselling techniques. However, it must be noted that she does not solely operate from a narrative approach, but rather

incorporates various other components, like the Myers-Briggs Inventory, aptitude tests and personality profiling. In reference to the five elements of effective career counselling practices as expounded by Brown and Krane (2000) in the literature review section, Annette Miller utilises the first four above mentioned elements, as well as intentionally setting aside time to find out the background and context of each of her clients and providing feedback sessions.

In terms of the adolescents who receive career guidance counselling, data was gathered by handing out the CDDQ to them upon arrival for their first set of tests with Annette Miller, provided that they brought a signed informed consent form from their parents. Participants parents were emailed a consent form in the week preceding their assessment with Annette Miller. Attached to the CDDQ was a section that required participants to fill in their biographical and demographic details (refer to Appendix A). At the beginning of the CDDQ was a basic description that explained how to fill in the CDDQ and what the purpose of the questionnaire was. This meant that the CDDQ was basically self-explanatory. Because the adolescents completed their involvement with Annette by the time the CDDQ was distributed at time two, email correspondence was used. A time lapse of one month allowed the CGCA enough time to complete their tests and follow-up counselling sessions with Annette Miller, and therefore the researcher was able to gauge whether the career guidance counselling had any impact on the CGCA level of career indecision.

In order to gain access to the respective schools in the study to gather the sample for the control group, a letter of approval from the Western Cape Education Department was obtained. Thereafter, Principals were approached and asked for their permission to gain access to their learners. Once all the necessary avenues for obtaining permission were granted, school counsellors and teachers were enlisted to help gather groups of learners with whom the CDDQ could be administered. Rather than asking school counsellors or teachers to gather a group of 10 or 20 adolescents, they were asked to administer the CDDQ with randomly selected grade 11 and 12 classes. The importance of having a randomly selected class was that if the teacher or school counsellor gathered a group of learners, he or she may have chosen the most intellectual or most enthusiastic learners, which would have introduced a certain level of bias to the findings.

Because the CDDQ posed no foreseen threat to adolescents psychological well-being, as well as for administrative purposes passive consent was obtained from the parents of the control group learners and assent from the adolescents when the CDDQ was handed out. The reason for obtaining passive consent rather than informed consent was that often the process of gathering data is stifled by having to continually follow up parents who have failed to return the informed consent forms.

Therefore, to avoid any delays parents were contacted directly or sent the consent form along with the school notices and parents who were NOT willing to permit their son or daughter to participate in the study were asked to complete and return the consent form within a week as an indication that they did not want their son or daughter to participate in the study. In addition, each learner from the control group was asked to give their ascent by signing the CDDQ.

The researcher visited the schools and administered the questionnaire with the adolescents during a period that did not take away valuable time from the academic syllabi. The researcher then revisited the schools and administered the same questionnaire roughly one month later, in keeping with the time lapse of the CGCA. Data from the control group was only included if the participants from the control group did not receive any form of assessment or counselling from career guidance counselling interventions between time 1 and time 2.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This research project was under the supervision of Chiwoza Bandawe, a faculty member in the Department of Psychology at the University of Cape Town, and was intended for academic research purposes, as well as to assess the effectiveness of Annette Miller's career guidance counselling practice. Because this research project was supervised by a UCT faculty member the ethics were reviewed constantly. Although the results from the questionnaires were ultimately anonymous in the presenting of the findings, in order to ensure that pre- and post-counselling results were corresponded correctly the participants names and some form of contact detail was required upon completion of the initial questionnaire. Involvement in this study was completely voluntary and had any of the participants wished to withdraw from the study at any stage, they would have been allowed to. Participants and their parents/guardians received an official letter from Annette Miller and the University of Cape Town authorising this study and briefly highlighting its objectives.

To protect the confidentiality of the participants, a numerical coding system was used to match up the two questionnaires filled out by the participants, rather than referring to them by name. The consent form alerted parents and learners to the fact that they would be required to fill in the CDDQ on two separate occasions roughly one month apart. Participants were reassured that ultimately the findings would not make reference to any of their personal details or the name of their school, but rather that the data would appear anonymous. No participant's were harmed either physically or psychologically whilst participating in this study, nor was their privacy violated.

RESULTS

By mid September 2007 a total number of 83 completed questionnaires had been received, which is a response rate of 65% (83 out of 127). Forty-four (53%) of the respondents were female, while thirty-nine (47%) of the respondents were male. Completed questionnaires only included those that were filled in at both time intervals; therefore all incomplete questionnaires were excluded prior to analysis. Due to the nature of this short-term longitudinal study many of the participants who filled out the initial questionnaire at time 1 failed to complete the questionnaire at time 2.

Although it would have been useful to have performed a confirmatory factor analysis to validate whether the 34 difficulties in the CDDQ could truly be grouped into 10 subcategories and then further grouped into 3 major categories, there is substantial evidence from previous studies that have undertaken this task and found compelling evidence to support the grouping of the 10 subcategories and further 3 major categories of difficulties as such (Amir & Gati, 2006; Amir et al., 2007; Gaffner & Hazler, 2002; Gati et al., 1996; Gati et al., 2000; Gati & Saka, 2001).

Regarding the interpretation of the results, a given difficulty is considered salient if the mean scale score is above 6.67, moderate if it is between 6.66 and 3.34 and is negligible if it is below 3.33 (refer to Appendix B for the scoring key of the CDDQ). Furthermore, a negative score for 'change' from time 1 to time 2 indicates a reduction in adolescents' difficulty in a particular aspect of the career decision-making process. There is independent data for the between groups factor (different participants in the CGCA and control groups); and dependent data for the within groups factor (repeated measures over the two time intervals).

Because there are multiple variables, prior to analysis multiple regression and correlation analysis was used to assess whether there were any outliers in the sample group that should be removed from the data set by looking at Cook's distance. Having performed a multiple regression and correlation analysis the results indicated that there were no outliers in the data and therefore no data was removed from the analysis (Cook's distance < 1.00). Descriptive statistics were obtained from the ANOVA summary table to determine the means and standard deviations of the different variables (as shown in Table 1.).

Table 1. Summary Table of Means and Standard Deviations

Career Guidance Counseling Adolescents				Control Group			
Decision Making Difficulty		Time 1	Time 2	Change	Time 1	Time 2	Change
Readiness	means	4.36	3.94	-0.42	4.44	4.66	0.22
	{STD}	{0.99}	{1.22}		{1.18}	{1.14}	
Lack of Motivation	means	3.24	3.18	-0.06	3.56	3.5	-0.06
	{STD}	{1.68}	{1.88}		{1.49}	{1.57}	
General Indecisiveness	means	5.88	5.21	-0.67	5.78	5.8	0.02
	{STD}	{1.58}	{1.85}		{2.12}	{1.77}	
Dysfunctional Beliefs	means	4.03	3.55	-0.48	4.16	4.66	0.5
	{STD}	{1.16}	{1.28}		{1.5}	{1.6}	
Lack of Information (about)	means	5.09	4.09	-1	5.3	4.98	-0.32
	{STD}	{1.59}	{1.51}		{1.58}	{1.55}	
The process	means	5.33	4.33	-1	5.72	5.06	-0.66
	{STD}	{1.74}	{2.09}		{2}	{1.62}	
Self	means	4.94	3.55	-1.39	5.18	4.86	-0.32
	{STD}	{2.01}	{1.62}		{2.17}	{1.71}	
Occupations	means	5.18	4.12	-1.06	5.38	5.1	-0.28
	{STD}	{1.89}	{1.8}		{1.96}	{2.02}	
Ways to obtain information	means	4.06	3.48	-0.58	4.44	4.58	0.14
	{STD}	{1.97}	{1.64}		{1.88}	{2.05}	
Inconsistent Information	means	4	3.61	-0.39	4.36	4.08	-0.28
	{STD}	{1.52}	{1.25}		{1.51}	{1.51}	
Unreliable Information	means	4	3.64	-0.36	4.52	3.96	-0.56
	{STD}	{1.97}	{1.41}		{2}	{1.92}	
Internal Conflicts	means	4.76	4.03	-0.73	4.44	4.48	0.04
	{STD}	{1.39}	{1.31}		{1.68}	{1.73}	
External Conflicts	means	3.45	3.39	-0.06	4.18	3.82	-0.36
	{STD}	{2.24}	{1.9}		{2.16}	{1.89}	

When assessing the proposed hypotheses, an analysis of the mean scores and standard deviations revealed that, in general, there were no notable differences between the scores obtained by the CGCA and the control group at time 1. The only difficulties where the difference between the CGCA and the control group's scores exceeded 0.5 in favour of the CGCA were *unreliable information* and *external conflicts* (0.52 and 0.73 respectively). Similarly, the mean scores of the control group revealed that there were no notable differences between the scores obtained by the control group from time 1 to time 2. The only difficulty where there was a reduction of less than -0.5 was *lack of information about the process* and *unreliable information* (-0.66 and -0.56 respectively).

Although it was important to confirm the proposed hypotheses regarding the similar level of difficulty between the CGCA and the control group at time 1 and over the two time intervals of the control group, the crux of this research study was to investigate the impact of career guidance counselling. Suffice to say that the majority of time spent recording the results and discussion will focus on the impact of career guidance counselling.

Before simply running t-tests on all 10 subcategories of career decision-making difficulties, a mixed design ANOVA with repeated measures was performed on the 3 major categories of *Readiness*, *Lack of Information* and *Inconsistent Information* to inform further investigations. The mixed design ANOVA with repeated measures was chosen as the method for analysing the 3 major categories because there was one categorical grouping variable with two levels (namely CGCA and the control group). The dependent variables with repeated measures will be each of the 3 major categories of difficulties in the career decision-making process.

Tests of homogeneity of variance for all 3 major categories using Levene's test of homogeneity of variance indicated that there was homogeneity of variance. This implies that there was no significant difference between the variance noted for each of the variables ($p > 0.05$) (Tredoux & Durheim, 2002).

In terms of *Readiness* it appeared that the interaction between the two factors was significant ($F=8.5$; $p < 0.05$). The cell mean plots revealed an interesting finding: at time 1 both groups appeared to experience similar degrees of 'readiness', however, at time 2 the control group experienced a higher level of difficulty in the major category of *Readiness*, while simultaneously the CGCA noted a distinct reduction (0.22 and -0.42 respectively).

In terms of *Lack of Information* it appeared that the interaction between the two factors was significant ($F=4.69$; $p < 0.05$) and the time related variable *Lack of Information* was significant ($F=17.66$; $p < 0.05$). The cell mean plots revealed interesting findings: at time 1 both groups appeared to experience a similar lack of information, however, at time 2 the CGCA experienced a much greater reduction in the overall difficulty level than the control group (-1.00 and -0.32 respectively).

In terms of *Inconsistent Information* it appears that the interaction between the two factors was significant ($F=5.38$; $p < 0.05$). The cell mean plots revealed interesting findings: at time 1 the CGCA appeared to exhibit a slightly lower level of 'inconsistent information' than the control group (4 and 4.36 respectively). At time 2 both groups seemed to have experienced a very similar degree of reduction in their level of *Inconsistent Information* (-0.39 and -0.28 respectively).

Although all three ANOVA tests that were carried out were significant, rather than simply performing all 10 t-tests on the 10 career decision-making difficulties, 6 specific difficulties were selected for further analysis because the changes appeared somewhat substantial. These difficulties

included: *general indecisiveness; dysfunctional beliefs; lack of information about self; lack of information about occupations; lack of information about ways of obtaining information; and internal conflicts.*

Executing numerous t-tests increases the possibility of making a type 1 error and incorrectly rejecting the null hypothesis (Howell, 2004). Furthermore, the danger of performing numerous t-tests is that one runs into the familywise error rate problem, which entails the probability of incorrectly rejecting at least one null hypothesis in a set (or family) of comparisons. In this case there was a 26% chance of making this mistake. To overcome this problem it was essential to complete a Bonferroni correction in order to alter the significance level from 0.05 to 0.0083 as a result of performing 6 independent t-tests (Tredoux & Durheim, 2002). Because the chance of encountering the familywise error rate problem was so high (26%), the results must be interpreted with some degree of caution.

Of the 6 t-tests that were conducted four of difficulties reached the adjusted level of significance ($p < 0.0083$) and possessed homogeneity of variance ($p > 0.05$ for the Levene's test). It was found that the *dysfunctional beliefs* of CGCA were significantly lower than that of the control group (3.55 versus 4.66 respectively). It was found that the *lack of information about self* of CGCA was significantly lower than that of the control group (3.55 versus 4.86 respectively). It was found that the *lack of information about occupations* of CGCA was significantly lower than that of the control group (4.12 versus 5.10 respectively). Lastly, it was found that the *lack of information about ways of obtaining information* of CGCA was significantly lower than that of the control group (3.48 versus 4.58 respectively).

DISCUSSION

It is clear from the results that, in general, there were minimal differences between the difficulty in career decision-making of the CGCA and the control group at time 1 and between the results obtained from the control group over both time intervals. However, there were a few exceptions to these findings. When discussing the reasons behind why one would expect to find differences between the level of difficulty experienced by the CGCA and the control group at time 1, specifically in reference to the way in which the CGCA exhibited less difficulty with *external conflicts* and *unreliable information*, one may typically find that parents who send their adolescents for career guidance counselling may be more conscious of talking to them about matters pertaining to the world of work and providing relevant career information. Some form of dialoguing about

careers may reduce the external conflicts, while providing relevant information may reduce the amount of unreliable information adolescents are exposed to.

The reduction in the control group's level of difficulty in *lack of information about the process* and *unreliable information* could be explained by noting that at time 2 the questionnaires were administered at a stage of the year when late adolescents are typically exposed to many career options. At this stage of the year numerous universities visited the secondary schools to provide their grade 11 and 12 learners with information about tertiary education and course requirements.

The ANOVA analyses of the 3 major categories all indicated significant interactions between whether the adolescents had received career guidance counselling or not over the two time intervals. This is consistent with previous findings (Skorikov, 2007). However, the implications of these significant findings vary. It was found that the control group experienced an increase in the level of difficulty pertaining to *Readiness*. The data collection took place in the second half of the academic year, therefore increasingly adolescents may have felt more pressurised to have some idea about what career choices interested them. With regards to the control group, *dysfunctional beliefs*, which form part of overall *Readiness*, elicited the highest increase in adolescents difficulty in career decision-making than any of the other 10 subcategories. Where the control group may have felt increasingly under prepared for making meaningful career choices as the year progressed, the CGCA received assistance, which helped them investigate and prepare for specific career options.

In terms of overall *Lack of Information* both groups experienced a reduction in the level of difficulty in career decision-making to varying degrees. As already mentioned the significant effect of the time related variable *Lack of Information* may have been as a result of increased exposure in the schools to tertiary institutions and course requirements. However, the greater level of reduction noted in the CGCA may have been caused by the fact that career guidance counsellors typically provide adolescents with vast amounts of materials and resources with regards to specific career choices.

With regards to overall *Inconsistent Information* there was a similar decrease in the level of difficulty experienced by both groups from time 1 to time 2. Although from the outset this could imply that irrespective of career guidance counselling adolescents experience a similar reduction in the level of *Inconsistent Information*, upon close examination it becomes clear that although the 'change' was very similar, the individual subcategories seem to shift in different directions. For instance, while the CGCA experienced a greater reduction in internal conflicts compared to the

control group (-0.73 versus 0.04 respectively), the control group experienced a greater reduction in external conflicts compared to the CGCA (-0.36 versus -0.06 respectively). This could imply that career guidance counselling provides adolescents with the necessary skills needed to gain better self-knowledge and insight. In terms of *external conflicts*, the CGCA adolescents may have already engaged with significant others in talking about career choices which may have lead them to getting further advice from a career guidance counsellor and so exhibited a very minimal change in the level of difficulty. Whereas, for the control group, prior to partaking in this study adolescents may have neglected dialoguing with significant others about career options. The increase in information given to them at school by tertiary institutions may have acted as a catalyst for entering into discussions about career choices, which resulted in a slightly more substantial decrease in the level of difficulty experienced by them with regards to external conflicts.

The implications of the findings regarding the four significant t-tests that were performed suggest that *dysfunctional beliefs, lack of information about self, lack of information about occupations, and lack of information about ways of obtaining information* are the primary areas of career indecision that career guidance counselling is able to elicit significantly positive changes. Three of these four difficulties in career indecision fall under the major category of *Lack of Information*, which suggests that on the whole career guidance counsellors contribute the most to reducing adolescents general lack of information about career options and making career decisions.

The lack of significance and heterogeneity of variance for some of the 10 subcategories may have been as a result of the subjective manner with which the adolescents filled out the questionnaires. A 5-item scoring system may have reduced the variance in the scores, however the researcher was obliged to use the CDDQ verbatim, which meant the use of the predetermined 9-item scale. Furthermore, since each participant filled out the CDDQ using their own subjective scoring system, totalling each participants scores or the total for each difficulty was of no relevance, rather the change and comparison between each participants scores from time 1 to time 2 was useful for meaningful analysis.

Although the findings are useful and highlighted key areas of difficulty in the career decision-making process of late adolescents, it is important to be aware that the findings derived from this study pertain to one particular career guidance counsellor. Therefore, the results cannot be taken to be universally applicable to all forms of career guidance counselling practices.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From conducting research into the effectiveness of the case of a career guidance counsellor the following recommendations are made:

The effectiveness of using of the CDDQ in the practice of a local career guidance counsellor in determining late adolescents' level of difficulties in career decision-making means that further use of the CDDQ should be encouraged.

Further research could be conducted using the CDDQ with different population groups and with career guidance counsellors who operate from a variety of career guidance counselling approaches in order to draw more extensive comparisons. In addition, more variables, like sex, age, gender and parent's marital status, could be introduced as the focus of future studies in order to draw further comparisons.

The research design and methodology could also be replicated in future studies to compare the difficulties in the decision-making process of late adolescents with those in other developmental stages.

Future studies could look at comparing the effectiveness of the CDQ, CDDQ and other prominent means of measuring crucial aspects of career indecision.

CONCLUSION

Considering the responses of late adolescents who either received career guidance counselling versus those who did not, it is evident that the career guidance counselling adolescents experienced a greater overall reduction in their level of difficulty in the career decision making process than those who did not attend career guidance counselling. Specifically, analysis of the case of a career guidance counsellor indicated that reducing the lack of information that adolescents experienced was the primary area where career guidance counselling made a difference. It is essential that the difficulties that have been raised by the respondents be taken seriously as the difficulties experienced by late adolescents affects their level of career indecision and ability to make informed career choices as they progress towards entering the world of work.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The researcher would like to thank Dr Chiwoza Bandawe for all the time and energy he put into supervising this study. Annette Miller must be thanked for allowing the researcher to conduct research at her practice and for providing the researcher with encouragement and direction. The researcher is grateful to all the late adolescents who participated in this study by completing the questionnaires.

NOTES

1. Access to the raw data is available from the author on request.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A Career Decision-Making Difficulties Questionnaire

Participant's details

Name: _____

Email: _____ Fax: _____

Age: _____ Gender: _____ Grade: _____

School: _____ Home Language: _____

Parent(s) Marital Status: Married _____ Divorced _____ Separated _____

Date of test with Annette Miller _____

Have you considered what field you would like to major in or what occupation you would like to choose?

Yes / No

If so, to what extent are you confident of your choice?

Not confident at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Very confident

Next, you will be presented with a list of statements concerning the career decision-making process. Please rate the degree to which each statement applies to you on the following scale:

Does not describe me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Describes me well

Circle 1 if the statement does not describe you and 9 if it describes you well. Of course, you may also circle any of the other numbers.

Please do not skip any question.

1. I know that I have to choose a career, but I don't have the motivation to make the decision now ("I don't feel like it").

Does not describe me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Describes me well

2. Work is not the most important thing in one's life and therefore the issue of choosing a career doesn't worry me much.

Does not describe me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Describes me well

3. I believe that I do not have to choose a career now because time will lead me to the "right" career choice.

Does not describe me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Describes me well

4. It is usually difficult for me to make decisions.

Does not describe me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Describes me well

5. I usually feel that I need confirmation and support for my decisions from a professional person or somebody else I trust.

Does not describe me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Describes me well

6. I am usually afraid of failure.

Does not describe me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Describes me well

7. I like to do things my own way.

Does not describe me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Describes me well

8. I expect that entering the career I choose will also solve my personal problems.

Does not describe me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Describes me well

9. I believe there is only one career that suits me.

Does not describe me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Describes me well

10. I expect that through the career I choose I will fulfill all my aspirations.

Does not describe me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Describes me well

11. I believe that a career choice is a one-time choice and a life-long commitment.

Does not describe me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Describes me well

12. I always do what I am told to do, even if it goes against my own will.

Does not describe me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Describes me well

13. I find it difficult to make a career decision because I do not know what steps I have to take.

Does not describe me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Describes me well

14. I find it difficult to make a career decision because I do not know what factors to take into consideration.

Does not describe me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Describes me well

15. I find it difficult to make a career decision because I don't know how to combine the information I have about myself with the information I have about the different careers.

Does not describe me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Describes me well

16. I find it difficult to make a career decision because I still do not know which occupations interest me.

Does not describe me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Describes me well

17. I find it difficult to make a career decision because I am not sure about my career preferences yet (for example, what kind of a relationship I want with people, which working environment I prefer).

Does not describe me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Describes me well

18. I find it difficult to make a career decision because I do not have enough information about my competencies (for example, numerical ability, verbal skills) and/or about my personality traits (for example, persistence, initiative, patience).

Does not describe me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Describes me well

19. I find it difficult to make a career decision because I do not know what my abilities and/or personality traits will be like in the future.

Does not describe me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Describes me well

20. I find it difficult to make a career decision because I do not have enough information about the variety of occupations or training programs that exist.

Does not describe me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Describes me well

21. I find it difficult to make a career decision because I do not have enough information about the characteristics of the occupations and/or training programs that interest me (for example, the market demand, typical income, possibilities of advancement, or a training program's prerequisites).

Does not describe me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Describes me well

22. I find it difficult to make a career decision because I don't know what careers will look like in the future.

Does not describe me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Describes me well

23. I find it difficult to make a career decision because I do not know how to obtain additional information about myself (for example, about my abilities or my personality traits).

Does not describe me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Describes me well

24. I find it difficult to make a career decision because I do not know how to obtain accurate and updated information about the existing occupations and training programs, or about their characteristics.

Does not describe me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Describes me well

25. I find it difficult to make a career decision because I constantly change my career preferences (for example, sometimes I want to be self-employed and sometimes I want to be an employee).

Does not describe me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Describes me well

26. I find it difficult to make a career decision because I have contradictory data about my abilities and/or personality traits (for example, I believe I am patient with other people but others say I am impatient).

Does not describe me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Describes me well

27. I find it difficult to make a career decision because I have contradictory data about the existence or the characteristics of a particular occupation or training program.

Does not describe me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Describes me well

28. I find it difficult to make a career decision because I'm equally attracted by a number of careers and it is difficult for me to choose among them.

Does not describe me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Describes me well

29. I find it difficult to make a career decision because I do not like any of the occupation or training programs to which I can be admitted.

Does not describe me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Describes me well

30. I find it difficult to make a career decision because the occupation I am interested in involves a certain characteristic that bothers me (for example, I am interested in medicine, but I do not want to study for so many years).

Does not describe me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Describes me well

31. I find it difficult to make a career decision because my preferences can not be combined in one career, and I do not want to give any of them up (e.g., I'd like to work as a free-lancer, but I also wish to have a steady income).

Does not describe me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Describes me well

32. I find it difficult to make a career decision because my skills and abilities do not match those required by the occupation I am interested in.

Does not describe me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Describes me well

33. I find it difficult to make a career decision because people who are important to me (such as parents or friends) do not agree with the career options I am considering and/or the career characteristics I desire.

Does not describe me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Describes me well

34. I find it difficult to make a career decision because there are contradictions between the recommendations made by different people who are important to me about the career that suits me or about what career characteristics should guide my decisions.

Does not describe me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Describes me well

Finally, how would you rate the degree of your difficulty in making a career decision?

Low 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 High

Appendix B
Scoring of the CDDQr (34 items)

The Scale	Mean of items

<u>Readiness</u>	
Rm-Lack of motivation	1-3
Ri-General indecisiveness	4-6

Rd-Dysfunctional beliefs	8-11
<u>Lack of Information about</u>	
Lp-The stages of the cdm process	13-15
Ls-Self	16-19
Lo-Occupations	20-22
La-Ways of obtaining additional inform.	23-24
<u>Difficulties related to Inconsistent Information</u>	
Iu-Unreliable information	25-27
Ii-Internal conflicts	28-32
Ie-External conflicts	33-34

Note: items 7 and 12 are validity items
(item 7 is expected to be high > 4; item 12 is expected to be low <5)

Major categories

Readiness $(R_m+R_i+R_d)/3$
 Lack of Information $(L_p+L_s+L_o+L_a)/4$
 Inconsistent Information $(I_u+I_i+I_e)/3$

Total Mean of the ten scales --
 $(R_m+R_i+R_d+L_p+L_s+L_o+L_a+I_u+I_i+I_e)/10$

Copyright (c) 2000-2007 Itamar Gati and Samuel Osipow. All rights reserved.
 ANNETTE MILLER MA H.E.D.
 CAREER DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANT
 REGISTERED PSYCHOMETRIC COUNSELLOR : HPCSA PMT 0039764

CONSULTING ADDRESS: 24 ROSEVILLE ROAD CLAREMONT 7708

TELEPHONE / FAX NUMBER: 021 6716057

Dear Parent

Bradley Taylor, a Psychology Honours student at UCT, is currently doing research regarding the value of career assessments for his Honours thesis.

He has asked to use my practice and some of my clients for the purpose of gathering the data for his research. I, personally, am happy to allow him to do so in the interests of furthering academic knowledge and in a desire to keep making my practice more effective.

His research would involve asking your child to complete TWO short questionnaires for him. One would be completed when they come to me for their testing session, and one will be emailed to them about a month after they have been through the complete assessment process with me.

The questionnaire will, in no way, violate their dignity or privacy. It relates solely to career choice issues. Their names will only be used by Bradley in order to match up the pre- and post- test. Otherwise the entire research, data collected, and resultant findings will be anonymous.

If you are NOT happy to allow your son/ daughter to be a respondent to the questionnaire, would you please indicate this to us when they come for their assessment.

Yours sincerely

ANNETTE MILLER

Annette Miller MA HED
Career Development Consultant
24 Roseville Road, Claremont 7708
Tel & Fax: 021- 671 6057

Itamar Gati, Ph.D.
School of Education, Hebrew University, Jerusalem, ISRAEL

e-mail: itamar.gati@huji.ac.il

Fax: (+972)-2-5882084

If you agree to the following conditions, please sign the attached statement, indicate the number of copies you desire to reproduce for your research, and mail 2 copies to me at the above address. When I receive the signed copies I will send you a copy of the CDDQ along with your copy of the signed permission slip that will allow you to reproduce the instrument. Please limit requests to no more than 1000 at a time. If you need more, please let me know. Permission expires one year after it is granted.

Note: The instrument must be reproduced in its entirety. Permission to reproduce separate items is not granted.

1. I agree to reproduce the instrument in its entirety with no changes in content of format.
2. I agree to include the copyright statement shown on the instrument. Please add that it has been reproduced with the permission of the authors.
3. I will share the results of my research with Gati and Osipow and provide specific data for secondary analysis with the understanding that appropriate credit will be cited.
4. This permission to reproduce is limited to this occasion; permission expires in one year from the date of the permission letter; permission is limited to 1000 copies; future reproduction requests must be specifically and separately requested.
5. Foreign translations must be back translated into English and approved by Osipow or Gati.

I agree to the above conditions:

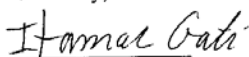
Name: Bradley Taylor Date: 19 April 2007 e-mail: taylorm@yebo.co.za

Signature: BRADLEY TAYLOR Fax: +2721 686 8238 Tel: +2721 689 2344

Address: 30 Bonair Road Rondebosch, Cape Town, South Africa, 7700

Number of copies: 200

Sincerely,


 Itamar Gati, Ph.D.

Permission is not granted without the signature of Itamar Gati in this space.

Mr Bradley Taylor
 30 Bonair Road
 RONDEBOSCH
 7700

Dear Mr B. Taylor

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: CAREER INDECISION.

Your application to conduct the above-mentioned research in schools in the Western Cape has been approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Principals, educators and learners are under no obligation to assist you in your investigation.
2. Principals, educators, learners and schools should not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.
3. You make all the arrangements concerning your investigation.
4. Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
5. The Study is to be conducted from **23rd May 2007 to 21st September 2007.**
6. No research can be conducted during the fourth term as schools are preparing and finalizing syllabi for examinations (October to December 2007).
7. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey, please contact Dr R. Cornelissen at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number.
8. A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the Principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
9. Your research will be limited to the following schools: **Rondebosch Boys High, Rustenburg Girls High, S.A. College High, Wynberg Boys High, Wynberg Girls High and Westerford High.**
10. A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Education Research.
11. The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:

**The Director: Education Research
 Western Cape Education Department
 Private Bag X9114
 CAPE TOWN
 8000**

We wish you success in your research.

Kind regards.

Signed: Ronald S. Cornelissen
 for: **HEAD: EDUCATION**
DATE: 23rd May 2007

Letter to Parent

25 May, 2007

RE: Career Guidance Counselling Research Study

Dear Parent(s)

I am presently studying my honours in psychology at UCT and am working alongside Annette Miller in researching my thesis, which aims at assessing the effectiveness of career guidance counselling interventions. In order to do this I am asking whether your son/daughter would be willing to fill out a standard questionnaire that deals with decision-making in the area of career choices. I will hand out the questionnaire on the first day that they arrive to do the various psychometric tests with Annette, as well as a subsequent questionnaire which I will emailed/posted to your son/daughter roughly one month after filling out the initial questionnaire.

Although the results from these questionnaires will ultimately be anonymous when I present my findings, in order to ensure that I correspond my pre- and post-counselling results correctly I will require your son/daughter's name and some form of contact detail on the initial questionnaire. However, I want to assure you that their responses will be confidential and strictly reserved for my eyes only. Should you be interested in my findings at the end of November, please do not hesitate to contact me. I would be more than willing to share my results. I would also like to mention that involvement in this study is completely voluntary; your son/daughter may withdraw from participating in this study at any stage. Thank you for your willingness to participate.

Are you happy with these terms and willing to allow your son/daughter to participate?

Yes No

Signature of parent: _____

Signature of son/daughter: _____

Name of son/daughter: _____

Dr Chiwoza Bandawe

chiwoza.bandawe@uct.ac.za

021 650 3435

Bradley Taylor

brad.taylor.c@gmail.com

0845864410

Kind Regards,

Bradley Taylor

Chiwoza Bandawe

Letter to principal

25 May, 2007

RE: Career Guidance Counselling Research Study

Dear Sir/Madam

I am presently studying my honours in psychology at UCT and am working alongside Annette Miller, a registered career guidance counsellor, in researching my thesis, which aims at assessing the effectiveness of career guidance counselling interventions. In order to do this I am asking whether you would be willing to permit me to gain access to the boarding house and/or career guidance counsellor in order to administer a standardised questionnaire on two separate occasions that will take approximately 15 minutes with roughly 20 grade 11/12 learners.

It is imperative that I am able to administer the second questionnaire with the exactly the same group of learners roughly one month after administering the first questionnaire. Although the results from these questionnaires will ultimately be anonymous when I present my findings, in order to ensure that I correspond these two questionnaires correctly I will require the learners names and some form of contact detail on the initial questionnaire. If you are willing to permit me to conduct these questionnaire's I can set up times and dates with the boarding house master or respective teachers. I want to assure you that there will be no mention of the name of the school or any of the learner's particulars in my final written report. Lastly, I will send each of the learners a consent form that needs to be filled out by their parent(s)/guardian prior to participation in my study.

Are you happy with these terms and willing to allow some of your learners to participate in my study, provided that their parent(s)/guardians consent to their participation?

Yes No

Signature of principal: _____

Dr Chiwoza Bandawe

chiwoza.bandawe@uct.ac.za

021 650 3435

Bradley Taylor

brad.taylor.c@gmail.com

0845864410

Kind Regards,

Bradley Taylor

Chiwoza Bandawe

CAREER DECISION MAKING DIFFICULTIES

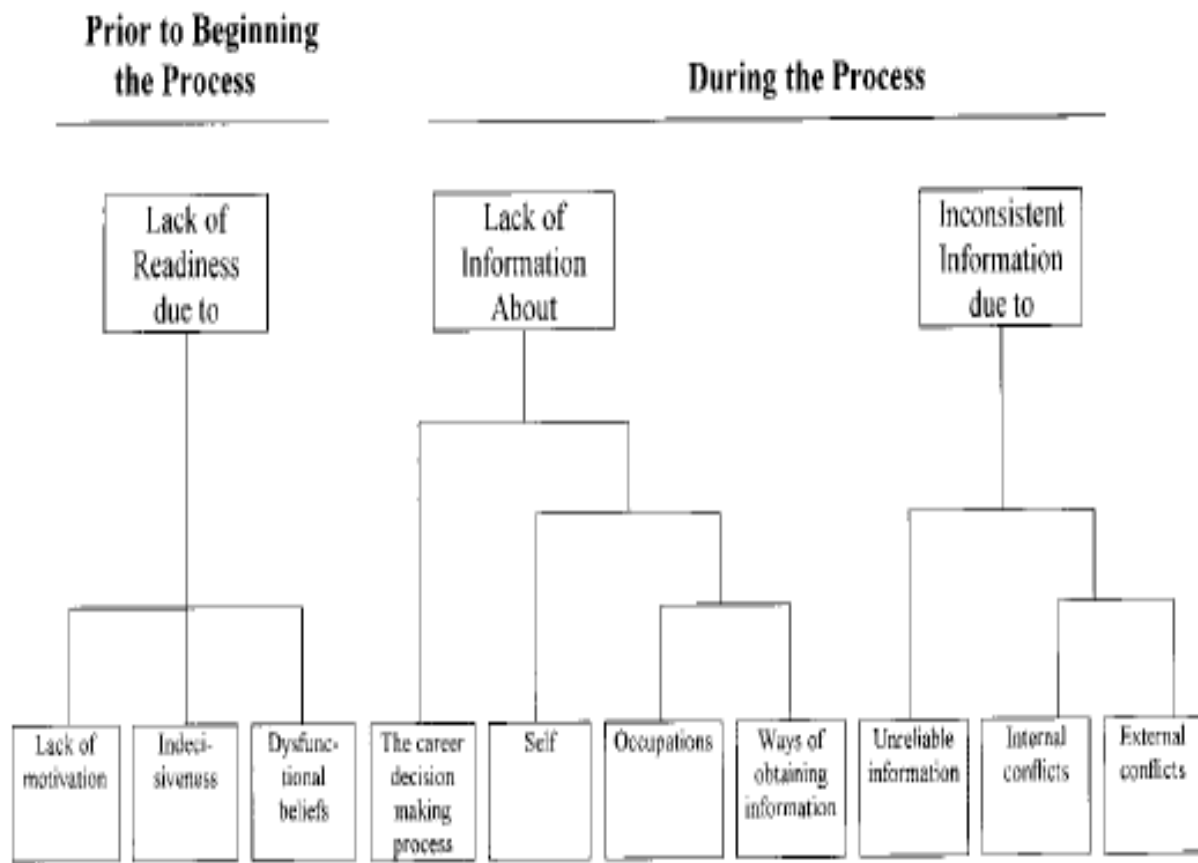


FIG. 1. The theoretical taxonomy of career decision-making difficulties (Gati, Krausz, & Osipow, 1996).