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The Role of Career Services Programs and Sociocultural Factors in Student Career Development

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Abstract

Existing research on the effectiveness of college career services centers (CSCs) has primarily focused on students' rates of utilization and their satisfaction with the programs and services offered. Based on survey ($n = 372$) and focus group data ($n = 35$) from undergraduate business students, we found that participants were most satisfied with the CSC's provision of practical tools that enhanced employability and were least satisfied with the CSC's integration of students' backgrounds and interests during advising. Our qualitative analysis yielded three categories of contributors (i.e., sociocultural factors, independent activities, and institutional factors) to student career outcomes, which were psychological characteristics, career decisions, and social capital. Sociocultural factors were most prominently featured in students' narratives of their experiences, in that they shaped how students leveraged institutional resources and how they engaged in independent activities as part of their career trajectories. Practical implications and future research directions are discussed.

The Role of Career Services Programs and Sociocultural Factors on Student Career Development

Mun Yuk Chin, Chelsea A. Blackburn Cohen, and Matthew T. Hora

Although debates about the role higher education should play in vocational preparation relative to liberal education have raged for decades (DuBois, 1973; Grubb & Lazerson, 2005), the vocationalist perspective is ascendant in the early 21st century. Widespread anxiety about the availability of well-paying jobs, the rising price of college, and questions about whether graduates have the skills employers require have all contributed to a reorientation toward career preparation across the entire higher education sector (Cottom, 2017; Selingo, 2016). Although this focus on student employability implicates nearly every unit or department on campus, campus administrators widely view career services centers (CSCs) as central in helping students prepare for and compete in a rapidly changing global economy. Consequently, CSCs have attracted considerable investment and scrutiny, with questions being raised about their quality, relevance, and ultimate impacts on students' lives and careers (Chan & Derry, 2013; Dey & Cruzvergara, 2014; Ezarik, 2016).

However, relatively little empirical research has examined the impact of CSCs on students' outcomes such as their career-related skills, social capital, and psychological readiness for the world of work. Research tends to focus on students' utilization of and satisfaction with programs and services offered by these campus units. For instance, a 2016 Gallup survey documented that 17% of recent college graduates described career services as very helpful for their career development. While insights into students' use and perception of career services is important, understanding the degree to which these units enhance their social capital and psychological readiness is arguably more salient. A considerable body of research highlights the importance of social networks and connections (i.e., social capital) (Granovetter, 1995) and psychological attributes such as career adaptability (Savickas et al., 2009) on a student's ultimate career success. A focus on these outcomes is especially warranted given that career services professionals are now seeing their roles as less about providing career-related skills (e.g., résumé preparation and job placement) and more about cultivating students' networks and professional identities (Dey & Cruzvergara, 2014).

An investigation into these phenomena, however, cannot assume that CSCs are the sole influence on students' lives, career-related skills, professional networks, and vocational development. Research indicates that students' career decisions are strongly influenced by personal relationships and family background (Fadulu, 2018; Schultheiss, Kress, Manzi, & Glasscock, 2001). Furthermore, a developmental perspective highlights the fact that students' views on work and careers unfold in stages throughout their lives, such that colleges and CSCs are but one influence on career identities and outcomes. For example, the sociocultural, economic, and political environment in which students are socialized, particularly via messages and models about what types of careers are possible and/or desirable, also play an important role in shaping students' views about the world of work (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). Thus, a key issue

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facing the field of student affairs and career counseling in higher education is not only whether students frequent campus CSCs, but also how those experiences might intersect with other factors that influence their career-related skills, social networks, and psychological readiness for the workplace.

In this paper we report findings from a mixed-methods study that explored these issues in a school of business at a large research university in the United States. Drawing on survey ($n = 372$) and focus group ($n = 35$) data from undergraduate students at this university, we address the following research questions:

1. How, if at all, are students using and experiencing CSC programs and services?
2. From which sources, particularly career services and sociocultural elements, are students acquiring information about careers and the world of work?
3. What are the relative influences of these factors on students' social networks, psychological characteristics, and early career outcomes?

Answers to these questions promise to expand the research literature on the role of CSCs on student outcomes, while illuminating nuances of student career decision-making that student affairs and career services professionals can use to design more effective programs and interventions.

Factors Shaping Students' Career Development and Outcomes

Despite increasing attention to CSCs on college and university campuses, little empirical research exists on precisely how these units contribute to students' career-related outcomes. For instance, much of the research and practitioner literature focuses on the degree to which students utilize CSC programs (Gallup, Inc., 2017; 2016) and students' reactions to the work performed by career services practitioners (e.g, McGrath, 2002; Olson & Matkin, 1992). This narrow focus fails to document and explore the ways in which CSCs may (or may not) influence students' career-related skills, social networks, and professional identities. This focus on program utilization and "client" satisfaction not only limits the field of higher education's understanding of the impacts of CSCs, it aligns poorly with the new, broader mandate career service professionals are adopting to help students cultivate their professional networks and identities (Dey & Cruzvergara, 2014; Schaub, 2012).

A broader focus on the effects of career services on students' skills, networks, and identities is consistent with developmental theories in vocational psychology (Brown & Lent, 2013). Prominent theories of vocational development such as social cognitive career theory (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994), the happenstance learning theory (Krumboltz, 2009), and the theory of career construction (Savickas, 2013) emphasize that a diverse range of sociocultural, institutional, and structural factors contribute to an individual's occupational choice(s) and vocational identities throughout their lives. They assert that early life experiences influence people's career choices and identities.

For college students, their career development must be considered in the context of their emerging adulthood (Arnett, 2000). In this phase, students are able to delay assuming adult roles

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and responsibilities in order to explore career interests and options more freely (Murphy, Blustein, Bohlig, & Platt, 2010). College, thus, provides a transitional space for the career explorations and vocational identity development of many emerging adults (Messersmith, Garrett, Davis-Kean, Malanchuk, & Eccles, 2008). Here, students encounter new opportunities and people from different backgrounds that allow them to merge their past and current experiences and shape their career interests and identities (Arnett, 2000, 2015). However, while emerging adults have more autonomy compared to adolescents, they continue to be influenced by significant figures, such as parents and caregivers, in their career explorations (Arnett, 2000; Whiston & Keller, 2004).

Adopting a developmental perspective, career construction theory postulates that individuals cultivate their career interests and identities based on the perceptions and values that they have acquired through their actions and roles in their family, civic, and educational lives (Savickas, 2013). Grounded in social constructivism, career construction theory views vocational trajectories as a lifelong processes, influenced by an individual's adaptations to social contexts and life circumstances. The theory further organizes career development in three phases, which are not strictly linear, but all help a person create a "story of [their] working life" (Savickas, 2013, p. 150). They are: *self as actor*, *self as agent*, and *self as author*. The *self as actor* phase is prominent during early life, when an individual internalizes messages and models about who they should become. Significant figures in a person's early life serve as role models or guides that influence career interests and choices. During the *self as agent* phase, the individual takes a more active role of responding to educational and career-related challenges such as normative vocational tasks (e.g., identifying area of interest) and work transitions (e.g., switching into and out of jobs). College students become agents when they carry out vocational tasks such as career planning and exploration, and when they experience career indecision (Kelly & Lee, 2002; Savickas, 2013). Students may straddle the acting and agentic phases since their choices and interests are expected to be permeable to others' influences as emerging adults (Arnett, 2000). As an author, the individual synthesizes career experiences in ways that allow them to narrate their storyline meaningfully.

A pertinent skill career construction theory espouses is that of career adaptability, which can be defined as a person's "psychosocial resources for coping with current and anticipated vocational development tasks, occupational transitions, and work traumas" (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012, p. 662). Career adaptability is conceptualized as a latent variable that is measured via the constructs of career concern (i.e., future orientation about work), control (i.e., internal characteristics and processes that facilitate self-regulation), curiosity (i.e., interest and motivation to explore), and confidence (i.e., self-efficacy) (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). A strong sense of career adaptability has been shown to be positively linked with career decision-making and job search self-efficacy (Zhou, Guan, Xin, Mak, & Deng, 2016; Guan et al., 2013), the development of career management skills (Chong & Leong, 2017), and positive employment outcomes (Guan et al., 2013; Savickas et al., 2009). For instance, Koen, Khele, and van Vianen (2012) found that graduate and undergraduate students in their final year of studies who completed a training program aimed at increasing their career adaptability reported higher employment quality post-graduation compared to those who did not. Career adaptability was also found to be positively linked with psychological well-being, as measured by life satisfaction and positive affect (Rudolph, Lavigne, & Zacher, 2017). Given the changing nature of labor markets, particularly

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the growth of automation and uncertainty regarding the future of work, career adaptability has become widely viewed as a critical attribute for college students to develop before they graduate (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012).

According to Savickas (2013), institutional services such as CSCs can offer vocational guidance, education, and coaching to help students based on their developmental needs. CSCs are tasked with cultivating students' lifelong processes and skills for career development—one of which is career adaptability (Savickas et al., 2009). Thus, a critical issue facing the field of higher education is how colleges and universities can help to cultivate students' sense of career adaptability via CSCs. However, little research explores this point. Instead, research indicates the importance of non-institutional forces on an individual's career adaptability, such as social networks (Auyeung & Sands, 1997; Whiston & Keller, 2004), an influence also widely explored in sociological research on labor market outcomes (e.g., Granovetter, 1995). In addition, family-of-origin factors such as parents' occupations, emotional support, and provision of educational assistance have been widely examined with respect to their influence on college students' vocational exploration (Schultheiss, Kress, Manzi & Glasscock, 2001), career aspirations (Hackett, Esposito, & O'Halloran, 1989), and career decision-making (O'Neil et al., 1980).

As a result, an emphasis on CSCs as the sole contributor toward students' career development is misplaced, given that a panoply of other factors, such as social capital and family influences, have been documented as influencing college students' career-related outcomes. Consequently, the degree to which CSCs—among other factors—influence students' career outcomes in general and career adaptability in particular is an open empirical question.

Methods

This mixed-methods case study examines undergraduate students' experiences with career services and decision-making processes at a school of business in a large research university in the U.S.. Specifically, we employ a qualitative dominant approach, where the qualitative portion of the study takes precedence over the quantitative during the analytic phases of the research (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

Research Sites and Sampling

Research was conducted within the school of business at a large, public, doctoral-granting research university with over 40,000 full-time undergraduate and graduate students. The school enrolls over 2,500 bachelor of business administration students who can choose from 10 business majors. The school's CSC offers a wide range of career and professional development-related services on campus, including résumé workshops, mock interviews, networking opportunities, and more.

Procedures and Study Participants

Data collection occurred from January to May 2017. First, an online survey was administered to all registered undergraduate students within the business school. Of the approximately 2,500 students who received the survey, 372 students responded to and completed it, a 14.8% response

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rate. After completing the survey, students could self-select into focus groups, and 35 students participated in 13 focus groups that lasted approximately 45 minutes and ranged in size from one to five students per group. Focus group participants were reimbursed with \$20 payment on the date of the scheduled focus group. The majors of participants in both phases of the study included accounting, actuarial science, finance, marketing, management and human resources, real estate, international business, and operations and technology management. Additional information on the demographic of study participants is in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic Information for Survey and Focus Group Participants

		Survey (<i>n</i> = 372)	Focus group (<i>n</i> = 35)
Category	Subcategory	<i>Average</i> <i>n</i> (%)	
Student-reported Family Income		\$100,000–\$149,999	no information
Gender	Female	189 (50.8%)	23 (65.7%)
	Male	183 (49.2%)	12 (34.2%)
Race/Ethnicity	American Indian or Alaskan Native	1 (0.3%)	0
	Asian/Asian American	47 (12.6%)	4 (11.3%)
	Black/African American	6 (1.6%)	0
	Hispanic/Latino/a	13 (3.5%)	1 (3%)
	White	314 (84.4%)	30 (85.7%)
Student status	First-generation	45 (12.1%)	no information
	International	22 (5.9%)	no information
	Domestic	350 (94.1%)	no information

Survey. The survey contained 57 items, including specific items that elicited information about participants’ satisfaction with career services, sources of information regarding careers, and career adaptability. Here we detail the key measures in our analysis:

Utilization of and satisfaction with career services. Four items assessed participants’ utilization of career services and their levels of satisfaction with these experiences. Participants indicated on a single item how frequently they accessed CSC programs (i.e., “in the past 12 months, how often have you utilized career services at the School of Business”) using a 4-point scale: 1 (*once*) to 4 (*5 or more times*). Participants also rated their satisfaction with CSC programs via three items (“career services addressed my unique needs, questions, and interests,” “... took time to understand my situation and/or concerns,” and “... were able to provide appropriate resources that reflected my cultural/ethnic background”) using a Likert-style response scale that ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*).

Sources of information regarding careers. We created nine items to assess participants’ frequency of relying on different sources (e.g., immediate family members, friends and peers, career services at my college, faculty etc.) when seeking career-related information. Participants rated their use of these resources using a 5-point scale: 1 (*never*) to 5 (*very frequently*). Each item referred to the use of a particular source.

Career adaptability. The Career Adapt-Abilities Scale International Version 2.0 (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012) assessed participants’ levels of career adaptability. The scale’s 24 items are

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equally divided among four subscales: career concern, control, curiosity, and confidence. Participants were asked to rate the strength of their abilities as listed within each subscale. Sample items include “preparing for the future” (concern), “taking responsibility for my actions” (control), “looking for opportunities to grow as a person” (curiosity), and “overcoming obstacles” (confidence). All items were rated on a 5-point Likert-style scale ranging from 1 (*not strong*) to 5 (*strongest*). The scale has been tested and validated across 13 countries including the U.S., yielding high internal consistency estimates (alphas range from 0.87 to 0.96) for the full scale (Savickas & Portefeli, 2012). The cross-national internal consistency estimates for the subscales were adequate (concern = 0.83; control = 0.74; curiosity = 0.79; confidence = 0.85). The full-scale alpha for this sample was 0.92.

Focus groups. We followed a semistructured protocol to conduct the focus groups, which were facilitated by the first and third authors. Examples of questions asked in these focus groups included: *Can you describe your experiences with your college’s career counseling/advising? When you have academic or career concerns, who do you go to for advice and suggestions? Do you actively seek out new opportunities for yourself in terms of learning and/or career development? Why or why not?*

Data Analysis

Analyses of qualitative (focus group) and quantitative (survey) data occurred simultaneously. However, as noted, interpretation of results from the qualitative portion took precedence over the quantitative results, given the increased detail available within the focus group data related to our research questions.

First, survey data were analyzed to produce descriptive statistics and correlations among key variables of interest using SPSS 22.0 (IBM Corp., 2013). Descriptive analyses of participants’ satisfaction with career services and use of resources to gain career information were generated to address the first two research questions. Correlational analyses between the Career Adapt-Abilities Scale subscales and participants’ sources of information as well as utilization of the CSC were run to address the third question.

Next, we analyzed responses to focus group questions using inductive qualitative data analysis (Bernard, 2011), where preliminary codes were developed to be as close to the text as possible (Robson, 2011). Both analysts coded five of the 13 focus group transcripts using *NVivo* qualitative data analysis software. This initial step produced 42 codes subsumed under three themes (career services, career decision-making, and career adaptability) that served as a framework for subsequent rounds of coding for the remaining transcripts. Examples of initial codes included “feeling discouraged after sessions” (career services), “personal influences” (career decision-making), and “confidence” (career adaptability). The results of this coding scheme were used to answer research questions 1 and 2.

To answer research question 3, we examined connections between and among codes in order to ascertain relationships between career services (and other factors) and career-related outcomes. Analysts returned to the 13 transcripts and proceeded to identify explicit statements of causal relationships. These causal statements were organized according to antecedents (e.g.,

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“deciding on career path”), mediating variables (e.g., “mom talks about changes in job field”), and associated outcomes (e.g., “career adaptability”), resulting in a full causal statement. These resulting utterances, known as causal fragments, were then analyzed through multiple rounds of inductive coding where two analysts generalized and then linked the fragments. For example, “mom talks about changes in job field” was ultimately generalized to “family advice and support,” which, as a mediating variable, became linked to a variety of career-related outcomes. In other words, the causal fragments demonstrate the causal links between codes.

Instances where multiple code-code relationships existed were then graphically depicted in what is known as a causal network, or a visual representation of relationships between variables (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). For example, “family advice and support” was linked to several outcomes, such as identifying an interest in a business career field and the decision to declare a specific major in business, such as accounting. To simplify these representations, infrequently cited code-code links were removed, resulting in causal networks that comprised only code-code relations reported by more than one student. For each stage of analysis, we met regularly to discuss disparate findings, collaboratively revise and/or examine codebooks and findings, and arrive at conclusions as a validity check (Robson, 2011). With the results from the qualitative and quantitative analyses, we answered all three research questions using both datasets.

Limitations

Our sample was limited to undergraduates in the school of business who were disproportionately white and from middle- to upper-class backgrounds (based on self-reported family income). Because studies have found conflicting results in relation to underrepresented students’ utilization and satisfaction with career services (Gallup, Inc., 2016; Shivy & Koehly, 2002), future research exploring minority student experiences is warranted. Further, longitudinal studies with in-depth one-on-one interviewing techniques (as opposed to focus group interviews) would generate a deeper understanding of the complexity of the sociocultural and organizational factors and independent activities that influence students’ thinking and decisions about their careers. Expanding research to other institutions across different disciplines would yield a more thorough analysis.

Results

In this section we report findings for each of the three research questions. We first present data from the quantitative analyses, then more in-depth treatment of the qualitative data.

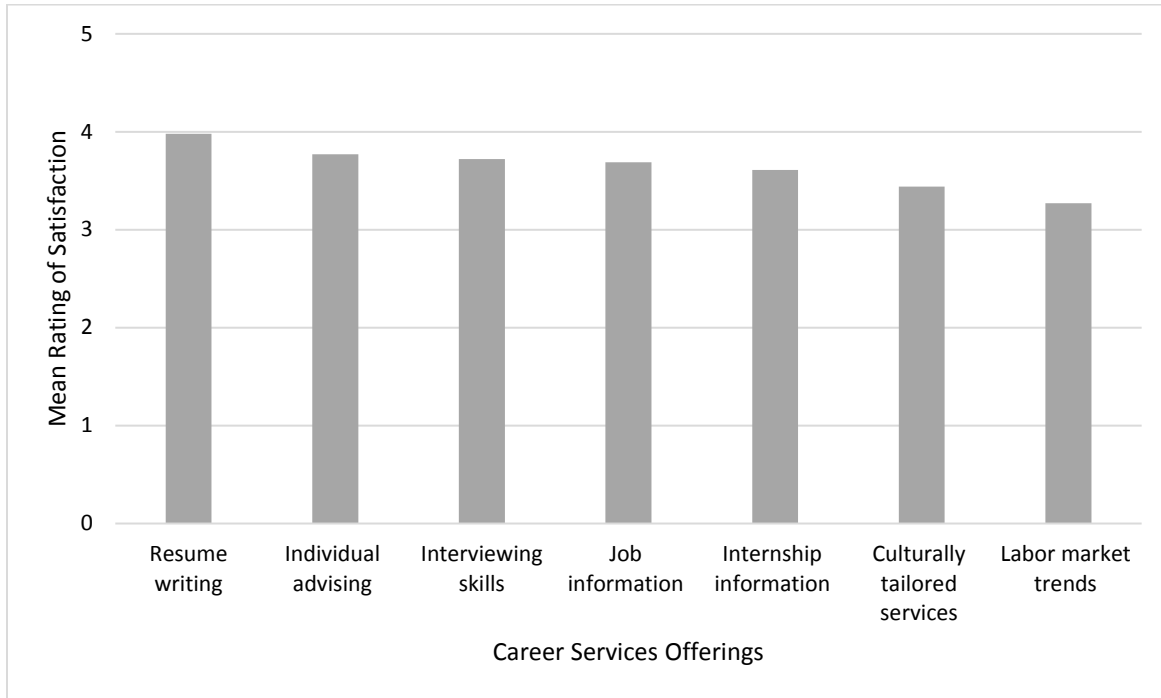
1. Students’ Utilization of and Satisfaction with Career Services Center

Survey results. Of the 372 participants who completed the survey, the majority of participants (71%) reported being aware of career services and having accessed them. With respect to frequency of use within the previous year, the majority reported using career services two to three times (45.8%), followed by once (34.1%), four to five times (11.7%), and more than five times (8.3%). Students who indicated that they had used career services were then asked to rate their satisfaction with the different services provided ($n = 264$). As shown in Figure 1,

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participants reported highest satisfaction with the résumé writing services ($M = 3.98$, $SD = 0.83$), followed by individual advising sessions ($M = 3.77$, $SD = 0.99$), and assistance with interviewing skills ($M = 3.72$, $SD = 0.90$). Of these services, the provision of culturally tailored services ($M = 3.44$, $SD = 0.97$) and information about labor market trends ($M = 3.27$, $SD = 0.89$) were rated least favorably.

Figure 1. Surveyed Students' Mean Ratings of Career Services Offerings



Rating scale: 1 = Unsatisfactory, 2 = Improvement needed, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Met expectations, 5 = Exceeded expectations

Focus group findings. Next, survey respondents who agreed to participate in focus groups were asked to describe their experiences with career services, as all focus group participants had visited the CSC at least once. Focus group results were organized into positive and negative experiences with CSC programs and services. The themes and frequency with which results were found are in Table 2.

In general, students in the focus groups felt that the CSC programs, tools, and services were useful and beneficial. However, for students needing support related to an individual disciplinary focus and/or with choosing or changing a career path, services missed the mark. In particular, international students and first-generation college students were more likely to find their needs unmet.

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Table 2. Themes of Students’ Positive and Negative Experiences with CSC

	Theme: Students said they	Definition: Students said career services
<i>Positive experiences</i>		
1	learned how to secure employment	provided coaching and training of skills pertinent to employment (e.g., interviewing, résumé critique)
2	received relevant information and resources	provided adequate occupation-related information and assisted in expanding students’ networks
3	received tailored advice and guidance	cultivated relationships with students that increased students’ comfort with asking questions and facilitated students’ self-awareness
<i>Negative experiences</i>		
1	received insufficient internship and employment support	needed improvement in these areas: connecting students with work opportunities, more rigorous skills coaching (e.g., negotiations, interviewing), and expanding network of employers into other geographic regions
2	found staff to lack professionalism and relevant knowledge	perceived as inadequate given high staff turnover and limited availability; and characterized staff as having limited knowledge about industry-specific insights and labor trends, and at times, unsupportive of students
3	received “cookie-cutter” advising with low levels of personalization	provided guidance and advice that was poorly tailored to meet needs for career exploration, instead seeming “scripted” for average student and focused on job-matching.
4	received insufficient support for underrepresented students	provided inadequate support and resources for underrepresented groups including international students and students of color.

Data source: focus groups

Positive experiences with the CSC. Focus group participants cited CSC programs and services to be meeting or exceeding expectations in three main areas. First, several students reported experiences that *prepared them to be successful in securing employment*. Students found mock interviews, job shadowing, and résumé workshops to be the most helpful in promising to secure them jobs post-graduation. As the most often-cited positive experiences, these workshops generally were regarded as increasing student preparedness and boosting confidence during the often grueling job-search and interviewing processes.

Another commonly cited positive experience pertained to how the CSC offered *relevant information and resources*. These observations included programs that connected students with established professional networks through the school of business, providing opportunities for students to make contacts with employers and alumni in their fields of interest. The third positive theme captured student views that the programs offered *tailored guidance and advice*. These students appreciated that through one-on-one interactions with career advisors, they generally received advice tailored to their ambitions and career goals.

Negative experiences with the CSC. Negative experiences with career services were categorized into four main themes. The most frequently cited theme, *insufficient internship and employment support*, was based on students’ needs for additional services related to networking and securing relevant internships. These criticisms included a lack of geographic diversity with respect to employers featured in the CSC, including a lack of opportunities outside the geographic region and too few international work opportunities. Students seeking assistance with securing internships described their one-on-one meetings with advisors as providing no

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additional benefit than what they could find online, and some students reported a lack of guidance or advice regarding salary negotiation and interviewing skills.

The second most salient theme was career advisors' *lack of professionalism and relevant knowledge*. Observations included a perceived lack of knowledge about specific industry trends, a need to acquire and retain advisors with more specific and up-to-date disciplinary expertise, and instances where career advisors were rude or discouraging. Negative encounters with advisors, who at times were student peers a similar age to study participants, resulted in some students leaving their career advising appointments feeling less confident than when they first arrived at the CSC.

The next most frequent theme describing students' negative experiences were critiques related to *"cookie cutter" advising and a lack of personalization*. As one student said, "I just felt like they were missing who I was, like the advice they were giving me was the same thing they say to every student." Similar statements were grounded in concerns about not receiving sufficient information and support with respect to long-term career goals, and instead, students felt that advisors focused too much on short-term post-graduation employment. Students also lamented the 'standard' business model (e.g. careers with regional companies, working from 9 a.m.–5 p.m.) and wished for advice on how to use their degree in a less traditional manner.

The last theme related to negative experiences was that of *insufficient support for underrepresented students*. Students of color, international students, and first-generation college students described an unmet demand for services that addressed their individualized needs beyond those of the predominantly white U.S. student population. For example, several students expressed a desire for career advisors who could better understand their experiences, and for specific resources about job opportunities for certain groups, especially international students wishing to work and remain in the U.S. post-graduation. Further, first-generation college students felt inadequately prepared to network at career events as opposed to their non-first-generation peers.

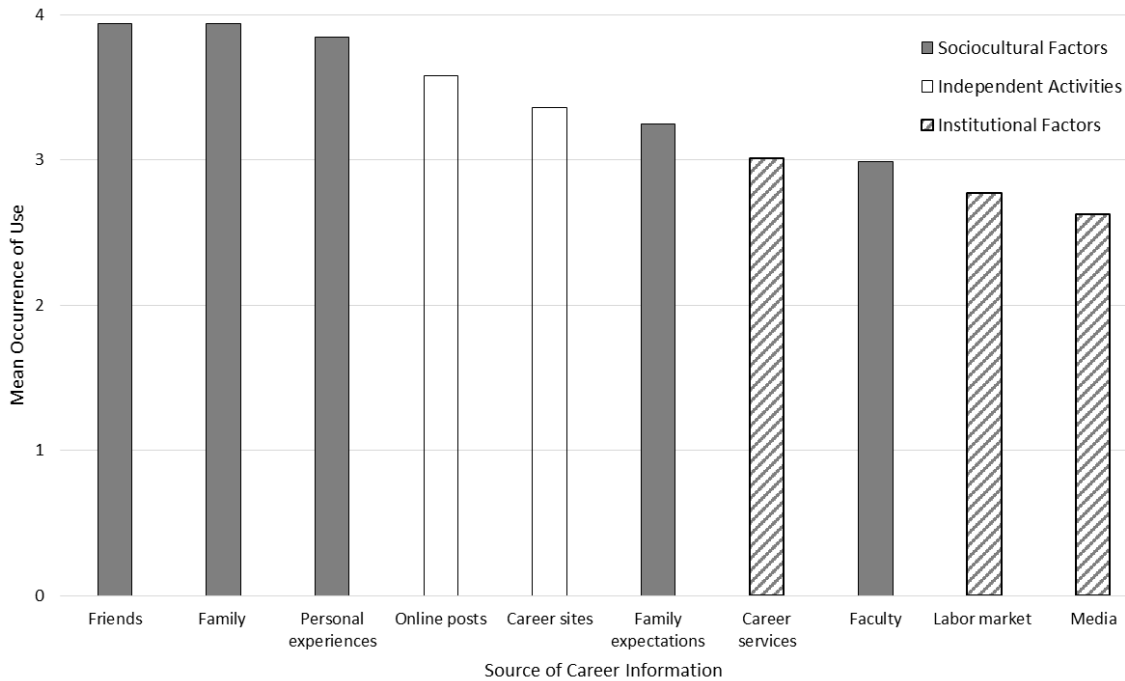
2. Sources of Information Informing Students' Career Decision-making

While many students turn to a CSC for resources and advice about the world of work, other factors also inform and shape students' career decision-making. Since students' perceptions and goals related to careers evolve and change throughout their life course (Savickas, 2013) and are influenced by sociocultural and family-related factors (Schultheiss, et al., 2001), identifying the factors that influence students' views about work and subsequent career decisions outside the academy is essential.

Survey-based student ratings of sources of career-related information. Survey respondents rated their use of sources to obtain career information. Figure 2 depicts survey participants' use of sources from the most influential to the least influential. Further, we mapped the source categories (i.e., sociocultural factors, independent activities, and institutional factors) from our qualitative analysis to the survey options as demonstrated in Figure 2. For example, we categorized friends as a sociocultural factor based on the definition we developed through coding the focus group data as described below.

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Figure 2. Student' Use of Sources of Career Information



Rating scale: 1 = Once, 2 = 2-3 times, 3 = 4-5 times, 4 = 5 times or more

Data sources: survey and focus groups

Sociocultural factors such as friends or peers ($M = 3.94$, $SD = 0.88$) and family ($M = 3.94$, $SD = 1.02$) were rated as the most influential or frequently used sources for career information, followed by personal experiences ($M = 3.85$, $SD = 0.87$). Career services were ranked the seventh most influential source of career information ($M = 3.01$, $SD = 1.02$), while the least utilized or influential sources of information were faculty ($M = 2.99$, $SD = 0.97$), labor market information (institutional factor; $M = 2.77$, $SD = 1.05$), and media reports (institutional factor; $M = 2.63$, $SD = 1.04$). Overall, survey participants reported a greater reliance on sociocultural resources compared to institutional factors such as CSC programs and services.

Focus group reports of influential sources of career-related information. In analyzing the focus group data on this topic, we identified three categories: sociocultural factors, institutional factors, and independent activities.

Sociocultural factors (68 out of 153 codes; 44%). This category referred to the influential people and familial norms or expectations that influence students' views about careers and work. These factors include, from the most frequently reported to the least: (a) the types of jobs family members held; (b) family advice, support, and expectations; (c) educators' advice and encouragement (high school and college); (d) guest speakers in college courses; and (e) work supervisors.

Many students discussed the significant role of their parents in shaping their career-related thinking. This influence took many forms such as parental advice or discouragement against certain occupations, and tips and strategies about negotiating salaries or accepting job offers. Many students reported being influenced by their parents' occupations, especially if they were

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small business owners, which in several cases led to their desire to pursue business-related careers. Educators and work supervisors also represented a source of influential advice and were seen as an “unbiased” (i.e., non-family) source of information.

Institutional factors (66 out of 153 codes; 43%). Institutional factors included sources of career-related information that students acquire from organizations or institutional offices and staff, usually in high school or college settings. These sources included, from the most frequently reported to the least: (a) sessions with career advisors (one-on-one advising); (b) in-class experiences in high school and college that featured career-related information (educators connecting course content to current industry trends); (c) career development resources (information provided by the CSC outside of one-on-one mentoring); (d) professional student organizations; and (e) general experiences with the school of business (feelings of preparedness associated with the school of business’ student climate and reputation).

The most widely reported institutional source of information were sessions with career advisors, where students discussed their goals, developed career-related skills (e.g., résumé writing), and obtained information about their selected careers and industries. Students reported they developed deeper insights into occupations from comments or anecdotes told by instructors and from guest speakers in their classes. Professional student organizations, such as the actuarial science club, offered opportunities for students to network and exchange industry-specific knowledge. In general, these institutional sources of information served to provide opportunities for students to build upon already-existing interests in a specific field or occupation.

Independent activities (19/153 codes; 12%). This category included activities that students engaged in independently beyond formal institutional programs and/or sociocultural influences. These activities include, from the most frequently reported to the least: (a) internships, (b) online research on jobs and careers, and (c) previous work experience. Each activity was motivated by forces not directly linked to sociocultural factors and/or college-based programs and services. For instance, students described their internship experiences as illuminating workplace preferences (e.g. team-based work, office climate, leadership styles, and industry trends). While sociocultural and institutional factors often provided the impetus or vehicle for students’ access to these opportunities, the influential aspects of internships were ultimately based from students’ highly personal experiences in these settings.

3. Exploring Factors Associated with Career Outcomes

Next, we turn to the ways in which sources of information and activities, including but not limited to CSC programs and services, are associated with career-related outcomes such as students’ psychological characteristics, career decisions, and social capital. In particular, we sought to examine the ways in which the sources of information and influences as previously reported affect student outcomes.

Analysis of survey. First, survey data were analyzed to examine the relationship between influential information sources (i.e., career services, family, and friends) and a specific career-related outcome—that of the psychological attributes of career adaptability (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). To explore these relationships, we conducted a Pearson correlational analysis using

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variables for student utilization of CSC programs, influential information sources, and the Career Adapt-Abilities Scale subscales of concern, control, curiosity, and confidence. (See Table 3.)

**Table 3. Descriptive and Correlational Analyses
of the Career Adapt-Abilities Scale with Source Use and CSC Utilization**

Measure	Mean	Range	Standard Deviation	Source of influence			Utilization
				Family	Friends/ Peers	Career Services	Career Services
Concern	22.43	6-30	4.40	0.13*	0.21**	0.22**	0.13*
Control	22.55	6-30	4.35	0.11*	0.24**	0.12*	-0.03
Curiosity	21.80	6-30	3.40	0.09	0.20**	0.13*	0.09
Confidence	23.16	6-30	4.10	0.13*	0.22**	0.07	0.04

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, $N = 369-372$

Data source: survey

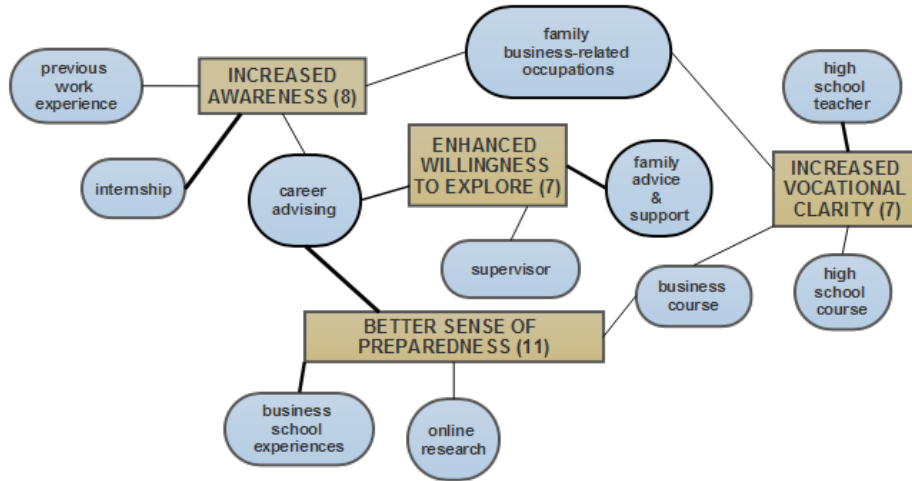
Students who rated relying on their families for information had higher levels of career concern ($r = 0.13$, $p < .05$), control ($r = 0.11$), and confidence ($r = 0.13$). The more frequently students rated relying on their friends or peers for information, the higher their levels of career concern ($r = 0.21$, $p < .01$), control ($r = 0.24$), curiosity ($r = 0.20$), and confidence ($r = 0.22$). Students' rated use of the CSC for career information was positively correlated with their concern ($r = 0.22$), control ($r = 0.12$), and curiosity ($r = 0.13$) scores. Last, students' utilization of the CSC was positively correlated with their career concern ($r = 0.13$), which suggests that students with greater career concern reported using career services more frequently. While these correlational relationships are significant, their effect sizes are small or moderate per Cohen's (1992) conventions.

Analysis of focus groups. Next, we examined the focus groups' qualitative data in greater depth to examine how the CSC programs, friends, and family led to a range of career-related outcomes. The outcomes students described were organized into three distinct categories: psychological characteristics, career decisions, and social capital. After identifying the type of outcomes, we conducted a causal network analysis that entailed identifying causal fragments where students explicitly linked an institutional program, sociocultural factor, or independent activity with an outcome. In the remainder of this section, we report the most commonly referenced causal networks for each of the three categories.

Psychological characteristics. Closely aligned with the tenets of the Career Adapt-Abilities Scale, the category of psychological characteristics offers a window into students' development of similar psychosocial constructs like career adaptability. The category of psychological characteristics refers to the thoughts, beliefs, and attitudes that individuals hold about themselves and the world of work. Specifically, the data indicate that students reported four distinct types of psychological outcomes that were influenced by a variety of people, events, and programs: better sense of preparedness, increased awareness, enhanced willingness to explore, and increased vocational clarity (see Figure 3).

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Figure 3. Psychological Characteristics and Sources of Influence



Data source: focus groups

Better sense of preparedness (11/126 causal fragments; 9%). This category referred to students' sense of psychological preparedness for pursuing career goals. Specifically, students described four influences that increased their preparedness: career advising (5 fragments), general business school experiences (4), business coursework (1), and online research (1). Career advising and business school experiences (e.g., school of business reputation) represent institutional factors that helped students feel more prepared via résumé workshops, mock interview sessions, and job fairs. For instance, while preparing for a job interview, one student noted the helpfulness of career services in providing a list of commonly asked behavioral interview questions, which familiarized him with the interview process and reduced his anxiety. Additionally, discussions with career advisors around workplace dynamics, such as gender in the workplace, allowed students to anticipate potential challenges and how to advocate for themselves.

Increased awareness (8/126 causal fragments; 6%). This category referred to students' development of a deeper awareness and understanding of their career goals, job preferences, and career options. Students described four specific factors that increased their awareness about the world of work: internships (5 fragments), previous work experience (1), career advising (1), and family business-related occupations (1). Internship experiences exposed students to new or unexpected career opportunities. For example, one student noted having increased awareness about a particular field of work: "It's a real estate internship, a real estate company and I've really never thought about real estate before. I'm (a retail major), and it's completely different, but (real estate) is definitely a career path that I'm thinking about pursuing." The influence of internships on student outcomes is well established in the literature (e.g., Paulson & Baker, 1999), and these data reinforce how work-based learning experiences can play an important role in enhancing students' awareness of not only the day-to-day realities of the workplace but also different career opportunities that they may not have previously considered.

Enhanced willingness to explore (7/126 causal fragments; 6%). Another type of psychological outcome is an enhanced willingness to explore different career opportunities.

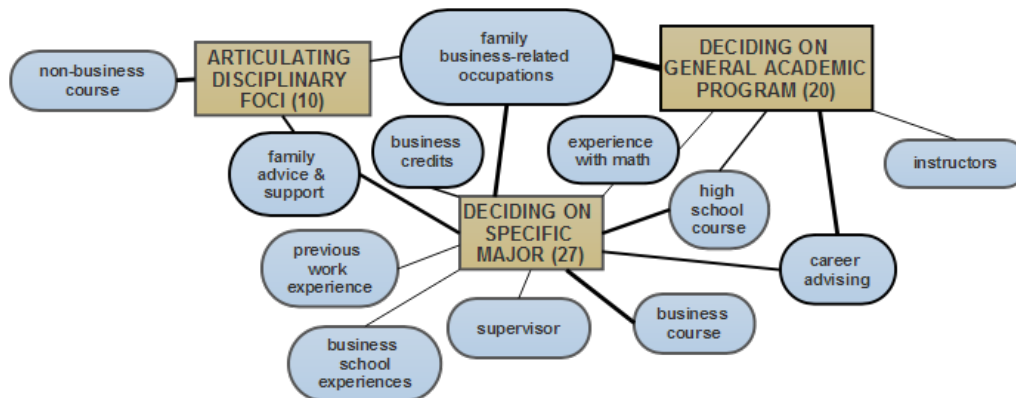
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Students identified three main sources contributing to their enhanced willingness to explore: family advice and support (4 fragments), career advising (2), and their work supervisors (1). A particularly influential factor helped students feel comfortable with experimenting with different career options was their families. For others, CSC programs acted as an influential force encouraging them to discover or explore different interests and career prospects. One student noted that having an in-depth conversation with a career services professional allowed him to find out more about himself, his career and life goals, and different prospects for the future.

Increased vocational clarity (7/126 causal fragments; 6%). The final psychological outcome identified in our study was that of increased clarity for vocational and career goals. The four factors that led to this outcome include: high school teachers (4 fragments), college-level business courses (1), business-related high school courses (1), and family business-related occupations (1). Some students observed that their high school teachers had identified their business-related aptitude and encouraged them to consider business as a major when they went to college. For example, one student noted that their math teacher “really influenced [them] in pursuing numbers and told [them] that [finance] might be a good career for me.” Exposure to business-related content through accounting courses in college and high school, and through parents’ involvement in running a small business, were also factors that increased the clarity of some students’ professional goals.

Career decisions. The category of career decision-making outcomes referred to the processes of and outcomes related to students’ decision-making about their majors and/or careers. Three primary types of selections were identified in this category: articulating disciplinary foci, deciding on general academic program, and choosing specific major (see Figure 4).

Figure 4. Career Decisions and Sources of Influence



Data source: focus groups

Articulating disciplinary foci (10/126 causal fragments; 8%). This category of picking business as the career field to pursue referred to students’ decisions to pursue a particular discipline, in this case, the field of business. Students identified three main sources of influences that shaped their choice of a career field: non-business courses (5 fragments), family advice and support (3), and their family’s business-related occupations (2). Family advice and support included both advice against entering a particular career field, of which teaching was mentioned

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more than once, and support for choosing a business-related career path, often attributed to the likelihood of job stability and income. Similarly, students whose parents worked in business noted that influenced their decisions to pursue a similar career path. Exposure to non-business courses were often described as moments of occupational epiphany where students began to identify areas where their skills did not match well with other career paths. For example, one student described both the influence of their parents as well as exposure to a non-business course that influenced their decision to major in business. “When I was younger, I always wanted to be a bioengineer. And then I took honors bio in sixth grade and it went terribly so I decided that was not for me. After the bioengineering thing wasn’t going to work out, I started looking at what my parents were doing.”

Deciding on general academic program (20/126 causal fragments; 16%). This outcome referred to the general decision to apply to and enroll in the business school at the research university in this study, and not necessarily to a specific major, which is declared once the student is formally accepted into the business school during their second year. Factors that influenced the decision to pursue a business degree were cited as: family’s business-related occupations (11 fragments), career advising (5), high school courses (2), instructors (1), and experience with mathematics (1). Many students in the study could trace their decision to enroll in the school of business to their family’s business-related occupations. One student described following in his father’s footsteps and discovering his college roommates had done the same: “I just did what I knew. Like my dad was in business, so OK, I’ll study business. And I would be, sure I’d get a job. I found out my roommates too, each of us is studying exactly what our dad does.”

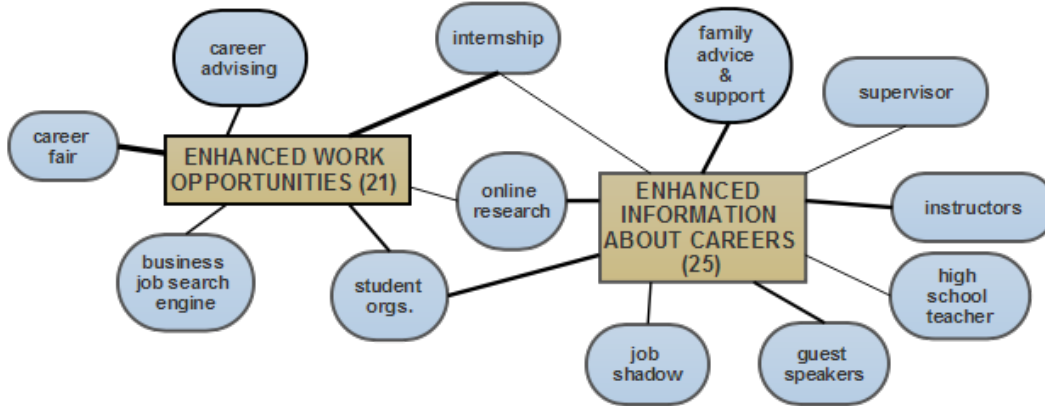
Deciding on specific major (27/126 causal fragments; 21%). This outcome included decisions that students made regarding the choice of a specific major within the school of business, such as finance, marketing, or accounting. This decision had 10 associated influences: business course(s) (5 fragments), family’s business-related occupations (5), family advice and support (4), high school course(s) (4), career advising (3), credits (and/or credit transfer) in the school of business (2), experience with mathematics (1), work supervisor(s) (1), experiences of being in the school of business (1), and previous work experiences (1).

For several students, taking a course in a specific field of business piqued their interest and led them to decide to major in that specialty. One student noted she decided to major in finance largely due to “what classes I enjoyed the most.” For another student, the parental connection to the business school specifically shaped their decision: “I think my parents influenced me in my decision to do marketing especially here, they both graduated from [this university] too and have been doing well. So, I think my parents probably played the biggest role in that.” Another influential factor shaping students’ decisions were family members’ advice. For one student, her sister’s experience as a finance major at another university, which included advice about “how much you can do with a finance degree and how versatile it is,” led her to focus on finance. Similarly, advice about what *not* to major in also influenced students’ thinking, such as worried comments about the state of the global economy and the poor job security and pay of fields such as teaching.

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Social capital. The final category of social capital referred to the development of students' career related professional or social networks, and the information and opportunities afforded via these networks. This category is based on the notion that important information and opportunities flow through social connections and networks, which in turn provide venues for the sharing of information and opportunities (Farmer-Hinton, 2008; Rios-Aguilar & Deil-Amen, 2012). Social-capital represent an important mechanism through which students develop career-related opportunities (see Figure 5).

Figure 5. Social Capital and Sources of Influence



Data source: focus groups

Enhanced information about careers (25/126 causal fragments, 20%). This outcome referred to insights and information resources that broaden student understanding of particular occupations and/or otherwise influence their interest in work opportunities. The primary resources available to and accessed by students to gain a better understanding of occupations include: instructors(s) (4 fragments), family advice and support (4), online research (4), student organizations (4), guest speaker(s) (3), job shadowing (2), supervisor(s) (1), business course(s) (1), high school teacher(s) (1), and internship(s) (1).

These data indicate that faculty and instructors played an influential role in students' thinking about careers via their discussions about the workplace. One student described how she had relied on her instructor in a marketing course to deepen her understanding of both digital aspects of marketing and the restaurant industry. For her, the instructor had provided valuable insights into real-world situations and applications. Family advice and support proved just as important in developing a nuanced understanding of certain professions, such as accounting. In other cases, students relied on their own searching of online resources to get information about different careers. For instance, several students mentioned the Glassdoor website (www.Glassdoor.com) as a valuable resource in finding out about a company's interviewing and hiring practices, salary ranges for open positions, company culture, and patterns of employee retention and attrition. Finally, student organizations provided a venue through which students acquired information about possible careers. One student reported that these organizations, such as the actuarial science club, provided important networking opportunities with other students in the field and recent alumni.

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Enhanced work opportunities (21/126 causal fragments, 17%). Finally, students reported that their professional, academic, and social networks and connections led to enhanced opportunities for internships and jobs. These outcomes were facilitated by six influential factors: the school of business career fair (6), internship(s) (5), student organization(s) (3), individual career advising (3), the school's own job search engine (3), and online research (1). The most frequently cited factor that influenced students' work opportunities was the school's well-established biannual business career fair, during which hundreds of (primarily) regional recruiters set up tables in the expansive athletic center, providing on-the-spot networking opportunities. For several students, the career fair provided the opportunity for a conversation with regional employers, leading to internships and later, several full-time jobs. For other students, many of their social networks, often attributed to their families, led to key internship opportunities.

Results from the causal network analysis highlight the importance of the CSC in developing students' career readiness and adaptability, providing opportunities to shape and develop essential professional networks and connections, and career-related outcomes. Altogether, the data from this research indicate that while the CSC and other institutional programs are influential in shaping students' diverse career-related outcomes, they are but one factor among several young adults during the vital stage of their career development, namely, college.

Discussion

For many emerging adults, college is a place and time for career exploration and development (Arnett, 2000). Students are afforded opportunities to create networks and experiences that allow them to explore potential vocational trajectories. Concurrently, their salient early life experiences and interactions with individuals continue to shape their career choices and responses to normative career tasks (Savickas, 2013). Taken together, these contextual factors—in the past and present—influence students' career opportunities and development.

Given the mounting pressure for colleges to prepare graduates for the world of work, CSCs have been scrutinized for their effectiveness in promoting students' career development and employability (Chan & Derry, 2013; Ezarik, 2016). However, limited empirical research has examined the impact of CSCs on students' career outcomes as they pertain to career-related skills, social capital, and psychological readiness for the world of work. Research on this topic has primarily focused on whether and how often students utilize CSC programs and services (e.g., Gallup, Inc., 2016). While this emphasis is important, it overlooks a panoply of other forces that shape students' career development. Further, while a focus on employment status and wages of graduates is important, so too is the development of psychological resources that enhance career success, such as career adaptability (Guan et al., 2013; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). These gaps in the literature are problematic for student affairs and career services professionals, given the increased focus on these units and a widespread emphasis on graduate employability as a primary goal of higher education (Tomlinson, 2012). Scholars have urged for effectiveness assessments of CSCs to better understand their contributions toward student development in higher education (Vinson, Reardon, & Bertoch, 2014).

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In this paper we reported results from a mixed-methods study that addressed these issues, namely, the degree to which students utilize the CSC, which factors (including the CSC) inform students' approach to career development, and how these various factors influence career-related outcomes, especially their psychological resources. In this discussion, we highlight key results and how they extend the literature on these topics, followed by recommendations for practice and future research.

Insights into Students' Utilization of and Satisfaction with CSCs

Findings offer insights into students' current use of and satisfaction with career services. Although CSCs are regarded as a major resource for students' career attainment and workplace success (Gobel, 2014; Selingo, 2016; Young, 2016), 29% of our 372 survey participants were unaware of career services and thus, had not visited the CSC. This utilization rate is comparable to results from a national survey of over 30,000 U.S. college students that indicated that approximately 40% of the sample had never used career services resources online or in-person (Gallup, Inc., 2017). Despite the higher school of business career services utilization rate of 71%, it appears that school of business career services can strengthen outreach to ensure that more students are aware of available career assistance. Among business students who knew about career services, all reported using them at least once in the previous year; most students reported using career services two to three times. Taken together, students are able to seek help from career services once they become aware of the resources or the existence of the center. Thus, our results underscore the importance of increasing students' awareness of career services available to them to increase their engagement with the center. Given that our results are limited to a particular school of business's CSC, we recommend researchers examine the utilization and satisfaction in other colleges (e.g., engineering, letters and sciences).

Our results also suggest that students are most satisfied with the pragmatic tools and guidance offered, including résumé reviews and interview preparation. However, students cited dissatisfaction with career services when obtaining support that required deeper exploration of students' long-term career goals; several students described the guidance they received as "scripted." Additionally, students from underrepresented backgrounds (i.e., students of color, international students, and first-generation college students) who attended the focus group interviews reported their backgrounds were not adequately considered or integrated by career services professionals. As one student described, "I wish, [we had] more time just to talk about what I have been involved in up until that point and what I was interested in ... just trying to figure out me as a person." Overall, it appears that school of business career services were adequately meeting students' needs for job-search tools that increase their employability as job applicants, but were less successfully meeting students' needs with respect to their unique interests, situations, and backgrounds. Thus, we argue that while a focus on the adequacy or efficacy of CSC programs and services is important, a sole focus on them is misguided.

Sociocultural Forces Play a Critical Role in Influencing Students' Career Interests

Consistent with career construction theory (Savickas, 2013; Savickas et al., 2009), this study offers a detailed and holistic account of students' career decision-making processes by revealing

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the significant impact that outside influences, such as familial and personal relationships, have on students' career trajectories. While previous work highlights the importance of these relationships (Fadulu, 2018; Schultheiss et al., 2001), they offer less in consideration of all potential influences toward career decision-making alongside an assessment of career services.

Results indicate that sociocultural factors, particularly those related to families, were influential in shaping students' career goals. Above all else, students regarded the types of jobs their family members held as important indicator of students' career aspirations. Outcomes from this influence often took shape in students pursuing career paths similar to those of their parents or siblings, and/or drawing on their own observations of their parents' occupations in choosing their own. Advice and support from family members were critical in students' decision-making, followed by the advice and encouragement of high school and college educators. Workplace role models, such as students' supervisors and guest speakers from their field of interest in their college courses, shaped students' career goals by revealing career-related preferences and imagining their place in the real world of work.

While other types of influences—such as institutional resources and independent activities—also influenced students' career goals, sociocultural forces shaped how students experienced and utilized institutional resources, as well as how they took up independent activities such as internships. While the sample was limited to students in business, a discipline where many students exhibit social capital resources (e.g., professional networks and connections), the findings suggest that career practitioners ought to help students leverage the sociocultural resources available to students with less social capital. The prominence of sociocultural forces in shaping one's career path are of utmost importance and follow students wherever they seek career guidance.

Factors Affect Students' Career-related Outcomes in Different Ways

Results of this study inform the literature on the range of career-related outcomes that emerge as a result of several influences in students' lives. Beyond wages and post-graduation employment, we argue that students developed a variety of career-related outcomes that also shape their career adaptability, a crucial attribute in the career construction theory framework needed for future workplace success (Savickas, 2013). From the focus group data, these other important outcomes fall into three groups: *psychological characteristics*, *career decisions*, and *social capital*. In particular, psychological characteristics overlap with aspects of the career adaptability construct as measured by the Career Adapt-Abilities Scale, and as such we argue that accounting for psychological outcomes is critical for practitioners in career services. For example, the curiosity subscale includes an assessment of one's motivation to explore career options, which parallels the qualitative findings that include student career exploration as an outcome.

While CSCs contribute to students' career development, results from our study suggest that services were not adequately customized to individual needs, nor did they account for student's varied social and economic backgrounds that were tied to several career-related outcomes. Rather, the services offered by the CSC in this study affected students' career-related outcomes

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strongly in terms of their preparedness in entering the job market (e.g., via interviewing workshops), enrolling in a general academic program and deciding on a specific major (e.g., via one-on-one career advising), and enhancing students' work opportunities (e.g., via career fairs).

We argue that CSCs, while a helpful resource in particular areas of career outcomes, do not adequately adapt services to meet students where they are and appear to have limited influence on students' career adaptability. Rather, career adaptability is more strongly impacted by family advice and support, role modeling of careers through family members and guest speakers in desired disciplines, and high school and college coursework and instructors. To better enhance students' career adaptability, as well as other important career-related outcomes aside from post-graduation employment, CSCs could increase their effectiveness by tailoring services to individual circumstances, experiences, and social capital. We diagnose a need for research to explore students' experiences with career services that accounts for these other important career-related influences and outcomes.

Practical Implications

First, the student affairs and career services professionals need to be attentive to the various factors shaping students' career goals and outcomes, and if and/or how the institution can support career development. Though the CSC in this study (and in others, see Gallup, Inc., 2016, 2017) boasts positive student feedback on job searching and interviewing tools, students were disappointed in the lack of services aimed at exploring their long-term career goals.

Sociocultural factors shape student career development. CSCs could improve their effectiveness if staff adapted services to leverage students' social networks, by first identifying students' social capital as related to their personal networks, on a case-to-case basis with each student. For students who have strong personal connections, including but not limited to family ties in their chosen industry, CSCs could explore how students can utilize and take advantage of their personal connections. For students who lack such resources, often the case for first-generation and low-income students, CSCs should look to engage with these students as early as possible and work to expand their personal networks so that they might have stronger ties to their chosen industry during the final years of their degrees. CSCs can also partner with student organizations to embed career-related programs (e.g., workshops) as a way to reach out to students via their existing peer networks.

CSCs can revise their offerings in concrete ways to leverage existing sociocultural factors that influence students' decision-making, as demonstrated by our findings. CSCs should provide a space for students to reflect and explore the influences and events that led them to where they are, including creating opportunities for students to engage with consistent career professionals over time. Career construction theory reaffirms the usefulness of career interventions, where students can "construct and narrate a story that portrays their career and life with coherence and continuity" (Savickas et al., 2009, p. 245). Narrative exercises enable students to better understand their own life themes and their vocational interests, and generate further exploration of career options (Savickas et al., 2009). If such services exceed the constraints of CSCs, partnerships can be created with other student services (e.g., counseling) to ensure students are

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appropriately referred to other professionals who can help them explore their career paths. Similarly, mental health practitioners in college counseling centers are encouraged to explicitly assess for and address career concerns as part of treatment to ensure that these concerns are not artificially relegated to career services practitioners only (Fouad et al., 2006; Schaub, 2012).

Finally, CSCs can further improve their services by collaborating more effectively and intentionally with instructors who teach courses that are applicable to students' career-development. As many students in the study cited the influence of their instructors, coursework, and guest speakers in their classes, CSCs could work more closely with instructors to amplify their professional development events and guest speaker series by highlighting the work already being done in the classroom and filling in gaps with CSC programming in areas not covered in them. For instance, CSCs might build relationships with key instructors so that CSCs could suggest well-received guest speakers in the profession, and/or that instructors may reach out to CSCs and make in-class content and guest speakers more widely available to other students in the discipline. Overall, these practical implications highlight the need for CSCs to have a more central role on a campus and be more thoroughly integrated in disciplinary programming, as well as providing individualized mentoring experiences where students can explore their long-term career goals and leverage their social and professional networks.

Examining CSC Contributions to Student Career Development Using a Developmental Perspective

Findings from our study emphasize the importance of expanding our discussion of CSCs' contributions beyond (a) students' satisfaction with their services and (b) their impacts on post-graduation employment and salaries. The themes presented above are consistent with career services professionals' views of their roles in helping students explore their career identities, options, and networks (Dey & Cruzvergara, 2014). Contrary to a vocationalist perspective, our study demonstrates that CSCs can be an institutional resource for students' career development that is not simply restricted to their eventual job placements.

Within a person's life course, career development in college is but one phase of a person's identity and career development (Arnett, 2000; Savickas et al., 2009). Our results emphasize the confluence of *sociocultural* and *institutional* factors, as well as *independent activities* that influence students' career goals, decisions, and actions related to vocational tasks that are prevalent during college. These findings are consistent with career development theories such as career construction theory (Savickas, 2013). Characteristic of a developmental perspective are the psychological processes related to self-concept and identity development (Erikson, 1968). The synthesis of past and presents experiences allows an individual to construct a sense of personal continuity that is both facilitative for identity development and well-being (McAdams, 1993; McLean, 2008). Thus, it is imperative for researchers and practitioners to look beyond how CSCs are imparting technical skills (e.g., résumé writing) and consider if or how they contribute to students' vocational development by cultivating their psychosocial skills such as career adaptability (Savickas, 2013) in the context of other significant influences. By doing so,

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we can integrate often disparate fields of student affairs and vocational psychology to more fully understand student experiences with institutional programs geared toward career development.

Conclusion

Ultimately, we contend that disproportionate pressure is placed on CSCs to meet the needs of their constituents—including policy makers, practitioners, and students—and the workforce. This considerable responsibility undermines the complex interrelationship of factors that influence students' career outcomes. Like many of its university administrative counterparts, CSCs are limited by financial and administrative factors (McGrath, 2002) and are thus unable to replicate students' intimate relationships like those with family and peers. Given these constraints, CSCs should partner with other institutional agents (e.g., faculty members) and offices (e.g., mental health counseling), and existing networks within which students are captured (e.g., student groups) to provide career-related support in a more integrated manner.

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