CPA Counsellor

Newsletter of Counselling Psychology Section of the
Canadian Psychological Association

Message from the Chair

As recently elected Chair of the Counselling Psychology Section, I am pleased to be writing my first "message from the chair." Over the past few years, the section has grown and become increasingly active both within and outside of the CPA, and I feel privileged to take the helm at this time. I want to express my gratitude to the outgoing members of the executive, Vivian Lalande, Shelley Russell-Mayhew and Reana Saraceni, and outgoing editor of the section newsletter, Olga Sutherland, for the dedicated service they have provided to the section in helping us to get to where we are now. I am also pleased to introduce the current executive and additional officers who, besides myself,

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consist of Sharon Cairns, past chair; Helen Massfeller, secretary-treasurer; Colleen Haney and Patrice Keats, Members at Large; Lara Cross, Student Representative; Sasha Lerner, Web-master; and Michael Huston, Newsletter Editor.

We have an exciting upcoming year for the profession of counselling psychology in Canada. First, under the leadership of Ada Sinacore, the Inaugural Canadian Counselling Psychology conference will be held in Montreal on November 19-21. Building on the definition of counselling psychology that was adopted by our section in 2009, the ICCP conference will discuss the current state of the discipline and conceptualize future directions for growth. This is an opportunity for all our members to have a role in shaping the future of the profession of counselling psychology in Canada, and I encourage everyone who has not yet decided to attend to consider doing so. Additionally, I envision the outcomes and recommendations generated by the conference as providing a focus for the Section Executive in the coming years.

The section executive is currently working on putting together a strong program of section-sponsored speakers and offerings for the 2011 CPA conference in Toronto. Although it seems a long way off, the November 15 deadline for submitting proposals for presenting at the conference is rapidly approaching, and I encourage everyone to think about submitting. I'd particularly like to highlight the fact that we offer a number of prizes each year for the best student posters, and that presenting posters at CPA is a great way for students to get experience with presenting at conferences in a friendly atmosphere.

On that note, I would like to congratulate the section award winners from this past year's CPA conference in Winnipeg: Lara Cross, University of New Brunswick (Best Master's Thesis); Gena Davies, Trinity Western University (Best Masters Poster); Arlene Simpson, University of Victoria (Best Masters Poster); Emily Koert, University of British Columbia (Best Doctoral Poster). They have each provided a summary of their award-winning work in this newsletter.

I hope to see many of you in Toronto, and invite you to

attend the section Annual General Meeting and our reception, both of which are open to all members of our section.

Respectfully,

José Domene
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Envisioning our future: An overview of a Counselling Psychology student symposium at the 2010 CPA conference

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In the past few years, the counselling psychology program at McGill has seen a number of changes, such as curriculum reformation, hiring of new faculty members, and the site visit for the APA/CPA accreditation. During this process, we as students continuously found ourselves in lively discussions about our professional identity. Questions that stimulated such discussion included: What is the history and current state of counselling psychology (CNPSY) training in Canada? What does ideal CNPSY training within our unique Canadian context look like? What would we like to see in the future for our profession? These dialogues resulted in a student-led symposium entitled "Envisioning our future: Counselling Psychology students" (Wada et al., 2010) at the 2010 CPA convention in Winnipeg, involving eleven counselling psychology students and a recent PhD graduate from four Canadian universities.

In the first presentation, Lerner, Hutman, and Cross (2010) provided a historical background of the profession and discussed how Canada's unique context shapes the profession. Second, Wada, Titus, and Morrison (2010) examined internal and external factors in graduate training in Canada that facilitate or hinder students' professional identity development. Third, Kerner and Mikhail's presentation (2010) on accreditation was particularly timely in light of the APA's upcoming withdrawal from accreditation of Canadian programs. In the fourth presentation, Jaghori, Genovese, and Rostam (2010) discussed the impact of the profession's minority status on students' experiences and identity development. Lastly, Kassan,

a recent graduate of McGill and now a visiting assistant professor at UBC, provided concluding comments from the standpoint of an early career professional.

Upon reflecting on the entire symposium, far-reaching ramifications of accreditation issues have become apparent. As Kerner and Mikhail (2010) reported, the insufficient number of CNPSY training opportunities not only demonstrates the profession's minority status within the discipline of psychology in Canada, but also perpetuates this minority standing. As of July 2010, only four CNPSY doctoral programs and three pre-doctoral internship sites were CPA-accredited, as opposed to 25 clinical psychology doctoral programs and 24 internships sites. The situation may become even more serious in the advent of the upcoming withdrawal from APA accreditation.

Furthermore, in reviewing accreditation documents and a report from the Counselling Psychology Section Accreditation Standards Review Committee (Sinacore & Kerner, 2010), Kerner and Mikhail (2010) discussed how the current CPA accreditation standards do not account for the unique values of counselling psychology and instead reflect the values of clinical psychology, thereby assuming uniformity across the disciplines of professional psychology. This dominance of clinical psychology values underlying the CPA accreditation standards appears to be influencing the CNPSY curricula. For example, in their review of the CNPSY program curricula in Canada, Wada et al. (2010) observed that courses such as vocational psychology, multiculturalism, and social justice are not required for many programs in Canada, even though these courses represent the history and core values of the profession. Since these courses are not required for CPA accreditation, they remain vulnerable to being eliminated at a time of increased pressure from universities to shorten doctoral programs.

One of the important implications of these accreditation and curriculum issues for students is the minority experience described by Jaghori et al. (2010). They poignantly reported the various challenges that students face when trying to integrate CNPSY values in their research and clinical practice in settings that may not necessarily support such endeavors.

Despite these concerns, the symposium pointed to some exciting developments. The first of such developments is the official definition of counselling psychology adopted by CPA in 2009 (Beatch et al., 2009; also discussed in Lerner et al., 2010). As this definition was tailored to our unique Canadian context, it will likely be a cornerstone for further developing a coherent identity and national unity

within the profession. Additionally, individual programs and training sites can incorporate this definition into their program information and websites, and use it when hiring new faculty members and seasonal instructors to communicate their organizational values.

Furthermore, the Inaugural Canadian Counseling Psychology Conference scheduled in November 2010 in Montreal will likely be a historical milestone for the CNPSY in Canada. As Lerner et al. (2010) pointed out, counselling psychology conferences (e.g., the 1964 Greystone Conference; the recent 2008 International Counseling Psychology Conference in Chicago) have delineated future directions for the field and have provided momentum for further growth within the profession in the United States. Thus, the ICCP conference may incite similar advances in the Canadian context.

What is particularly significant is that students are involved in all of these developments. This reflects the fact that students embrace their emerging professional identity and are prepared to play a role in the shaping of the profession's future. The symposium closed with encouraging words from then-CPA section president Dr. Sharon Cairns, who was in the audience, "it is truly an exciting time to be a counselling psychologist in Canada". We agree with Dr. Cairns, and have written this newsletter article in hopes that it will stimulate further student discussion on the current state and the future of our profession.

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A Brief Summary of "The Counselling Alliance: Client Categorization and Rating of Helpful Factors"

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The Counselling Alliance: Client Categorization and Rating of Helpful Factors

While a wealth of previous research has shown the therapeutic alliance to be the strongest predictor of a positive outcome for counselling and psychotherapy (Horvath & Symonds, 1999), there exists a significant lack of research that *directly* accesses the client's perception of what factors contribute to the development and maintenance of the alliance. Clients have been asked to endorse, deny, or rate items and concepts generated by clinicians and researchers based on the professional's conceptualization of the alliance. However, due to the covert nature of the alliance as the subjective experience of both the clinician and the client, the best way to access the client's perspective is to ask the client. The present study relates to a previous line of research initiated by Bachelor (1995) and continued by Mohr and Woodhouse (2001); Bedi, Davis, & Arvay, (2005); Bedi, Davis, & Williams, (2005), and Bedi, (2006). These studies explored the client's perception of themes and characteristics pivotal to the alliance by directly

soliciting client perceptions.

Method

In the present study, participants who were currently or recently involved in counselling, organized 125 client-generated helpful factors into thematic categories; each category was composed of statements participants viewed as relating to a similar concept. Participants then gave each category a title. The 125 statements were collected in a previous study where participants were asked to identify the three most helpful factors that led to a strong therapeutic alliance (Bedi & Duff, 2008). These participants were free to include any factor that they believed was helpful, regardless of its nature – concrete or abstract, observable or unobservable. This design facilitated the possible inclusion of factors not previously considered in previous research or alliance theory. Additionally, the current study included counselling clients in the analysis of data. The client's "voice" was thereby included in the generation and organization of factors, as well as in the vocabulary used to title the categories.

Multi-dimensional scaling (MDS) and hierarchical cluster analysis (hCA) were used to identify the most representative categorization scheme, across participants, and The Concept Systems (2008, Version 4) statistically identified client-generated category titles for each category. Researchers selected the most representative title from the list for each category.

Results and Discussion

Participants were asked to rate the client-identified factors for relative helpfulness in alliance formation on a 5-point likert scale. The ten most highly rated factors included the counsellor's ability to listen, acceptance of the client by the counsellor, the counsellor's ability to encourage the client to open up, the counsellor posing critical questions that helped the client identify the problem, the counsellor conveying a non-judgmental and supportive attitude, confidentiality, perceived counsellor sincerity and approachableness, familiarity of the counsellor with subject matter, use of body language to communicate that the counsellor is comfortable, and treating the client as a normal intelligent person rather than a condition or problem. Also included was the client's "ability to open up, trust and talk" to the counsellor.

All of these factors are very relational and familiar to Rogerian or client-centered counsellors who emphasize the critical need for clients to experience unconditional positive regard and empathy from their therapist (Rogers, 1957). These factors are also congruent with Bordin's (1979) discussion of the role of the bond between the client and the clinician in developing a strong therapeutic alliance which he

suggests, "may often be the main vehicle of change" (p. 255). Ratings of helpful factors by clients in this study show that clients highly value the respect and acceptance of their clinician.

Using MDS and hCA, a 14 category solution was determined to be the best representation, across participants, of the 125 client-identified helpful factors. In descending order of mean helpfulness ratings, these categories are: Emotional Support ("empathetic", "non-judgmental", "supportive"), Non-judgmental ("non-judgmental", "stressed that I was not crazy even when I believed I was"), Effective Listening ("did not interrupt with analytical questions", "expressed interest", "smiled", "accepted"), Body Language ("was friendly", "treated me as an intelligent and normal person", "saw me as an individual"), Directed Process Appropriately ("return to the underlying issues", "look at what I felt was important", "facilitated my thought process", "allowed me to find my own answers"), Approachable ("never showed shock, disgust", "made him/herself very approachable", "created an environment where I could express myself"), Attentiveness ("took client's perceptions and beliefs at face value", "listening", "asking questions", "thinking carefully about what client shares"), Interpersonal Demeanour (included references to genuine smiling and treating client like a unique and equal person), Planning and Approach (ideas included knowing when to challenge the client and the counsellor being honest and straight forward in his/her reactions), Availability (statements describe the counsellor doing "extra legwork', the counsellor accommodating the client's needs regarding session times and session frequency, being able to contact counsellor when distressed, as well as phone calls and emails between sessions), Good Boundaries (" shared idiosyncrasies", "ability to laugh and joke", "remain professional and not too personal", " dressed professionally"), Provided Resources and Homework (described factors such as the counsellor giving the client ideas on how to complete the homework, help with forms, providing information about resources or contacting other professionals, and suggesting authors and books), Sharing the Counsellor's Personal Experiences (statements referred to the counsellor revealing a struggle with the same issues as client, and the counsellor telling personal stories about self, family, and others), and Ability to Relate (included references to office décor, confidentiality, going beyond duties to show sincere caring, giving reassurance).

The results of this study support previous research (Bachelor, 1995; Mohr & Woodhouse, 2001; and Bedi, 2006) in investigating the client's subjective perspective of the therapeutic alliance. Clients in these studies identified factors that are not usually included in alliance theory, including the counsellor's sense of humour, office décor, counsellor's age and

gender, offering food and/or drinks, contact outside the counselling session in the form of phone calls or emails, referrals to other community services, and suggestions for helpful materials.

The studies also show that not all factors identified as helpful are valued in the same way by all clients. Some clients find some of these factors helpful while other clients indicate that these same factors may in fact hinder the alliance: there is no ideal alliance that will be equally effective for all clients. Further, these studies provide client validation for existing alliance theories that focus on the counsellor communicating "unconditional positive regard" for the client (Rogers, 1957), the client feeling understood by the counsellor and having a sense of working with the counsellor in a collaborative effort (Luborsky, 2000); and the "goodness of fit of the respective personalities of the patient and the therapist" (Bordin, 1979, p. 252).

Limitations

This study experienced some methodological limitations in not being able to use the same participants for each step. Also, some of the written statements were somewhat ambiguous. In order to increase the clarity of the statements and increase their validity, it would likely be helpful for future researchers to review the statements with participants. Further, the sample had a large proportion of university students and individuals with post-secondary education, proportions not reflective of the general counselling population, thereby limiting generalizability.

Future Research

A more comprehensive view of the client's perspective of the alliance would likely be revealed if clients were asked to include factors that contributed to a rupture in, or termination of the alliance. Clients could also be asked what factors enabled them to rebuild a faltering or weak alliance. Much thoughtfulness and skill is required to construct research designs that include avenues for feedback to validate and refine both our theories and therapies. It is hoped that future research will continue to address the need to hear the client's 'voice' more clearly in order to better understand and develop a theory of the therapeutic alliance that will support both the counsellor and the client in working toward the client's personal goals.

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Investigating Positive Psychology Approaches in Case Management and Residential Programming With Incarcerated Youth

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Secure custody facilities are often viewed as "last resorts" for youth with complex of behaviour and emotional disorders, and the youths involved in the justice system tend to present with unmet emotional and physical needs (Maschi, Hatcher, Schwalbe, & Rosato, 2008). Mental health programming in justice settings emphasize the identification of risk and need factors, and do so primarily through standardized assessment tools to evaluate the possibility of recidivism. Stemming from a medical model of mental health, risk-need approaches focus on behavioural and emotional disorders as individual pathologies, and utilize interventions designed to reduce problem behaviours and alleviate negative symptoms (Morrison, Kirby, Losier & Allain, 2009).

However, recent evidence-based practice research asserts the importance of moving beyond a problem-focused approach to embrace a more positive view of mental health known as positive psychology. This perspective frames mental health as much more than absence of mental illness, requires service providers to focus not only on problems, but also on youth strengths and resiliency, wellness, hope, self-esteem, self-determination (Seligman, 2008). Integrating a strengths-based model of positive psychology into assessment has shown promising outcomes for youth struggling with emotional and behavioural disorders, possibly because positive psychology encourages identification and promotion of youths' strengths and capacity for change (Amendola & Scozzie, 2004).

Although youth development approaches are popular, there is limited research on the application of positive psychology to work with youth with complex behavioural and emotional disorders within the justice system (Bradshaw et al., 2008). The literature reveals 19 themes that can be implemented into care plans. They cluster into three areas of practice: First, protocols and programming "as a whole" should include (a) structured prosocial processes/activities (Cox, 2008); (b) individualized person-centered care (Rogers, 1961); (c) opportunities to explore strengths/interests/resources (Rose, 2006) and; (d) undergo continuous evaluation for improvement (Leadbeater, Marshall, & Banister, 2007). Second, internal strengths and resources nurtured by participation in protocols and programming should include: (a) self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997); (b) resiliency (Brendtro, Brokenleg, & Van Bockern, 2005); (c) autonomy (Deci & Ryan, 2000); (d) mastery (Brendtro et al., 2005); (e) achievement (Park, 2004); (f) competency (Deci & Ryan, 2000); (g) empathy development (Brendtro et al., 2005); (h) empowerment (Rose, 2006); (i) relatedness/connectedness (Gifford-Smith, Dodge, Dishion, & McCord, 2005); (j) initiative (Bandura, 1997), and; (k) hope (Laursen, 2004). Finally, service providers who administer the protocols and programming should: (a) display an attitude of unconditional positive regard (Brendtro & Shahbazian, 2003); (b) maintain a strength-based perspective (Cox, 2008); (c) have proper training and preparedness for working with youth (Mullins, Cornille, Mullins, & Huber, 2004) and; (d) demonstrate collaborative skills and attitudes (Romanelli et al., 2009).

No research had obtained information directly from incarcerated youth about how they feel regarding themes of positive psychology and its presence in their case management and residential programming in which they participate. By combining a review of one secure custody facility's program manual with interviews with youth and service providers, the present study provided a holistic perspective of how themes of positive psychology are implemented in case management protocols and residential programming at such a facility. Four specific research questions were addressed: (1) Does this facility in rural Canada incorporate a strength-based model of positive psychology in its case management protocols? If so, how are the themes of positive psychology demonstrated? (2) What are the perspectives of the secure custody facility's youth and service providers of its case management protocols? (3) Does the facility in rural Canada incorporate a strength-based model of positive psychology in its residential programming? If so, how are the themes of positive psychology demonstrated? (4) What are the perspectives of the secure custody facility's youth and service providers of its residential programming?

Data collection consisted of four phases: (1) a literature review to develop a model for evaluation of themes of positive psychology, which served as a basis to develop the interview protocols and guide the analyses; (2) semi-structured interviews with 10 youth (four female; six male) ages 16-18 at the facility; (3) semi-structured phone interviews with 11 service providers (seven female; four male), working in a range of occupations such as correctional officers, social workers, teachers, management, recreational and programming directors; and (4) obtaining the facility's policy and program manual for review for themes of positive psychology. Data was analyzed using Thorne's (2008) interpretive description, an inductive thematic analytic strategy that takes inspiration from the interpretive hermeneutic tradition.

Responses from youth and service providers worked to supplement and expand details outlined in the policy and program manual, which was very valuable in providing a holistic perspective of the facility's case management protocols and programming. In case management, three of the four "as a whole" themes of positive psychology emerged in the case management-related data: structured prosocial processes, individualized person-centered care, and opportunities to explore strengths, interests, resources. Of the 11 themes reflecting the internal strengths and resources dimension of positive psychology, only autonomy and relatedness - connectedness were present across all three sources of information. In contrast, five themes were evident in one or two sources (achievement, competency, empowerment, initiative, hope), while the remainder (self-efficacy, resiliency, mastery, empathy development) were entirely absent from the descriptions of case management. Hence, case management did not illustrate all 19 themes of positive psychology across the model, since various themes were not detailed by the policy and program

manual or described by youth and service providers.

All 19 themes were detailed with regard to the facility's programming across all areas of inquiry. However, different perspectives about the degree to which the programming incorporates positive psychology emerged across the three different sources of information, as consistent with case management. The primary and most common themes of positive psychology in both areas clustered around the "as a whole" philosophy of individualized person-centered care, and internal strengths and resources themes of autonomy and relatedness/connectedness. Autonomy and relatedness/connectedness were the only internal strengths and resources themes which emerged across all three sources of information. The themes were more strongly evident in the policy and program manual than in the youths' and service providers' perspectives on the programming. Synthesis of the data also revealed several challenges to the successful incorporation of some positive psychology themes into residential programming. Therefore, to answer the research questions, both the secure custody facility's case management protocols and programming do incorporate themes of positive psychology; however, they do so in different ways.

Youth and service provider perspectives provided rich descriptions of programming and case management protocols at the facility. For example, youth described qualities of effective versus ineffective service providers. Good qualities included fair treatment, fostering connection, and authentic caring attitude. Bad qualities included abuse of power, judgmental attitude, lack of connection, and inconsistent adherence to protocol. The effective and ineffective service provider qualities described by the participants are consistent with the qualities of staff who promote positive youth development through prosocial connections as identified in the existing literature (Lerner, Alberts, Jelicic, & Smith, 2006).

Limitations include inability to audio-record the interviews (due to security concerns raised by the secure custody facility), no opportunity to engage in member-checking, access to youth who were displaying the best behavior at the time, and data collected at only one site.

Future research opportunities include transferability of the developed model at other secure custody facilities and services for marginalized youth, determining whether the incorporation of positive psychology themes into policy and programming actually has a causal effect on improving youths' levels of the 11 internal strengths and resources, and assessing youth before the new protocols are implemented and comparing their levels of the 11 resources to youth after the positive psychology tenets have been fully implemented.

The results of this study suggest numerous implications for practice in secure youth custody settings, and for counselling practitioners working with youth in conflict with the law, particularly in the areas of person-centered care, demonstrating collaborative skills and attitudes, autonomy, and youth engagement in programming.

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Experiences of Resilience and Determination: Immigrant Women's Response to Change in Their Working Lives

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Positive Psychology is the study of human strengths and virtues that enable people to thrive (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Research from a Positive Psychology framework is appropriate and fitting for a Counselling Psychology-based research study because Counselling Psychology focuses on promoting and understanding optimal human development and positive adjustment and adaptation to change. My qualitative study took a Positive Psychology approach to ask 10 recent immigrant women about the changes that they had experienced in their working lives after moving to Canada, how they responded positively to these changes, and the impact of these changes on their overall lives.

In general, in the broad area of research on immigrants' experience, studies have primarily highlighted the barriers, challenges, and difficulties that immigrants face in the transition and adjustment experience. For example, in their personal lives, research suggests that immigrants experience discrimination, culture shock, second language anxiety, and changes in family dynamics (Kadkohoda, 2002; Westwood & Ishiyama, 1991). In their careers, many immigrants experience downward mobility, feelings of frustration and isolation, and often have to resort to lower paying jobs or retraining in order to find work (Bauer, 2000; DiCicco-Bloom, 2004; Hum & Simpson, 2004; Kadkohoda, 2002; Waters, 2002). These barriers hinder successful adjustment to life in the host country. Within this literature, there is evidence that the transition and adjustment experience differs for men and women. For example, immigrant women are faced with the task of balancing responsibilities at home and at work with little to no social support, often while their male partner retrains (Di-Cicco-Bloom, 2004; Read, 2004).

A small but growing body of literature suggests that despite the challenges that immigrants face, some are successful in dealing with transition and adjustment and respond positively to change (Christopher, 2000; Khan & Watson, 2005; Wang & Jordache Sangalang, 2005). In the case of immigrant women, many display positive personality traits or qualities such as resilience, hardiness, determination, and hope in the adjustment experience. However, this area of inquiry is small and as such, there have been calls for more research to help us understand how those who are successful manage the adjustment and transition experience (e.g., Christopher, 2000; Khan & Watson, 2005; Wang & Jordache Sangalang, 2005). In response to this gap in the literature, my study aimed to explore immigrant women's positive response to change in their working lives. It asked the questions, how do immigrant women respond positively to change in their working lives? What are the implications for their work and other aspects of their lives?

Ten participants were recruited for my qualitative study using purposive sampling. The participants had immigrated from England, Mexico, the Philippines, India, China, Romania, and Russia. Their ages ranged from 27-54 years (Mean: 38.7 years) and they were well educated with Bachelor, Masters, and/or PhD degrees. All were married or in common-law partnerships with responsibility for providing for their families. Their length of time in Canada ranged from 3 months to 2 years (Mean: 15.6 months). The inclusion criteria included an ability to speak English at a basic to intermediate level in order to communicate with the interviewer in English. In depth, open ended interviews were conducted, audio-taped, transcribed, and analyzed for thematic

content. Results were sent to participants for their feedback and approval.

Participants described their own positive responses to the variety of changes that they had experienced. Their stories included examples of growing, learning, and progressing, feeling happy, confident, and positive, working to adapt, adjust, transition, and display resilience when dealing with change, being effective, productive, and using their skills at work and at home, developing positive relationships and creating a positive environment, finding inner peace and harmony, and maintaining balance in their lives. The participants' response to change had positive implications for their professional work including an ability to complete tasks and duties, engaging in professional development and building of skills, and securing new positions. Their response to change also had positive implications for their psychological well-being and additional aspects of their personal lives such as their family relationships.

These results add to a Positive Psychology knowledge-base that provides an alternative view of immigrant women's transition and adjustment experience which has generally been characterized by struggle, hardship, and challenge. Instead, my research offers examples of immigrant women's ability to thrive and respond to the challenges of change with resilience, determination, and hardiness. This examination allows for a deeper understanding of immigrant women's positive response to change, which is an aspect of their overall adjustment and transition experience in a new country. Settlement and career services offered to immigrant women can be enhanced by focusing on the development of personal qualities such as hardiness (Maddi, 2002), which can be built and enhanced, in order to help immigrant women to deal with the many changes in their lives. Future research should be undertaken that further elucidates the experience of immigrant women who self-identify as positively adapting to change in order to promote these qualities in those who continue to struggle with the adjustment process.

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Does Post-secondary Student Sex and Relationship Status Influence Expected Occupation Outcome?

Gena H. Davies, Trinity Western University

Little is known about how romantic relationships influence young adults' consideration of their anticipated occupational outcomes, and what role gender plays in this process. It is possible that individuals greatly underestimate the extent to which romantic relationships influence their expectations about obtaining a successful and satisfying career, or vice versa. How does having (or not having) a current romantic relationship influence a person's anticipated occupational outcomes?

Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy construct, and the larger social cognitive theory within which it is embedded, have stimulated a great deal of research concerning career development. *Self-efficacy* refers to an individual's conviction and confidence that he or she can execute the behaviour needed to produce a desired outcome. Self-efficacy beliefs are assumed to be acquired and revised through informational sources, such as social encouragement.

Self-efficacy is hypothesized to influence the outcomes expected of behaviour. *Outcome expectations* are beliefs about the consequences of individual behaviours. Expanding on Bandura's (2001) definition of outcome expectations, the present authors defined *Occupational Outcome Expectations* (*OOE*) as expectations about obtaining a successful and satisfying career that utilizes the skills of the individual.

Career choice is a dynamic process between environments and people; choices may be altered based on support or barriers from the environment. According to Bandura (1997), positive social reactions (e.g., approval) rather than negative social reactions (e.g., disapproval) will influence outcome expectations. Whether an individual will decide to engage in an activity is viewed in terms of an *if-then* declaration: "*If* I engage in a specific activity, *then* I can expect a particular physical, social, and/or self-evaluative outcome" (Fouad & Guillen, 2006, p. 134).

It is possible that *if* an individual achieves a level of education that will lead to a specific career goal, *then* he or she may gain the approval of his or her romantic partner. Thus, an individual's romantic relationship may serve as a positive social stimulus. Fouad and Guillen (2006) call for more research in the measurement of factors contributing to career-related outcome expectations.

Research is needed to understand if individuals' romantic relationships influence their expectations of obtaining positive, satisfying careers. In this study, it was hypothesized that individuals currently enrolled in a post-secondary program who are involved in a relationship will have higher OOE scores than individuals not in a relationship. The possibility that students' sex might have an effect on OOE, and may interact with relationship status, was also explored; although no directional hypotheses were made for these exploratory analyses.

Method

Participants

University and community college students volunteered to participate in a 20-minute online survey and could enter a draw for one of three $50 gift certificates to an online bookstore.

Data was collected from 318 respondents, but 2 non-post-secondary respondents did not qualify for the analysis requirements. Data from 316 respondents was used for the analysis, with 242 females and 72 males. The mean average age was 20.99 years (*SD* = 2.7; range: 17-28).

One hundred and thirty-one respondents were in a romantic relationship, and 179 were not. The mean average romantic relationship length was 1.9 years (*SD* = 1.46; range: .08-8.33).

The mean average of time spent in post-secondary education was 3.24 years (*SD* = 2; range: 1-9), with 263 respondents attending a bachelor or undergraduate degree. The majority of participants were heterosexual (*n* = 307), of Western European or Western European Ancestry ethnicity (*n* = 200) and approaching middle class socioeconomic status.

Procedures & Measures

Data was collected as part of a larger study designed to examine how career aspirations and expectations, and academic or social engagement develop in relation to a variety of interpersonal factors. Examples of interpersonal factors included relationship functioning, beliefs and sense of calling, and demographic characteristics.

Recruitment techniques included: paper and electronic advertisements posted at 6 post-secondary institutions in British Columbia and Washington State; in-person class announcements at 1 university; and through word of mouth, including the use of social networking sites.

An anonymous, online survey method was used to collect the data. Survey items included a combination of closed Likert-type scale and open response formats. Six survey items measured OOE and had good internal consistency; with a Cronbach alpha coefficient reported of .85. The items to measure OOE included: (a) *My Career Planning will Lead to a Satisfying Career for Me*; (b) *I will be Successful in My Chosen Career/Occupation*; (c) *The Future Looks Bright for Me*; (d) *My Talents and Skills will be Used in My Career/Occupation*; (e) *I Have Control Over My Career Decisions*; and (f) *I Can Make My Future a Happy One*. The range of item response options for OOE was 1.00 (i.e., strongly disagree) to 4.00 (i.e., strongly agree).

Results

The 6 OOE survey items were computed with a mean statistical function to create a new dependent variable: average OOE. The distribution was negatively skewed and the assumption for the normality of the distribution was violated for each variable of interest. The non-parametric data was analyzed using a Kruskal-Wallis test. To evaluate the OOE rank differences on the independent variables,

the scores for sex and current relationship status were manually recoded from two separate variables into a combined variable. A disadvantage of this process included a reduced ability to examine interaction and main effects.

A Kruskal-Wallis test revealed a statistically significant difference in OOE ranks across the 4 groups for sex and romantic relationship status (n_{ja} = 133: females not in a relationship; n_{jb} = 105: females in a relationship; n_{jc} = 45: males not in a relationship; and n_{jd} = 25: males in a relationship), χ^2 (3, n = 316) = 8.552, p = .04. Females in a relationship recorded the highest median rank (Md = 166.79), followed by females not in a relationship (Md = 157.72), males not in a relationship (Md = 137.34), and males in a relationship (Md = 116.62).

Three Mann-Whitney U with Bonferroni correction post-hoc tests were performed to examine the comparison between the most extreme ranks. There was a statistically significant difference in the OOE ranks between females in a relationship (Md = 3.5, n = 105) and males in a relationship (Md = 3, n = 25), U = 877.5, z = -2.6, p = .01, r = -.23. The effect size was small, and a potential exists for low statistical power and Type II error.

There was not a statistically significant difference in the OOE ranks between females not in a relationship (Md = 3.3, n = 133) and males in a relationship (Md = 3, n = 25), U = 1232.5, z = -2.07, p = .38, r = -.16; and females in a relationship (Md = 3.5, n = 105) and males not in a relationship (Md = 3.2, n = 45), U = 1904, z = -1.9, p = .57, r = -.15.

Discussion

A significant difference was found in OOE ranks across the 4 groups for sex and romantic relationship status. Specifically, if both sexes are in a relationship, females somewhat-to-strongly agreed that they had a positive OOE, while males somewhat agreed that they had a positive OOE. However, the effect for this rank difference was small. No significant rank differences on OOE were found for males or females who were not in a relationship.

Due to the statistical model limitations, more specific information regarding whether males and females involved in a relationship have higher OOE scores than those not in a relationship could not be delineated for several reasons. First, due to the lack of normality in the distribution, a non-parametric one-way analysis necessitated the combining of the variables. The resulting ranking of the medians for OOE led to a loss of depth of information about the scores. Second, while statistical power could not be calculated with the non-parametric data, it is assumed to be low, because of the general lack of significant results. It is likely that a greater sample size would result in a more normally distributed sample, resulting in an increased ability to detect small effect sizes. Third, there is the possibility that other Type II error sources may have affected the results. However, there is not enough research literature to assess potential Type II error problems, such as a masking of effect of one variable on another for OOE scores.

Further research is required regarding how individuals of different sexes may differentially experience OOE in the context of romantic relationships, in order to build a theory that can assist career counsellors and their clients.

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Section 24 Announcements

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Inaugural Canadian Counselling Psychology Conference

As a member of the counselling psychology section of the CPA, you may be interested in the direction that the profession will be headed in over the next few years. If so, I invite you to play a role in shaping the future of counselling psychology in Canada by participating in the discussions that will take place at the upcoming Canadian Counselling Psychology Conference that will take place in Montreal this November 19 to 21. One of the primary desired outcomes of the conference is to conceptualize future directions for the growth of our profession in Canada, and we consider it important to have as many voices as possible represented in the discussion.

For more information and to register, please see: http://www.mcgill.ca/inauguralccpc/

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Call for Nominations: Section 24 Distinguished Member Award

The Distinguished Member Award is intended to recognize someone who has made significant contributions to the field as a practitioner or as a researcher. We are looking forward to receiving nominations and presenting the 2011 award in Toronto. Nominees must be a member of the CPA Counselling Psychology Section and will preferably have been active in the profession for at least 10 years.

Nominees should have made a distinguished contribution in one or more of the following ways:
1. Outstanding counselling service.
2. Scholarly research, which has moved the profession of counselling forward.
3. Development of counselling materials which has contributed to the provision of service by others.
4. Outstanding service to professional associations, in particular to the CPA Counselling Psychology Section.

Other factors that will be considered are:
1. Influence of the work on the profession of counseling (e.g., is the work moving the
2. profession forward?).
3. Breadth of influence (e.g., how many people have been touched/affected by the work?).

Nominators should provide a statement providing a rationale for nominating this individual for the award and additional supporting information, such as an up to date curriculum vitae of the nominee; detailed descriptions of work; samples of work; independent evaluations of work; letters of support from colleagues, students and/or clients; and description of positions held, and/or service contributions.

Please send nominations by May 15, 2011 to: José Domene (jfdomene@unb.ca).

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Call for Nominations: Section 24 Student Awards Nominations

The Counselling Psychology Section of CPA offers annual awards for:
1. Best PhD Dissertation
2. Best Masters Thesis
3. Best Doctoral Conference Poster
4. BestMasters Conference Poster

These prizes are awarded for outstanding student research in the field of counselling psychology, and include a monetary prize ($100).

Best Poster Awards

Posters are evaluated for quality and relevant of content, and the student's engagement with the audience. All student-authored posters presented in the Counselling Psychology Section poster session at the CPA annual convention are evaluated for this award. Students do not need to be a member of the Counselling Psychology Section to be eligible.

Best Dissertation – Thesis Award

The Best PhD Dissertation and Best Masters Thesis prizes are awarded based on a 30-page (maximum) summary of the dissertation or thesis, to be written by the student. The student's work can only be nominated once for each award. The research must have been successfully defended within 2 years prior to the annual award submission date. The person who nominates the student's work must be a member of the Counselling Psychology Section; the student does not need to be a member.

The nominator should submit 2 hard-copies of the 30 page summary to:

Dr Colleen Haney
Scarfe Library 287
University of British Columbia
2125 Main Mall
Vancouver, BC, V6T 1Z4
E-mail: colleen.haney@ubc.ca.

The award submission **deadline is May 15**, 2010.

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Call for Nominations: Section 24 Section Executive

Nominations are now being accepted for the following Section Executive positions:

1. Chair Elect
2. Member at Large: Student Awards
3. Member at Large: Review Coordinator

The duties of these positions are described in the section by-laws, which can be downloaded from the Section page of the CPA web-site: http://www.cpa.ca/sections/counselling/

The term of office for the Member at Large positions is two years. The Chair Elect will serve for one year in that position, before taking on the duties of the Chair of the section. These positions will commence following election at the Section's Annual Business Meeting, June 2011 in Toronto.

If you or someone you know would be interested in serving the section in any of the above roles, please send nominations to José Domene, Chair, at jfdomene@unb.ca

Counselling Section Executive

Chair—José Domene
E-mail: jfdomene@unb.ca

Past Chair—Sharon Cairns
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Secretary-Treasurer—Helen Massfeller
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