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COLLEGE OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

COMMUNITY STRENGTHS TO CAREER CAPACITIES: FAMILY SUPPORT,
AUTHENTICITY AND CAREER DECISION-MAKING SELF-EFFICACY IN
THE LESBIAN, GAY AND BISEXUAL COMMUNITY

by

Jody Russon

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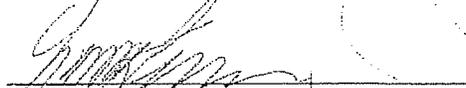
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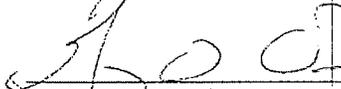
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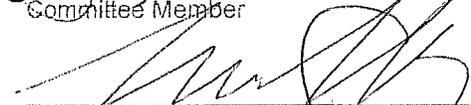
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Chair, Thesis Committee Date 6/21/2011


Committee Member Date 6/21/2011


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ABSTRACT

COMMUNITY STRENGTHS TO CAREER CAPACITIES: FAMILY SUPPORT, AUTHENTICITY AND CAREER DECISION-MAKING SELF-EFFICACY IN THE LESBIAN, GAY AND BISEXUAL COMMUNITY

Jody Russon

Theories in career development and positive psychology have discussed the importance of career decision-making self-efficacy (CDMSE) for diverse groups; however, there has been little development in this area for the lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) community (Lent, Brown & Hackett, 1994; Perez, 2007; Taylor & Betz, 1983). Previous research has shown that LGB individuals may experience a disruption in career development as psychological energy could be focused on developing sexual identity (Hetherington, 1991). The present study sought to determine if strength-based characteristics, found among LGB individuals, such as authenticity, acceptance from others, and social support from friends and family, predicted CDMSE (Kernis & Goldman, 2006; Mohr & Fassinger, 2003; Procidano & Heller). Survey results from 55 LGB-identified individuals indicated that social support from family and need for acceptance accounted for a significant amount of the variance in CDMSE. Implications for research and career counseling are discussed.

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Introduction

The multicultural movement has promoted a flourish in research with sexual minority populations; however, the field of counseling psychology has yet to make lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) issues commonplace in both practice and research settings (Perez, 2007). According to Chung (2003), vocational literature for the LGB population has made significant advances in the theoretical domain. This has created new possibilities for expanding theory through empirical research. Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT), specifically, has grown through the creation of the Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy (CDMSE) measure (Lent, Brown & Hackett, 1994; Taylor & Betz, 1983) and this measure has been used to understand how sexual identity and vocational constructs are related for the LGB population (Betz, Klein & Taylor 1996; Lyons, Brenner & Lipman, 2010). Investigating such constructs that have relevance for the LGB college student population will further enhance our understanding of how to best serve this population in science and practice.

To reiterate the need for LGB vocational research, recent studies have found evidence for the “bottleneck hypothesis,” which proposes that LGB individuals may experience a disruption in tasks related to career development when psychological resources are focused towards concerns surrounding sexual identity or vice versa (Hetherington, 1991; Schmidt & Nilsson, 2006). Lyons et al. (2010) found that LGB individuals may experience one of three trajectories: sexual identity tasks interfere with career development tasks, career development tasks interfere with sexual identity development tasks, or neither developmental process interferes with the other. Further, individuals in both of the interference groups demonstrated a lower level of CDMSE than

the group that did not experience identity interference in either direction. Although the research evidence for the bottleneck hypothesis is in its infancy, it does appear that at least for some LGB individuals, sexual identity development and career development can influence one another.

In addition to looking at the ways career development may be disrupted or negatively affected for individuals negotiating a minority sexual orientation, research has also focused on some of the positive constructs that enhance the career development for LGB individuals. The LGB community may even possess distinct characteristics that combat interference between sexual and vocational identity (Preston-Sternberg, 2009). Riggle, Whitman, Olson, Rostosky & Strong (2008) have identified several LGB community-based strengths that lead to well-being. Their research identified three domains of positive aspects of being a lesbian or gay man, including disclosure and social support, insight and empathy for self and others, and freedom from societal definitions of roles. Within the domain of “insight and empathy for self and others”, the authors describe how self-acceptance and the ability to be truly and honestly oneself, also known as authenticity, are critical elements for the development of a positive sexual identity. As the strengths one possesses as an LGB individual are likely related to sexual identity development, it is possible that these strengths may also be linked to career development processes for this population.

Another well-researched construct that has been shown to promote and enhance career development for LGB individuals and other socially marginalized groups is social support (Patel, Salahuddi & O’Brien, 2008; Quimby & O’Brien, 2004; Schmidt & Nilsson, 2006). For LGB individuals, social support plays a role in supporting healthy

sexual identity development (Sheets & Mohr, 2009), which has also been linked to healthy career development (Preston-Sternberg, 2009). In 2006, Schmidt and Nilsson found that both inner sexual identity conflict and social support were statistically significant predictors of vocational indecision and career maturity; therefore giving support to the “bottleneck hypothesis” (Hetherington, 1991). When examining how strengths of LGB individuals relate to career constructs, such as career decision-making self-efficacy, one must consider the potential role of social support.

Given the paucity of research examining strengths of LGB individuals, especially as they relate to career development for this population, the current study examined the relationship between positive psychological constructs and career decision-making self-efficacy for LGB individuals. Specifically, authenticity, need for acceptance from others and social support from friends and family were expected to contribute to career decision-making self-efficacy for LGB students. In the following section, the research that has been conducted in these areas will be further elucidated and hypotheses for this study will be stated.

Literature Review

Since the 1980’s, LGB vocational psychology has gained more attention due to the support of the multicultural movement (Chung, 1995). At the same time, positive psychology has given both researchers and practitioners empirical validation for honing in on human strengths and patterns of optimal functioning (Walsh, 2003). As evidence exists for the idea that vocational and sexual identity development can influence one another in potentially detrimental ways for LGB individuals, discovering strengths of this

community that foster growth in both developmental areas may lead to a positive sexual identity and career decision-making capacity (Lyons et al., 2010).

Career Development for the LGB Community

An extensive amount of literature exists to demonstrate that self-efficacy, a core concept in positive psychology, is a salient construct in the career development domain. Based on Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory, Lent, Brown and Hackett's (1994) Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) uses social cognitive constructs, including self-efficacy, to conceptualize three career components (choice, interests and performance) (Lyons et al., 2010). For instance, with regard to career choice, the theory proposes that individuals will become engaged in vocational opportunities when they have a high level of self-efficacy for a certain career. Self-efficacy is essentially one's confidence in his or her ability to perform a specific task (Bandura, 1986). Thus, the more efficacious one is regarding his or her ability to perform the tasks related to a specific career, the more likely she or he will be to pursue that vocational option.

Within SCCT, self-efficacy is a result of the interaction between the person, the career-related behavior, the environment, and also the supports and barriers present in the career realm (Lent et al., 1994). For example, an individual's personal characteristics, current activities, geographical location and familial support all would play a role in self-efficacy for career-related tasks. According to Sheu, Lent, Brown, Miller, Hennessy and Duffy (2010), this theory addresses the role of context, supports and barriers by stating that they influence an individual's career goals. Career goals are formulated based on interests, outcome expectations and self-efficacy (Sheu et al., 2010).

SCCT differs from other career theories due to its dynamic nature (Lent, Brown & Larkin, 1987). According to Lent, Brown and Larkin (1987) when an individual develops an ability or career-related skill, developing competency in this ability will reinforce self-efficacy, resulting in the development of further goals that involve this ability. The authors also state that contextual factors and awareness of barriers influence both the probability and perception of success; therefore, when one recognizes few barriers, ability-based goals are reinforced. Because it emphasizes the role of context, supports, and barriers, SCCT has been used as the guiding theory for empirical research with diverse groups (Lent & Worthington, 2000). The focus on person and population-specific supports and barriers has led theorists to recommend that SCCT be researched further with the LGB community (Keeton, 2002; Morrow, 1997; Nauta, Saucier & Woodard, 2001).

Taylor and Betz's (1983) outlined the construct of career decision-making self-efficacy (CDMSE), which has become a central point in SCCT and other career development research. CDMSE addresses one's belief in her or his ability to successfully carry out the tasks necessary to choose a career, or make important career decisions. This theory attributes career decisiveness to maintaining self-efficacy in five distinct behavioral areas including the ability to appraise one's career-related interests and skills, gather information related to various occupations, choose goals related to careers, make specific career plans, and solve problems as they arise. As individuals' experiences with these tasks can differ widely, especially when considering potential societal influences and barriers related to gender, ethnicity, and sexual orientation, this theory is useful when

considering the career development process for marginalized groups (Taylor & Betz, 1983).

In a review of relevant literature, Morrow, Gore and Campbell (1996) examined the societal influences on the career development of lesbian and gay individuals in association with self-efficacy. The authors argued that individuals facing oppression or marginalization have unique developmental needs, as they are negotiating identities that do not follow socially sanctioned pathways (Morrow et al., 1996). The authors note that because self-efficacy beliefs form prior to sexual identity, gender congruent models are incorporated into vocational development; therefore women and men become interested in career possibilities that society has deemed acceptable for their gender. Similarly, development can also be stalled due to negative societal messages regarding interests in opposite, sex-typed careers. Morrow et al. (1996) described that LGB children often are interested in opposite sex-typed careers and might obtain negative messages and insufficient modeling for the careers that interest them. This can potentially inhibit self-efficacy development in these types of careers. With this information, Morrow et al. suggested that LGB individuals may have lower levels of self-efficacy than the heterosexual population.

Individuals from marginalized populations may experience a disruption in career development-related constructs, such as career decision-making self-efficacy. According to the “bottleneck hypothesis” (Hetherington, 1991), individuals with sexual minority orientations may experience a disruption in career development, self-efficacy, and vocational preparation due to the concurrent nature and competing demands of sexual and career identity developmental processes (Hetherington, 1991; Schmidt & Nilsson, 2006).

When the bottleneck effect occurs, LGB individuals may devote more psychological resources to one area of development over the other, as these processes are generally emerging around the same developmental period of adolescence. If sexual identity development is the individual's primary focus, vocational identity development may be delayed or vice versa (Hetherington, 1991).

The bottleneck hypothesis was tested in a study that examined the relationships between variables related to sexual identity development, social support, and career development (Schmidt & Nilsson, 2006). Variables related to sexual identity development, including identity confusion, internalized homonegativity and perceptions of sexual identity development being a difficult process, and career development, including career maturity and vocational decision, as well as social support, were measured in a survey of 102 LGB high school students. The researchers hypothesized that sexual identity management would predict both career maturity and vocational indecision with social support contributing unique and shared variance to both. Results of the study indicated that sexual identity conflict along with social support predicted career maturity and vocational indecision; such that those individuals who experienced higher levels of conflict and lower levels of social support had lower scores on career maturity and higher scores on vocational indecision. This study yielded initial support for the bottleneck hypothesis as it demonstrated a relation between sexual identity conflict and variables related to career development, but it also pointed to the potential role of social support, which is consistent with SCCT's view of the importance of contextual supports on career-related constructs.

In another test of the “bottleneck hypothesis,” Lyons et al. (2010) sought to determine the extent to which LGB individuals experience disruption in one element of identity over the other. It was hypothesized that four types of people would emerge: one in which participants’ sexual identity interferes with career development, a second in which career development interferes with sexual identity, a third where there is conflict reported in both areas and, finally, a fourth where there is low conflict reported in both areas. The authors hypothesized that participants, 127 LGB individuals between the ages of 17 and 29, who experienced high conflict related to sexual identity would have lower levels of CDMSE as evidenced by the short form of the CDMSE scale (Betz et al., 1996). The cluster analysis results indicated that three of the four hypothesized clusters existed in this population (all but the high conflict group). It was also apparent that the low conflict cluster held the largest amount of participants, indicating that there is not necessarily a conflict struggle existing between developmental processes for LGB individuals on the whole. On the other hand, the presence of the career conflict and the sexual identity conflict clusters supports the “bottleneck effect” for at least some members of the LGB community. Individuals who fell into the clusters demonstrating conflict between career decision-making and sexual identity scored lower on the career decision-making self-efficacy scale, indicating that sexual identity is related to one’s beliefs of potential competence in career decision-making tasks whether sexual identity is being embraced or ignored. According to these results, development of a healthy sexual identity is associated with higher levels of CDMSE.

Strengths Related to LGB Career Development

In populations other than the LGB community, specific strengths, including social support and self-efficacy, have been shown to have positive relationships with CDMSE. In a study that examined social support, perception of educational barriers, coping self-efficacy, and CDMSE, Crespin (2006) examined college-age women engaged in the career development process. Using hierarchical multiple regression analyses, it was found that coping efficacy, perception of educational barriers, and social support each were statistically significant individual predictors of CDMSE. As hypothesized, the perception of educational barriers had an inverse relationship with CDMSE while social support and coping efficacy maintained positive relationships. Like the LGB population, women face specific challenges when entering the workforce. Understanding the factors that enhance CDMSE with other marginalized groups can bring clarity to LGB vocational psychology. As social support and coping efficacy are both strengths that have been shown to have positive relationships with CDMSE, it is possible that there are specific strengths common to LGB populations which also yield a strong relationship with CDMSE (Crespin, 2006; Cutrona & Russell, 1987).

The field of counseling psychology is beginning to devote more attention to multicultural aspects of optimal human functioning (Frazier, Lee & Steger, 2006). In a study using qualitative analyses, Riggle et al. (2008) engaged 203 gay and 350 lesbian individuals in an online survey that asked participants to respond to an open-ended question regarding the positive aspects of being a lesbian or gay man (Riggle et al., 2008). A grounded theory approach was used to analyze the experiences of these individuals based on responses to open-ended questions (Glaser & Stauss, 1967). The

authors determined that there were three domains and 11 themes for positive aspects inherent to lesbian and gay identities. The three domains included disclosure and social support, insight and empathy for self and others, and freedom from societal definitions of roles. The participants identified that there are several factors (themes) that make up the disclosure and social support domain including belonging to a community, creating families of choice and having strong connections with others. Many of the themes for the insight and empathy for self and others domain were based around living authentically and being fully accepting of one's identity. The final identified domain, freedom from societal definitions of roles, included freedom from gender-specific roles, exploring sexuality and relationships, and, for lesbian participants only, egalitarian relationships. Riggle et al. (2008) suggested that strengths from social support and authenticity enhance well-being in relationships, provide support for life activities, and facilitate insight for the self and others. Thus, it is likely that these strengths would contribute to enhancement of career developmental processes, including career decision-making self-efficacy.

Authenticity. Authenticity is a newly developed construct that has just began to garner attention in psychological research related to the LGB community. Riggle et al. (2008) stated that authenticity and honesty can be expressed as self-acceptance, whereby an individual can be truly her or himself with others and fully accept all parts of his or her identity. This acceptance of self can be described as the achievement of developing a positive sexual identity. Alderson (2000) conducted a qualitative study to understand the experience of sixteen gay male participants and their process of defining and attaining a positive gay identity. The researcher engaged in interviews with the participants in order to discover how each defined his own positive sexual identity. Through responses in

these interviews, it was found that much conflict arises within the gay individual as he comes out to himself. As coming out to one's self involves a whole new conceptualization of relationships and surroundings, such a process takes an enormous amount of emotional energy (Alderson, 2000). For some, authentic living may present a vulnerable sense of social identity due to homophobic societal climates and the insecurity that may be elicited when community supports threaten to be lost (Israel & Mohr, 2004). According to Alderson (2000), once an individual has self-identified as being gay, the basis for sexual identity is formulated; however development of a positive sexual identity specifically involves the acceptance component of authenticity.

Authenticity is also shaped around maintaining an awareness of personal insight (Riggle et al., 2008) and integral to the strengths-based developmental perspective referred to as "coming out growth" (COG) (Vaughan, 2008). Vaughan (2008) tested a newly developed measure for COG, compared it to stress-related growth (SRG) and discovered relationships between COG and many constructs described in LG literature with 418, out, lesbian and gay individuals. The author found that the levels of growth associated with COG are equivalent to or exceed the growth typically associated with SRG in the literature. It was also found that there are both individualistic and collectivistic elements related to COG. According to the author, COG had a significant, positive relationship with authenticity, well-being and personal identity (individualistic) and social functioning, attitudes and involvement (collectivistic). As outness has been researched as a part of sexual identity experience and development, this study indicates that internal authenticity and external social support are related to these processes (Knoble & Linville, 2010; Mohr & Fassinger, 2003). Thus, a logical next step was to

examine how such factors related to sexual identity development would be potentially involved in career development.

Authenticity has also been related to other variables based around positive human functioning and social relationships in populations other than the LGB community (Theran, 2010). From her research regarding the relationships between authenticity with friends and authority figures of adolescent females, quality of friendships, and psychological well-being (self-esteem and depressive symptoms), Theran (2010) found that authenticity predicted quality of friendships and self-esteem in a positive relationship and depressive symptoms in a negative relationship. It was also found that social support from family served as a moderator between authenticity and depressive symptoms, such that those with low levels of authenticity in relationships with authority figures, but with high levels of social support from family, have fewer symptoms of depression. When the level of authenticity in authority relationships was high, however, there was not a difference in depressive symptoms for high versus low levels of familial support (Theran, 2010). Although these variables have not been examined in the LGB community to this point, this study alludes to an important relationship between authenticity and social support. It is possible that these strengths may be particularly relevant to the LGB community as living authentically with strong social support would likely be relevant to healthy development in other realms, such as career development.

Research examining authenticity is currently in its infancy in the psychological literature. As of now, very few studies have addressed this construct in relation to the LGB community, and fewer still have linked it to career development. Research has shown that authenticity is related to positive sexual identity in the LGB community

(Mohr & Fassinger, 2000). It has also been shown that acceptance from others serves as a mediator between family support and gay identity formation (Elizur & Ziv, 2001). With this information, this present study strove to further the development of this construct in relation to LGB research in the vocational domain.

Social support from family and friends. Social support has been linked to constructs involved with positive functioning among a variety of populations (Cohen, 2004). Further, the importance of social support in the career development realm has received theoretical and empirical attention. With regard to social support's relationship with career development variables for traditionally marginalized groups, Quimby and O'Brien (2004) found that both social support and perceived career barriers were related to CDMSE for nontraditional college women. Overall, perceptions of minimal career barriers and high levels of social support elicited feelings of confidence in career-related domains. Given that women experience career barriers due to sexism, these findings are likely to be similar for LGB individuals experiencing perceived career barriers and societal oppression.

Social support has also been found to be important to the career development process for LGB individuals (Schmidt, Miles, & Welsh, 2010; Schmidt & Nilsson, 2006). Schmidt et al. (2010) examined the relationships between perceptions of discrimination and social support with career indecision and adjustment to college with 189 undergraduate, LGBT college students. The survey included experimenter-designed instruments for perceived discrimination and personal/social adjustment to college, the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS: Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet, & Farley, 1988), and the Career Decision Scale (CDS: Osipow & Schweikert, 1981). The

authors found that the perception of discrimination increased career indecision and decreased social support, and social support formed negative and positive relationships with career decision and college adjustment, respectively. It was also found that social support is an interacting variable in the relationship between perceptions of discrimination and career indecision; therefore reinforcing the omnipotent role of social support in career development research.

Present Study

The present study sought to build on the previous research devoted to the career development of sexual minority populations by examining the relationships between authenticity, acceptance from others in relation to sexual identity, support from family and friends and CDMSE for LGB individuals. The specific strengths of LGB individuals related to having a sexual minority orientation are just beginning to be understood (Riggle et al., 2008), and to date, there has been no empirical investigation into how these strengths would contribute to career development variables, such as career decision-making self-efficacy. Three such strengths worthy of investigation include authenticity, acceptance from others and social support. Both authenticity and acceptance have been key components in positive sexual identity formation processes and in forming connections socially (Alderson, 2000; Elizur & Ziv, 2001). As there is some evidence linking sexual identity development to career development for LGB populations, a logical next step was to investigate the extent to which positive psychological variables related to sexual identity development, such as authenticity and acceptance from others, will contribute to career decision-making self-efficacy. Further, based on findings that indicate the prominent role of social support in career development for underrepresented

populations, LGB individuals will likely also benefit from positive support sources (family and friends) (Patel et al., 2008; Quimby & O'Brien, 2004; Sheets & Mohr, 2009).

On the basis of this literature review, two hypotheses were tested:

H1: Authenticity and need for acceptance will predict unique and shared variance in career decision-making self-efficacy.

H2: Social support from friends and family will predict unique and shared variance in career decision-making self-efficacy, above and beyond that of authenticity and need for acceptance.

Method

Participants

Participants were 55 LGB or Queer-identified, college students aged 17 to 43 years (mean age of 22). Originally, the researchers determined that only data from participants aged 18 to 25 would be included; however, the age criteria were expanded due to limited participant involvement. As participants were college students, it was expected that socio-economic status, gender-identity, disability status and ethnicity would resemble a representative sample of a university population. A power analysis for the proposed research study demonstrated that a total of 118 participants would be needed to detect a medium effect with a multiple regression analysis with four independent variables, an assumed p value of .01, a medium effect size, and an estimated power of .80 (Cohen, 1992). Thus, as only 55 participants were included, only large effects were likely to be detected.

Data was collected for a total of 60 participants; however, five of these participants identified as heterosexual or questioning and were withdrawn from the analysis. Originally, the target population was undergraduate students; however, graduate students' responses were also included in the analysis due to the limited sample size. Of the 55 participants included in the analysis, 70.9% identified as "female," 27.3% as "male," and 1.8% as "female-to-male transgender" (as this person still identified as gay or bisexual, he was included in the analysis). For sexual identity, 34.5% of participants identified as "lesbian," 23.6% as "gay," 23.6% as "bisexual," and 18.2% as "other." 72.7% of participants ethnically identified as being "White/Caucasian," 7.3% as "Black/African American," 7.3% as "Latino/Latina," 7.3% as "Biracial/multiracial," 3.6% as "Asian/Pacific Islander," and 1.8% as "Other." Most participants (83.6%) identified as full-time students and 92.7% had declared a major. Participants represented diverse majors and all years in school, (12.7% first year, 16.4% second year, 27.3% third year, 12.7% fourth year, and 14.5% graduate students). Some participants (3.6%) identified as being "other" for year in school and 12.7% did not identify as being a college student. Data from these individuals was included due to the decreased number of participants involved in the study. All participants but 5.5% stated that they had some involvement in the LGBTQ campus community and 29.1% declared a moderate level of participation. Finally, when asked how often career counseling had been received, 45.5% of participants had never participated in career counseling, 10.9% received it once, 25.5% had gone twice, and 18.2% were involved three or more times.

Recruitment for participation in this study was facilitated at a mid-Atlantic university, by word of mouth and through Facebook; therefore participants identified as

being from colleges throughout the U.S. and abroad. Students at the primary university were informed of the study by announcements at LGBTQA organizational group meetings, mass emails using listservs for LGB student groups, flyer and handout postings around campus, and Facebook event promotions. All advertisements briefly stated the nature of the survey questions and community-based benefits of participation.

Participants were referred to a website where they were provided with an informed consent statement, presented in Appendix G, and survey questions. The contact information for the researchers was made available in case any questions or concerns arose.

Measures

Demographic information form. To determine sample characteristics, participants' ethnicity, race, age, gender, sexual orientation, year in college, involvement in LGBTQA community organizations, most recent involvement in career counseling and declared major were assessed using a demographic information form. This form also served as a basis to check participants' information for exclusion criteria.

Career decision-making self-efficacy. The CDMSE-SF scale measures salient aspects of individuals' confidence in relation to the career decision-making process (Betz et al., 1996). Using a 5-point Likert scale (0 = no confidence at all, 5 = complete confidence), perceived efficacy is rated on the following subscales: Self-Appraisal (e.g., "Decide what you value most in an occupation"), Occupational Information (e.g., "Change majors if you did not like your first choice"), Goal Selection (e.g., "Choose a career that will fit your interests"), Planning (e.g., "Prepare a good resume"), and Problem Solving (e.g., "Choose a career that will fit your preferred lifestyle"). This 25

item measure is divided into 5 items for each of the five subscales; therefore, respondents' higher scores indicate more self-efficacy. Although the subscale scores can be calculated and used independently, for the purposes of this study, only a total scale score was included in the analysis. The CDMSE is a well-established and reliable scale. While using a meta-analytic design to study the reliability of the CDMSE, Nilsson, Schmidt and Meek (2002) found the reliability coefficients ranged from .83 to .97 with a mean of .95 for the CDMSE. Betz et al. (1996) reported that the CDMSE-SF, specifically, has an alpha of .94 and demonstrates concurrent validity through subscore correlations on measures of career indecision. The internal consistency reliabilities (Cronbach's alphas), for the subscales in the present study ranged from .64 on Occupational Information to .77 on Goal Selection. The Cronbach's alpha for the total CDMSE scale was .90.

Perceived social support from friends and family. Procidano and Heller (1983) created the PSS-Family and PSS-Friends scales to measure individuals' perceptions of social support given by family and friend groups; the scales are identical except for the stated target group (friends or family). Some sample items from both scales are "My family is sensitive to my personal needs" and "My friends give me the moral support I need." Both scales are separately scored and require respondents to give a "yes", "no" or "don't know" response to 20 statements. Scores range from 20 (indicating the highest level of perceived familial or friend support) to 0 (indicating the lowest level of familial or friend). The reported internal consistency reliability estimates for the PSS-Friend and PSS-Family are .88 and .90 respectively (Procidano & Heller,

1983). In this study, the PSS-Family subscale reported a Cronbach's alpha of .73, while the PSS-Friend reported a score of only .60.

Authenticity. Authenticity was measured by the Authenticity Inventory Version 3 (AI-3; Kernis & Goldman, 2006). This 45-item measure captures the ability for individuals to function authentically across the following four domains: awareness, unbiased processing, behavior, and relational orientation. According to Kernis and Goldman (2006), awareness refers to knowledge of personal strengths, weaknesses, motivations and feelings. Unbiased processing can be thought of objectivity in regards to personal strengths and weaknesses. When one is unbiased in her or his processing, the result is a minimal amount of distortions and denial with regard to understanding the self and personal experiences. Authenticity in behavior refers to congruence in one's values and actions. Those who seek to please others regardless of their own needs would not be displaying a high level of authenticity in behavior. Finally, relational orientation refers to the interpersonal side of authenticity; those who focus on truthfulness in their close relationships would obtain a higher level of functioning in this area. Genuineness is another core element of relational orientation authenticity.

Responses for the statements presented in the AI-3 include all authenticity subscales and are measured with a 5-point Likert scale from one (strongly disagree) to five (strongly agree). Higher scores on the measure indicate a more authentic perception of the self. Previous research has shown a high coefficient alpha for the scale: .90. The subscales for awareness, unbiased processing, behavior and relational orientation are .79, .64, .80 and .78, respectively (Kernis & Goldman, 2006). For the participants in this study, the Cronbach's alpha for the total scale score was .74. Reliability coefficients for

Unbiased Processing, Awareness, Behavior and Relational Orientation subscales were .72, .38, .25 and .41, respectively.

Need for acceptance. Acceptance from others was measured using the Need for Acceptance subscale of the Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Identity Scale (LGBIS: Mohr & Fassinger, 2000). The LGBIS consists of five items, scored on a 7-point Likert scale (disagree strongly to agree strongly), that address the need for acceptance from others in LGB identity (e.g. “I will never be able to accept my sexual orientation until all of the people in my life have accepted me.” Lower scores on the LGBIS indicate that an individual experiences less difficulties related to sexual identity. Although there is little information available from published studies, results from unpublished analyses from national samples indicate that LGBIS subscales are comparable to the established Lesbian and Gay Identity Scale levels of reliability and validity (Mohr & Fassinger, 2000). When Mohr and Fassinger (2000) validated the LGIS on a sample of 590 lesbians and 414 gay men, they found that the Need for Acceptance subscale had an internal consistency measure of .75. For the present study, the reliability coefficient for the Need for Acceptance subscale of the LGBIS was .76.

Procedure

Directions for accessing the web-based survey site were provided to potential participants in all forms of recruitment. Once participants accessed the web address, they were not able to open the questionnaires until they completed the informed consent. Following the informed consent, participants completed the demographic information form, the PSS-Friend (Procidano & Heller, 1983), the PSS-Family (Procidano & Heller, 1983), the AI-3 (Kernis & Goldman, 2006), the CDMSE scale (Betz et al., 1996), and the

LGBIS Need for Acceptance subscale (Mohr & Fassinger, 2000). Upon completion of data collection, questionnaires from participants meeting the exclusion criteria were discarded before analysis occurred.

Results

The data was entered and analyzed using the PASW computer program. Means and standard deviations for demographic information and measured variables are presented in Table 1. Bivariate correlations were examined for the variables of interest, including authenticity (AI-3), need for acceptance (LGBIS), social support (PSS-Family, PSS-Friend), and career decision-making self-efficacy (CDMSE; see Table 1). Although there were statistically significant positive correlations between PSS-Family and CDMSE, and AI-3 and PSS-Friend, none of the other expected relationships between variables were detected. It is possible that the sample size of 55 was too small to detect some relationships that may exist between these variables.

As statistically significant bivariate correlations were detected between the variables of interest, a multiple regression analysis was performed (see Table 2). To test the first hypothesis, which stated that the need for acceptance and authenticity would predict career decision-making self efficacy, total scores on the LGBIS and AI-3 were entered as predictors of CDMSE at the first step of the analysis. To test the second hypothesis, which predicted that social support from friends and family would predict both shared and unique variance above and beyond the contribution of need for acceptance and authenticity in career decision-making self-efficacy, PSS-Family and PSS-Friends were entered at the second step of the analysis. Scores on the CDMSE were the dependent variable in this regression equation. The first step of the analysis

demonstrated that neither scores on LGBIS nor AI-3 were found to be statistically significant predictors of CDMSE (see Table 2). Thus, the first hypothesis was not supported by the data. At the second step, however, both LGBIS and PSS-Family were statistically significant predictors of CDMSE, while AI-3 and PSS-Friends were not, though PSS-Friends closely approached statistical significance ($p = .06$). Therefore, the second hypothesis was partially supported in that PSS-Family was a statistically significant predictor of career CDMSE above and beyond the contribution of the other variables. Further, as LGBIS became a statistically significant predictor of CDMSE once social support entered the equation, there was at least partial support for the contribution of this variable to CDMSE (hypothesis 1).

Discussion

In this study, it was hypothesized that authenticity, need for acceptance, and perceived social support from friends and family among LGB individuals would contribute to career decision-making self-efficacy (CDMSE) for this population. This hypothesis was based on evidence that has shown the career development process for LGB individuals may be influenced by psychological variables related to maintaining a marginalized sexual identity (Hetherington, 1991; Lyons et al., 2010; Schmidt & Nilsson, 2006). Results from the current study indicated that the need for acceptance and perceived social support from family contributed statistically significant variance to CDMSE, while the extent to which one feels she or he is living authentically did not make a statistically significant contribution. Therefore, as research in the career development realm has consistently shown, social support is a key contributor to

important career-related variables for LGB individuals (Patel, Salahuddin & O'Brien, 2008; Quimby & O'Brien, 2004).

The need for acceptance became another important variable for vocational development when viewed as an aspect of maintaining a healthy sexual identity (Riggle et al., 2008), and the results of this study provided initial evidence of the contribution of this variable to the specific task of career decision-making for LGB individuals. As the relationship between vocational identity and sexual identity has been supported in the literature, the need for acceptance has been shown to be a relevant variable in LGB career development (Lyons et al, 2010). Further, as need for acceptance was not a statistically significant predictor of CDMSE until social support entered the regression equation, it appeared that they were strongly related, though LGBIS and PSS-Family did not have a statistically significant bivariate correlation. Thus, these data suggest that the relationship between need for acceptance and social support is complex, as they relate to CDMSE.

The role of social support from family seemed to be an especially important predictor of career decision-making self-efficacy for LGB individuals. In this study, social support from family contributed a sizable portion of variance to the overall model, representing a large effect size (Cohen, 1992) and this is especially notable given the small sample size. Though research on career development of LGB individuals is still in its infancy, multiple studies have demonstrated that social support plays an important role in this developmental realm for LGB individuals (Patel, Salahuddin & O'Brien, 2008; Quimby & O'Brien, 2004; Riggle et al., 2008; Schmidt & Nilsson, 2006; Schmidt, Miles, & Welsh, 2010).

As the findings of this study demonstrated the importance of social support from family, hypotheses can be made regarding the role of this source of support. Sheets and Mohr (2009) found that sexuality-specific support from family members in particular was related to the development of a positive sexual identity for LGB individuals. Such findings seemed consistent with those of the current study in that the source of social support holds particular relevance for the LGB community. Social support from family may be particularly relevant for the LGB community because of the marginalized status of this identity. Extending the bottleneck hypothesis (Hetherington, 1991), when the family is seen as a secure source of acceptance, LGB individuals may be more able to focus their psychological resources on career development tasks, rather than needing to devote energy to managing discrimination and lack of acceptance within the family.

The results from the multiple regression analysis suggest that there is a complex relationship between the need for acceptance and family support among LGB individuals. One possibility is that the experience of family support and the extent to which a person needs acceptance from others interact with one another. For instance, a LGB individual who experiences high family support and a low need for acceptance from others would likely have more psychological resources available for career development as they may not be experiencing the extent of discrimination and marginalization that someone who had low family support and a high need for acceptance might. This idea would be consistent with the bottleneck hypothesis, which posits that more psychological energy devoted to managing an oppressed identity leaves fewer resources available for other developmental tasks, such as career development (Hetherington, 1991). Future studies

should examine the need for acceptance and family support to determine the nature of the relationship, as it pertains to career development.

Another statistically significant, positive relationship was found between perceived social support from friends and participants' level of authenticity, such that the more authentic one is, the more likely she or he may maintain a solid social support system. Interestingly, the same could not be said for family support, as this construct was not found to be correlated with authenticity. One possibility is that though family support remains important in the career development realm for LGB individuals, as individuals navigate the often difficult waters of self-identifying as a sexual minority, they look to their friends, rather than their families for a place to be truly themselves. Doty, Willoughby, Lindahl, and Malik (2010) found that family members of sexual minorities more readily offered support for stress that was unrelated to sexuality, than they did for stress related to being an LGB individual. Thus, in the current study, it appeared that the ability to be more truly oneself was more closely related to friend support, while family support was still more instrumental in career development.

Limitations

Though several interesting findings emerged from this data, there were factors that limited their interpretation. Overall, the present study had insufficient power to detect small or medium effects due to the small sample size. Analyses were conducted on 55 participants when 118 were needed to detect a medium effect for the regression analysis, though 55 would be sufficient to detect large effects (Cohen, 1992). Although power was limited, results demonstrated a large effect from social support in predicting career decision-making self-efficacy. With a larger sample size, however, other variables

which may have more small to medium-sized effects, including authenticity, need for acceptance, and social support from friends, would have demonstrated statistical significance in the relationship with career decision-making self-efficacy (Cohen, 1992).

Another limitation of the present study relates to characteristics of the population which were unique when compared to other groups of LGB individuals. LGB individuals who are out enough to self-identify and participate in a survey related to sexual identity may be very different in terms of authenticity and need for acceptance than those who are still in the closet. The sample might have generally communicated higher levels of authenticity and lower levels of need for acceptance when compared to LGB individuals who have not openly identified themselves as such. This is a problem inherent to research with LGB individuals, as participation itself requires a certain level of acceptance and comfort with this marginalized identity.

Implications

This study emphasized the need for greater instrumentation and measurement development for sexual minority populations. Excluding the Need for Acceptance subscale of the LGBIS, the measures used for the present study were not created for LGB individuals. Although some of these instruments have been used for LGB populations in previous empirical work, only the Need for Acceptance subscale of the LGBIS had a reliability coefficient that closely matched the one found in validation studies (Mohr & Fassinger, 2000). To best understand the LGB community through psychological research, future measurement development must address constructs that may be different for LGB and heterosexual populations, such as authenticity and social support from friends and family. Though there are several measures related to the experience of

heterosexism and homophobia (e.g. Self-Stigma Scale: Mak, Cheung, Law, Woo, & Chung, 2007; Lesbian Internalized Homophobia Scale: Szymanski & Chung, 2001) and the sexual identity development process (e.g. Measure of Sexual Identity Exploration and Commitment: Worthington, Navarro, Savoy, Bielstein, Hampton, 2008), currently a measure of the strengths related to being LGB does not exist. Therefore, to fully capture the positive end of the LGB experience, greater instrumentation in this realm is necessary.

The present research showed that, even with a small sample size, social support from family predicted a significant amount of the variance in career decision-making self-efficacy. Based on these results, practical implications for LGB career development interventions could involve multiple components. Career clients with a sexual minority orientation should be asked about their level of family support, as it cannot be assumed for this population. Further, as research has shown that LGB individuals often create families of choice when support from immediate family is not present, career counselors may better serve LGB clients by discussing both friend and familial support systems (Dewaele, Cox, Van den Berghe, & Vincke, 2011). By assessing family support in career counseling work with LGB individuals, and further fostering its development, counselors can enhance this element of the career decision-making process for this population.

Student engagement in LGB mentoring programs might also be a tool for expanding support systems and families of choice. Traditional-aged college students, who may be living on their own for the first time, may not have developed the connections to create a family of choice; therefore, mentoring programs could provide these students with the tools to connect to the community. Research on LGB mentoring

has also shown that mentoring relationships between adolescents and teachers is associated with higher levels of post-secondary educational involvement (Gastic & Johnson, 2009). Career counselors might benefit the LGB student population either by creating mentoring programs involving faculty, staff and older students or by partnering with offices that provide students with mentors. As was shown in this study, working to facilitate support for LGB individuals may be a critical role for career counselors.

Conclusion

The present study was focused on the relationships between authenticity, need for acceptance, social support from friends and family and career decision-making self-efficacy for LGB individuals. Overall, it was found that social support from family predicted a significant amount of the variance in career decision-making self-efficacy. Implications for relevance of social support for career counselors may include facilitating discussions about support systems within sessions and helping LGB students create families of choice through community involvement and mentoring.

Table 1

Summary of Bivariate Correlations, Means and Standard Deviations for Participant Ages, Gender, and Scores on CDMSE, PSS-Fa, PSS-Fr, AI-3 and the Need for Acceptance Subscale of the LGBIS

| Measure | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | M | SD |
|-----------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|-----|-----|--------|-------|
| 1. Gender | --- | | | | | | | 1.76 | .54 |
| 2. Age | .07 | --- | | | | | | 21.96 | 4.54 |
| 3. CDMSE | -.19 | -.11 | --- | | | | | 100.65 | 12.64 |
| 4. PSS-Fa | -.30* | -.13 | .37** | --- | | | | 66.36 | 10.73 |
| 5. PSS-Fr | -.13 | -.06 | .17 | .10 | --- | | | 72.72 | 6.87 |
| 6. AI | -.04 | -.24 | -.13 | -.11 | .45** | --- | | 152.94 | 15.22 |
| 7. LGBIS | .07 | -.04 | -.25 | .08 | .13 | .12 | --- | 2.32 | .86 |
| M | | | | | | | | | |
| SD | | | | | | | | | |

Note. * $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$

Table 2

Summary of Linear Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting CDMSE of LGB Participants

| Variable | B | SE B | β | t | R ² |
|----------|-------|------|---------|-------|----------------|
| Step 1 | | | | | .07 |
| AI | -.08 | .11 | -.10 | -.75 | |
| LGBIS | -3.49 | 1.97 | -.23 | -1.77 | |
| Step 2 | | | | | .27** |
| AI | -.14 | .11 | -.16 | -1.22 | |
| LGBIS | -4.30 | 1.78 | -.29 | -2.40 | |
| PSS-Fa | .41 | .14 | .35 | 2.87 | |
| PSS-Fr | .47 | .25 | .25 | 1.86 | |

Note. ** $p < 0.01$

Appendix A

Demographic Information Form

Sex:

 Male Female Male-to-Female Transgender Female-to-Male Transgender
Sexual identity: Lesbian Gay man Bisexual man or woman Heterosexual Other (Please specify): _____

Age: _____

Race/ethnicity:

 White/Caucasian Black/African-American Latino/a Asian/Pacific Islander Native American Biracial/multiracial Other: (Please specify) _____

Student status:

 Part-time college student full-time college student I am not a college student Other: (please specify): _____

Year in college:

 Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior

Other: (please specify): _____

Which university do you currently attend? : _____

LGBTQA organizational involvement:

To what extent are you involved in events/activities within the LGBTQA community (social, political, religious/spiritual, professional organizations)?

| | | | | | |
|------------|--------------|------------|-------------|--------|-----------|
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all | A little bit | Moderately | Quite a bit | Highly | Extremely |

Declared major:

Major: _____ Check here if "undecided": _____

Please indicate how often you have received career counseling (this does not include resume reviews or writing critiques) in the past four years:

Three or more times _____

Two times _____

One time _____

I have never received career counseling _____

Appendix B

Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy Scale-Short Form (CDMSE-SF)
Betz, Klein & Taylor, 1996

For each statement below, please read carefully and indicate how much confidence you have that you could accomplish each of these tasks by marking your answer according to the key.

| | | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| No Confidence At All | Very Little Confidence | Moderate Confidence | Much Confidence | Complete Confidence |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Example: How much confidence do you have that you could:

- a. Summarize the skills you have developed in the jobs you have held?

If your response was "Moderate Confidence," you would fill out the number 3 on the answer sheet.

HOW MUCH CONFIDENCE DO YOU HAVE THAT YOU COULD:

1. Find information in the library about occupations you are interested in.
2. Select one major from a list of potential majors you are considering.
3. Make a plan of your goals for the next five years.
4. Determine the steps to take if you are having academic trouble with an aspect of your chosen major.
5. Accurately assess your abilities.
6. Select one occupation from a list of potential occupations you are considering.
7. Determine the steps you need to take to successfully complete your chosen major.
8. Persistently work at your major or career goal even when you get frustrated.
9. Determine what your ideal job would be.
10. Find out the employment trends for an occupation over the next ten years.
11. Choose a career that will fit your preferred lifestyle.
12. Prepare a good resume.

13. Change majors if you did not like your first choice.
14. Decide what you value most in an occupation.
15. Find out about the average yearly earnings of people in an occupation.
16. Make a career decision and then not worry whether it was right or wrong.
17. Change occupations if you are not satisfied with the one you enter.
18. Figure out what you are and are not ready to sacrifice to achieve your career goals.
19. Talk with a person already employed in a field you are interested in.
20. Choose a major or career that will fit your interests.
21. Identify employers, firms, and institutions relevant to your career possibilities.
22. Define the type of lifestyle you would like to live.
23. Find information about graduate or professional schools.
24. Successfully manage the job interview process.
25. Identify some reasonable major or career alternatives if you are unable to get your first choice.

Appendix C

Perceived Social Support from Friends and Family (PSS-Fr; PSS-Fa)

Procidano & Heller, 1983

PSS-Fa

The following statements refer to feelings and experiences that occur to most people at one time or another in their relationships with their families. For each statement there are three possible answers: Yes, No, Don't Know. Please circle the answer you choose for each item.

- | | | | |
|-----|----|------------|---|
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 1. My family gives me the moral support I need. |
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 2. I get good ideas about how to do things or make things from my family. |
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 3. Most other people are closer to their family than I am. |
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 4. When I confide in the members of my family who are closest to me, I get the idea that it makes them uncomfortable. |
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 5. My family enjoys hearing about what I think. |
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 6. Members of my family share many of my interests. |
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 7. Certain members of my family come to me when they have problems or need advice. |
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 8. I rely on my family for emotional support. |
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 9. There is a member of my family I could go to if I were just feeling down, without feeling funny about it later. |
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 10. My family and I are very open about what we think about things. |
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 11. My family is sensitive about my personal needs. |
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 12. Members of my family come to me for emotional support. |
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 13. Members of my family are good at helping me solve problems. |

- | | | | |
|-----|----|------------|--|
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 14. I have a deep sharing relationship with a number of members of my family. |
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 15. Members of my family get good ideas about how to do things or make things from me. |
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 16. When I confide in members of my family, it makes me uncomfortable. |
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 17. Members of my family seek me out for companionship. |
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 18. I think that my family feels that I'm good at helping them solve problems. |
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 19. Other people's family relationships are more intimate than mine. |
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 20. I wish my family were much different. |

PSS-Fr

The following statements refer to feelings and experiences that occur to most people at one time or another in their relationships with friends. For each statement there are three possible answers: Yes, No, Don't Know. Please circle the answer you choose for each item.

- | | | | |
|-----|----|------------|---|
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 1. My friends give me the moral support I need. |
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 2. Most other people are closer to their friends than I am. |
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 3. My friends enjoy hearing about what I think. |
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 4. Certain friends come to me when they have problems or need advice. |
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 5. I rely on my friends for emotional support. |
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 6. If I felt that one more of my friends were upset with me, I'd just keep it to myself. |
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 7. I feel that I'm on the fringe in my circle of friends. |
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 8. There is a friend I could go to if I were just feeling down, without feeling funny about it later. |

- | | | | |
|-----|----|------------|--|
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 9. My friends and I are very open about what we think about things. |
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 10. My friends are sensitive to my personal needs. |
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 11. My friends come to me for emotional support. |
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 12. My friends are good at helping me solve problems. |
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 13. I have a deep sharing relationship with a number of friends. |
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 14. My friends get good ideas about how to do things or make things from me. |
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 15. When I confide in friends, it makes me feel uncomfortable. |
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 16. My friends seek me out for companionship. |
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 17. I think that my friends feel that I'm good at helping them solve problems. |
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 18. Other people's friend relationships are more intimate than mine. |
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 19. I've recently gotten a good idea about how to do something from a friend. |
| Yes | No | Don't Know | 20. I wish my friends were much different. |

Appendix D

Authenticity Inventory Version 3 (AI-3)
Kernis & Goldman, 2004

The following measure has a series of statements that involve people's perceptions about themselves. There are not right or wrong responses, so please answer honestly. Respond to each statement by writing the number from the scale below, which you feel most accurately characterizes your response to the statement.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|----------------------|----------|-------------------------------|-------|-------------------|
| Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree Nor Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |

1. I am often confused about my feelings.
2. I frequently pretend to enjoy something when in actuality I really don't.
3. For better or for worse I am aware of who I truly am.
4. I understand why I believe the things I do about myself.
5. I want people with whom I am close to understand my strengths.
6. I actively try to understand which of my self-aspects fit together to form my core- or true- self.
7. I am very uncomfortable objectively considering my limitations and shortcomings.
8. I've often used my silence or head-nodding to convey agreement with someone else's statement or position even though I really disagree.
9. I have a very good understanding of why I do the things I do.
10. I am willing to change myself for others if the reward is desirable enough.
11. I find it easy to pretend to be something other than my true-self.
12. I want people with whom I am close to understand my weaknesses.
13. I find it very difficult to critically assess myself.
14. I am not in touch with my deepest thoughts and feelings.
15. I make it a point to express to close others how much I truly care for them.

16. I tend to have difficulty accepting my personal faults, so I try to cast them in a more positive way.
17. I tend to idealize close others rather than objectively see them as they truly are.
18. If asked, people I am close to can accurately describe what kind of person I am.
19. I prefer to ignore my darkest thoughts and feelings.
20. I am aware of when I am not being my true-self.
21. I am able to distinguish those self-aspects that are important to my core- or true-self from those that are unimportant.
22. People close to me would be shocked or surprised if they discovered what I keep inside me.
23. It is important for me to understand my close others' needs and desires.
24. I want close others to understand the real me rather than just my public persona or "image."
25. I try to act in a manner that is consistent with my personally held values, even if others criticize or reject me for doing so.
26. If a close other and I are in disagreement I would rather ignore the issue than constructively work it out.
27. I've often done things that I don't want to do merely not to disappointing people.
28. I find that my behavior typically expresses my values.
29. I actively attempt to understand myself as best as possible.
30. I'd rather feel good about myself than objectively assess my personal limitations and shortcomings.
31. I find that my behavior typically expresses my personal needs and desires.
32. I rarely if ever, put on a "false face" for others to see.
33. I spend a lot of energy pursuing goals that are very important to other people even though they are unimportant to me.
34. I frequently am not in touch with what's important to me.
35. I try to block out any unpleasant feelings I might have about myself.

36. I often question whether I really know what I want to accomplish in my lifetime.
37. I often find that I am overly critical about myself.
38. I am in touch with my motives and desires.
39. I often deny the validity of any compliments that I receive.
40. In general, I place a good deal of importance on people I am close to understanding who I truly am.
41. I find it difficult to embrace and feel good about the things I have accomplished.
42. If someone points out or focuses on one of my shortcomings I quickly try to block it out of my mind and forget it.
43. The people I am close to can count on me being who I am regardless of what setting we are in.
44. My openness and honesty in close relationships are extremely important to me.
45. I am willing to endure negative consequences by expressing my true beliefs about things.

Appendix E

Need for Acceptance Subscale (items 2, 7, 12, 16, 21) from Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Identity Scale (LGBIS)

Mohr & Fassinger, 2000

For each of the following statements, mark the response that best indicates your experience as a lesbian, gay, or bisexual (LGB) person. Please be as honest as possible in your responses.

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7
 Disagree Strongly Agree Strongly

1. _____ I will never be able to accept my sexual orientation until all of the people in my life have accepted me.
2. _____ I often wonder whether others judge me for my sexual orientation.
3. _____ I can't feel comfortable knowing that others judge me negatively for my sexual orientation.
4. _____ Being an LGB person makes me feel insecure around straight people.
5. _____ I think a lot about how my sexual orientation affects the way people see me.

Appendix F

Institutional Review Board Approval Letter**EXEMPTION NUMBER: 11-1X12**

To: Jody Russon
From: Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human
Subjects, Gerald Jerome, Member
Date: Tuesday, March 22, 2011
RE: Application for Approval of Research Involving the Use of
Human Participants

Office of University
Research Services

Towson University
8000 York Road
Towson, MD 21252-0001

t. 410 704-2236
f. 410 704-4494

Thank you for submitting an application for approval of the research titled,
*Community Strengths to Career Capacities: Family Support, Authenticity
and Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy in the Lesbian, Gay and
Bisexual Community*

to the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Participants
(IRB) at Towson University.

Your research is exempt from general Human Participants requirements
according to 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2). No further review of this project is
required from year to year provided it does not deviate from the submitted
research design.

If you substantially change your research project or your survey
instrument, please notify the Board immediately.

We wish you every success in your research project.

CC: Christa Schmidt
File

Appendix G

Informed Consent

Graduate students and faculty in the Towson University Department of Psychology are carrying out a project related to the career concerns of the Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual community. Your role in this project will consist of filling out the surveys that follow on this Web site and participation usually takes between 20 and 30 minutes. Eventually this data will be used to better understand career development for sexual minority communities.

There are no known risks or discomforts associated with completing this survey. We have reason to believe that this method may be of significant value in understanding career development for diverse populations. However, should you decide not to participate in this project, you can exit the survey at any time. If you feel emotional or psychological discomfort as a result of taking the survey, call the Towson University Counseling Center at 410-704-2512. For career-related concerns, call the Career Center at Towson University at 410-704-2233.

Participation in this study is voluntary. All information will remain strictly confidential and the researchers will not have access to any of your personal information other than what you choose to disclose on the demographic information form. You will not be asked to provide your name or other identifying information anywhere on the survey. Descriptive information regarding the total sample may be published, but there will be no way to identify any single person's responses. The data will be stored on a password-protected computer in a locked office for the duration of the study, and will be deleted once all analyses have been conducted. If you have any questions after today, please feel free to call Jody Russon at 410-704-4837, Dr. Christa Schmidt at 410-704-3634 or Dr. Debi Gartland, Chairperson of the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Participants at Towson University at (410) 704-2236. Please note that this study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board at Towson University.

By clicking to continue to the survey, I affirm that I am 18 years of age or older, have read and understood the above statement, and have had all of my questions answered.

References

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CURRICULUM VITA

Jody Russon

428 Buttonwood Lane
Oxford, PA 19363

EDUCATION

M.A., Counseling Psychology, Towson University, Towson, MD, Aug, 2011
Current GPA: 4.0

B.A., Psychology, University of Delaware, Newark, DE, May 2009
Double minor: Anthropology and Figure Skating Coaching
GPA: 3.856

HONORS AND AWARDS

Towson University Star Leadership Award nominee, June 2011
Magna Cum Laude, University of Delaware, May 2009
Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society, University of Delaware Chapter, Dec 2008
Psi Chi (National Honor Society in Psychology), Dec 2008
Golden Key International Honour Society, University of Delaware Chapter, Nov 2008
National Society of Collegiate Scholars, University of Delaware Chapter, Dec 2007
Alpha Lambda Delta (Co-ed Honor Fraternity), University of Delaware, Nov 2007
National Collegiate Synchronized Ice Skating Bronze Medalist (Mar 2006, Mar 2007)
Silver Medalist (Mar 2008), and Pewter Medalist (Mar 2009)

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Master's Thesis, Towson University, Towson, MD, Aug 2009-June 2011
Research Assistant, Lab of Interpersonal Functioning, Newark, DE, Sept-Dec 2008
Research Assistant, Human Emotions Lab, Newark, DE, Feb-May 2007

COUNSELING AND ADVISING EXPERIENCE

Graduate Assistant, The Career Center at Towson University, MD, Aug 2009-present
Mental Health Intern, Harford County Health Department, MD, Sept 2010-May 2011
Crisis Helpline Intern, Volunteer Phone Counselor, Contactlifeline, DE, May 2008- 2009
Volunteer, Psycho-Socialization Group (VOICE), New Castle, DE, Feb- May 2006

LEADERSHIP AND COACHING EXPERIENCE

Synchronized Skating Coach, University of Delaware, Newark, DE, June 2009- present
Member, Alpha Lambda Delta Honors Fraternity, Newark, DE, Nov 2007-May 2009
President, University of Delaware Synchronized Skating Team, DE, Sept 2008-Mar 2009

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS AND CERTIFICATIONS

American Counseling Association, Student Member (Aug 2010), Professional Skaters' Association, Rated Coach (Aug 2010), United States Figure Skating Association, Coach and Member (Dec 2009), Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (Nov 2008)

