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The primary emphasis in vocational development theory and research has been on vocational outcomes with little attention to the role of the choice process on psychological well-being. Moreover, much of the research on vocational and career development has been oriented toward white middle class adolescents, and assumes a large opportunity structure and set of choice options. Consequently, we have relatively little knowledge about the meaning and significance of the role of work in the lives of individuals from lower socioeconomic positions. This study explored individuals' work possible selves, which are those hopes and expectations for the self in work along the five dimensions of ability utilization, achievement, autonomy, personal development, and creativity. The primary purpose of this study was to examine the relationships among work possible selves, work role salience, socioeconomic position, gender, and psychological well-being.

Participants included individuals in early adulthood (N = 201), aged 20 to 35, who were enrolled in three community colleges and one university in North Carolina. Work possible selves, a construct based on the theory of Possible Selves (Markus & Nurius, 1986), were examined through the Work Possible Selves Questionnaire (WPSQ; Pisarik, 2005). Participants also completed the Work Centrality Questionnaire (Paullay, Alliger, & Stone-Romero, 1994), the Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener,

Emmons, & Larsen, 1985), the Depression – Happiness Scale (McGreal & Joseph, 1993), and the Occupation – Education Status Questionnaire (Pisarik, 2005).

Results indicated no relationships between hoped-for work selves and socioeconomic position, or between work role salience and socioeconomic position. Significant positive relationships were found between expected work selves and socioeconomic position. No statistically significant differences were found in hoped-for work selves, expected work selves, or work role salience between males and females. Canonical correlation analyses indicated that the variable set that included work possible selves discrepancies, defined as the difference between hoped-for and expected work selves, socioeconomic position, work role salience, and gender was significantly related to the variable set that included two components of psychological well-being, satisfaction with life and affective balance. Work possible selves discrepancies were negatively related to satisfaction with life, affective balance, work role salience, and socioeconomic position. Results indicate that individuals who report large work possible selves discrepancies, and low socioeconomic positions, also report lower levels of satisfaction with life and affective balance.

Considerations for counselors and counselor educators, and suggestions for future research are provided. Additional discussion regarding the development and future iterations of the Work Possible Selves Questionnaire also was presented.

THE RELATIONSHIP AMONG WORK POSSIBLE SELVES, WORK ROLE SALIENCE, SOCIOECONOMIC POSITON, AND THE PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING OF INDIVIDUALS IN EARLY ADULTHOOD

By

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APPROVAL PAGE

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

What do you want *to be* when you grow up? Adults in our society ask this question of children and of each other as a cliché that refers to individuals' life long search for the ideal job. Inherent in this question are three fundamental assumptions about the way adults think of themselves in relation to work. The first assumption is that people generate and maintain hopes and dreams regarding work, and that they create mental images of themselves in the future that reflect these hopes and dreams. The second assumption is that adults define themselves in terms of the work role. The verb *to be*, in the context of this question, indicates that work is expected to be a highly salient life role that adds significantly to adults' sense of self. The third assumption is that all individuals have choices regarding their future work lives.

Life-span and career development theorists posit that early adulthood is a time when individuals are engaged in the vocational choice process. This process is believed to include the creation and evaluation of hopes and dreams of the self in the domain of work (Blustein, 2001; Ginzberg, 1984; Gottfredson, 1981; Holland, 1997; Super, Savickas, & Super, 1996). The vocational choice process unfolds gradually as individuals explore work possibilities and gain insights into the world of work and themselves (Chaves et al., 2004; Levinson, 1978; Super et al.). Through this process, individuals either commit to pursuing their original hopes and dreams or, more likely,

they adjust their hopes and dreams, and form realistic expectations (Ginzberg; Gottfredson; Levinson). As the vocational choice process unfolds, many individuals eventually choose work that fosters the development and expression of a positive and integrated sense of self (Blustein; Chaves et al.; Erikson, 1968; Holland; Levinson; Super et al.). It is assumed that psychological well-being is, to a large extent, dependent on successful engagement in this process (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984; Erikson; Gottfredson; Levinson; Super et al.).

Many vocational choice theories are based primarily on the experiences of college educated, middle-class populations (Blustein, 2001; Richardson, 1993). Underlying these theories is the assumption that individuals have the resources and opportunities to prepare for and choose work that reasonably matches their hopes and will, therefore, foster a positive sense of self (Blustein; Chaves et al., 2004). This assumption may not hold, however, for individuals who experience limited opportunities during early adulthood due to socioeconomic position (Brown, Fukunaga, Umemoto, & Wicker, 1996; Chaves et al.; Constantine, Erikson, Banks, & Timberlake, 1998). For these individuals, a large discrepancy between their hopes and their expectations in the domain of work may persist throughout early adulthood (Baly, 1989; Bogie, 1976; Cook et al., 1996; Michelson, 1990).

Individuals develop vivid future images of themselves throughout the life-span. These images often represent individuals' hopes and expectations. Markus and Nurius (1986) referred to these images as "possible selves." Possible selves can depict an individuals' future sense of self in specific life domains such as the domain of work

(Bybee, Luthar, Zigler, & Merisca, 1997; Cross & Markus, 1991; Hooker, 1999; Markus & Nurius, 1986). Possible selves in the domain of work represent individuals' hopes and their expectations of implementing and expressing the self through work (Gottfredson, 1981; Super, 1990) and are considered foundational tasks of the vocational choice process (Baly, 1989).

Researchers suggest that as individuals enter early adulthood, their possible selves that reflect hopes for the self in work become similar to possible selves that reflect expectations (Bybee & Wells, 2002; Cook et al., 1996). This occurs as individuals become more realistic about their vocational options. Individuals from low socioeconomic positions, however, tend to have possible selves reflective of lowered hopes and lowered expectations for the self in work. Moreover, the discrepancy between individuals' hopes and expectations of the self in work is usually larger for individuals from low socioeconomic positions (Bogie, 1976; Cook et al., 1996; Michelson, 1990; Yowell, 2002). Researchers suggest that there is a relationship between such discrepancies and individuals' psychological well-being (Cook et al.; Hellenga, Aber, & Rhodes, 2002).

Not everyone who experiences discrepancies between hopes and expectations within the work domain suffers, however, from diminished psychological well-being. Researchers have found that work role salience acts as a moderating factor as individuals adjust the importance of the work role in order to maintain some level of positive psychological well-being (Kanter, 1977; Martire, Stephens, & Townsend, 2000; Mckee-Ryan, Song, Wanberg, & Kinicki, 2005; Super, 1990; Thoits, 1999). The results of this

research suggest that, in light of diminished hopes and expectations within the role of work, individuals may reduce the importance of the work role and increase the importance of other life roles to maintain their well-being.

Knowledge regarding the relationships among hopes and expectations for the self in work, work role salience, socioeconomic position, and psychological well-being assume vital importance when we consider the number of individuals in the U.S. who live near or below poverty. There were close to 47 million individuals below 125% of the official poverty threshold in the United States in 2004, or 16.5 percent of the U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005). Many of these individuals encounter some form of career guidance and counseling during high school or during participation in programs designed to upgrade employment skills, retrain workers, or augment academic skills (Katsinas, Grace, & Short, 1999). Career development researchers have given little effort, however, to examining the psychological consequences these individuals may experience as they engage in the vocational choice process (Brown et al., 1996; Chaves et al., 2004).

The results of this study will help career and mental health counselors working with individuals from low socioeconomic positions design more informed career counseling interventions. Further, it will broaden the counseling profession's knowledge and understanding of the meaning and significance of the work role for individuals from varying socioeconomic positions.

Early Adulthood

In this study, early adulthood refers to the ages of 20 and 35, an age range that prominent lifespan developmental theorists recognize as the life stage between adolescence and middle age (Erikson, 1968; Gould, 1978; Havighurst, 1972; Levinson, 1978; Rindfuss, 1991). For most individuals, early adulthood is a period of profound change often marked by important physical, social, and psychological life transitions. These transitions often include movement into formal operational thought, completion of school, leaving home, marriage, partnering, and parenthood (Furstenberg, Rumbaut, & Settersten, 2005). It is a time in which many life directions remain possible, when decisions regarding the future remain undecided, and the scope of exploration of a variety of potential directions in life roles is at a peak (Arnett, 2000). Life-span theorists assert that it is through the process of exploration and commitment that individuals eventually form a stable sense of self (Erikson; Levinson; Marcia, 1980, 2002).

A stable adult sense of self emerges as individuals engage in the exploration and commitment process within different interpersonal domains such as intimate relationships and family, and intrapersonal domains such as personal worldviews (Erikson, 1968; Josselson, 1987; Levinson, 1978; Perry, 1999). It is the implementation and expression of individuals' sense of self, however, via the movement into the world of work, which has intrigued researchers most (Erikson; Havighurst; Levinson; Super, 1990). Forming a stable adult sense of self through exploration and commitment within the work role is considered to be a complex and vital aspect of development in early adulthood (Erikson; Levinson; Marcia, 1980; Super).

Individuals in early adulthood create future-based images of themselves in work that reflect their hopes. They also assess and adjust these hoped-for images of the self as they face current realities and opportunities. This ultimately leads to the formation of images of the self that reflect realistic expectations (Ginzberg, 1984; Gottfredson, 1981, 1996; Holland, 1997; Super, 1990). This process has been referred to as vocational realization, vocational compromise, and occupational goal deflection (Cosby & Picou, 1971; Ginzberg, 1984; Gottfredson; Super). Through this process, individuals attempt to choose and commit to work that approximates their ideal self-images as closely as possible. This is often referred to in the vocational choice literature as the implementation of a self-concept through work (Super, 1954, 1961, 1990). This process is thought to be relatively benign when vocational opportunities are abundant and individuals' hopes are closely aligned to their expectations. There is some speculation, however, that it can have negative effects on individuals' psychological well-being when few acceptable vocational options exist (Gottfredson, 1996).

Recently, researchers have indicated that socioeconomic position is positively related to the implementation and expression of one's self-concept through the role of work (Blustein, et al., 2002; Chavez, 2004). Others have investigated the relationship between socioeconomic position and individuals' images of self that are reflected in future-based hopes and expectations in work (Bogie, 1976; Cook, et al., 1996). The results of this research suggest that socioeconomic position influences vocational development and work in important ways.

Socioeconomic Position

Socioeconomic position is an individual's position in economic and prestige hierarchies. It typically has been based on occupation and education levels of an individual and/or their parents' occupational and educational attainment (Liu et al., 2001). The origins of using occupation and education as socioeconomic indicators can be traced back to Weber's (1968) multi-dimensional concept of stratification. Within this framework, occupation and education are related to the dimensions of economic viability, social prestige, and power. Moreover, they are thought to be indicators and determinants of individuals' life chances, or those fundamental aspects of individuals' future possibilities (Gilbert, 2003).

From a more pragmatic perspective, education and occupation typically are used by social scientists as indicators of one's position in the stratification system for several reasons. First, they are easily determined for most individuals, whereas income is unstable and difficult to measure. Second, occupation is one of the most significant roles in individuals' lives. Third, with specific relevance to this study, both education and occupation are correlated with individuals' hopes and expectations for work (Hotchkiss & Borow, 1996; Sewell & Hauser, 1975).

Vocational development theorists have been aware of the effect individuals' socioeconomic positions have on vocational choice in early adulthood (Gottfredson, 1981; Hogan & Astone, 1986; Holland, 1997; Super, 1990). The status-attainment model put forth by Blau and Duncan (1967) and expanded by Sewell and Hauser (1975) has guided much of the research examining the influence of socioeconomic variables on

individuals' perceptions of work. The large body of research generated by the status-attainment model (see Hotchkiss & Borow, 1996, for a review of the research) has consistently supported the hypothesis that the socioeconomic status of individuals' parents shapes vocational aspirations, which in turn influences eventual vocational attainment. Essentially, vocational attainment is influenced by a socializing process in which parents' aspirations and expectation are passed down to their children (Mortimer, 1996). Yet, vocational choice theories posit, and recent research findings indicate, that hopes and expectations for work are subject to change over the life-span (Gottfredson, 1981, 1996; Jacobs, Karen, McClelland, 1991; Kirkpatrick-Johnson, 2002). This research suggests other influences on aspirations and expectations, such as individuals' awareness of their structural impediments to vocational achievement (Hanson, 1994).

Some researchers suggest that examining vocational hopes and expectations as distinct concepts can provide insights into the influence of socioeconomic variables on individuals' views of their circumstances and future opportunities (Baly, 1989; Hellenga et al., 2002; Mickelson, 1990). Markus and Nurius (1986) presented the concept of "possible selves" as a way of conceptualizing hopes and expectations regarding the self. Recently, researchers have begun using the concept of "possible selves" (Markus & Nurius, 1986) to measure individuals' vocational hopes and expectations as distinct constructs (Robinson, Davis, & Meara, 2003; Yowell, 2002).

Work Possible Selves

Markus and Nurius (1986) referred to individuals' future-based senses of self as "possible selves." They state that possible selves are "representations of the self in future

states…views of the self that often have not been verified or confirmed by social experience" (p. 955). Specifically, possible selves are individuals' visual, semantic, or symbolic representations of themselves in future states and circumstances (Cross & Markus, 1991; Markus & Nurius; Wurf & Markus, 1991). They are the cognitive manifestations of individuals' hopes, expectations, and fears. Hoped-for possible selves consist primarily of wishes and fantasies, and depict "ideal selves," whereas expected possible selves contain more specific and concrete procedural knowledge, and depict "realistic selves" (Markus & Nurius).

Work possible selves, for the purpose of this study, are future images that represent hopes and expectations for the expression and implementation of the self in work as depicted by personally held intrinsic work values. As previously mentioned, many vocational choice theorists regard vocational choice as a process of implementing a self-concept through work (Blustein, 2001; Gottfredson, 1981; Holland, 1997; Super, 1951, 1963, 1990). Within the vocational psychology literature, the specific content of the self-concept is vague and somewhat ambiguous. Donald Super (1990) asserted that the self-concept consists of the mental images that individuals hold of themselves in a specific role, such as the role of work. These images contain individuals' subjective appraisals of needs, interests, abilities, and values. Values are considered fundamental to the self-concept because they represent individuals' desires, interests, and goals. These self-concepts, then, include perceptions of skills, abilities, needs, and values (Dawis, 1996). Values are the cognitive manifestations of desired end states, interests, and needs, and they reflect individuals' hopes and expectations. Thus, certain assumptions are clear.

Work values are specific and fundamental aspects of the work self-concept, and of work possible selves, and are vitally important to the vocational choice process (Blustein; Brown, 1996; Dawis; Super).

Examining work possible selves can provide information regarding the meaning individuals place on the work role in the context of the self-concept. As previously mentioned, it is assumed that individuals in early adulthood are striving to choose work that adds, perhaps significantly, to their sense of self (Erikson, 1968; Gottfredson, 1981; Super). Researchers suggest that work-related images are among the most common and salient future-based images for individuals in early adulthood (Cross & Markus, 1991; Hooker, 1999). Little is known, however, about the specific content of these images, or how they may differ across socioeconomic positions and gender.

Demographic variables such as socioeconomic position, gender, and ethnicity have been shown to be major factors in the development of individuals' hopes and expectations for work (Bogie, 1976; Cook et al.,1996; Gottfredson, 1996; Hellenga, et al., 2002; Hotchkiss & Borow, 1996; Solorzono, 1992). Research findings suggest that individuals from low socioeconomic positions have lower aspirations for work (Rojewski, 1997; Sewell & Hauser, 1975); other researchers, however, have found no significant differences (Cook et al., 1996). Researchers have consistently highlighted gender differences, however, in vocational aspirations and expectations. Specifically, women are more likely to express higher vocational aspirations than men, and are more likely to aspire to either higher or lower prestige occupations than men (Rojewski & Yang, 1997). Although research suggests that ethnicity also is related to vocational

aspirations and expectations, the effects of ethnicity often are confounded with socioeconomic position (Osipow & Fitzgerald, 1996; Rojewski & Yang)

The values individuals place on work have been shown to vary within and across socioeconomic position and across gender (Brown, 1996; Erez, Borochov, & Manheim, 1989; Gibbs, 1985; Marini, Fan, Finley, & Beutel, 1996). For example, some researchers have found socioeconomic variables and gender to be positively related to the importance placed on intrinsic work values (Marini, 1996), while other researchers have found no significant relationship (Johnson–Kirkpatrick, 2002). These ambiguous results also are found in the work values literature. Further, when examining these relationships, researchers have rarely made a conceptual link between hopes, expectations, values, and the self-concept.

Examining the discrepancy between hoped-for work selves and expected work selves may offer unique insights into individuals' views of themselves in the context of their circumstances (Mickelson, 1990). Mickelson suggested that the discrepancy between hopes and expectations found among individuals from lower socioeconomic positions may signify differing ideological attitudes, those embodying the "American ethos" of opportunity, and those representing a perception of reality. Thus, work possible selves discrepancies may provide information regarding the perceived opportunities and barriers individuals in early adulthood from varying socioeconomic positions experience within the vocational choice process (Hellenga et al., 2002). Moreover, examining work possible selves discrepancies can provide information regarding the psychological consequences of individuals' socioeconomic circumstance in relation to the vocational

choice process (Hellenga et al., 2002), assuming that they continue to regard work as psychologically important to their self-concept.

Work Role Salience

Individuals who perceive work as highly salient are those people who psychologically identify with the role of work, look to work as a source of purpose and meaning, and rely on work to contribute significantly to their sense of self (Kanungo, 1982; Noor, 2004; Paullay, Alliger, & Stone-Romero, 1994). In general, the role of work has long been thought to be a highly salient role for Americans in the United States (Sverko & Super, 1995). Researchers suggest that individuals identify work as one of the most salient life roles, second in importance only to family (Brief & Nord, 1990; England & Misumi, 1986; Mannheim & Rein, 1993; Sverko & Super). Moreover, early adulthood is thought to be a time when integrating the role of work with an emerging sense of self is a primary focus for individuals (Erikson, 1968; Levinson, 1978; Super, 1990).

The two cognitive approaches to self-concept that bases a person's sense of self in terms of roles are the motivational approach (Kanungo, 1982; Paullay, Alliger, & Stone-Ramero, 1994) and the self-schema approach (Markus, 1977; Markus & Wurf, 1987). Both approaches consider roles in terms of the way individuals derive meaning from experiences. Additionally, these approaches are concerned with the importance of roles to individuals' senses of self (Kanungo, 1982; Markus; Markus & Sentis, 1982; Markus & Wurf; Thoits, 1999). The motivational approach uses the concept of work involvement to describe how individuals' identification with the role of work is dependent on personal needs and the expectations of work to meet these needs (Kanungo;

Paullay et al.). The self-schema approach describes the process whereby subjective interpretation of experiences within specific roles leads to the development of self-concepts (Markus, 1977; Markus & Sentis).

Socioeconomic position has been shown to influence work role salience (Blustein et al., 2002; Chaves et al., 2004; Kanter, 1977). People who perceive few opportunities for psychological fulfillment at work tend not only to view work as less salient, but also seek fulfillment in other roles (Blustein et al.; Chaves et al; Kanter). Moreover, researchers suggest that women generally have lower work role salience than men, however, this difference varies in relation to socioeconomic position (Mannheim, 1993).

The salience of the work role has long been thought to influence psychological well-being through its connection to self-concept (Gini, 2000; Super, 1990). Researchers have found that work role salience has direct effects on psychological well-being (Martire et al., 2000) and can serve to moderate the relationship between factors such as socioeconomic position and psychological well-being (Gecas & Seff, 1990; Martire et al.). The more salient a role is, the more meaning, purpose, and behavioral guidance will be derived from the role (Markus & Wurf, 1987; Thoits, 1992) and the more influence it will have on psychological well-being (Kanungo, 1982; Markus & Nurius, 1986; Martire et al.; Super, 1990; Thoits, 1992).

Psychological Well-being

Psychological well-being is considered to be positive mental health and functioning (Christopher, 1999). It is commonly conceptualized as having two primary components. These are individuals' subjective judgments about their level of satisfaction

with life (life satisfaction), and the extent to which their positive affect outweighs negative affect in their lives (affective balance; Diener, 1984).

Life satisfaction is individuals' subjective cognitive appraisal of their lives in positive terms (Diener, 1984) or, more simply, contentment with all aspects of life (Campbell, 1976). This approach to life satisfaction "relies on the standard of the respondent to determine what is the good life" (Diener, 1984, p. 543). For example, individuals may judge their lives to be either close to or far from their ideal. Moreover, they may judge conditions in their lives on a continuum from excellent to poor.

Affective balance corresponds to the term "happiness," which entails a "preponderance of positive affect over negative affect" (Diener, 1984 p. 543). Approaches to measuring affective balance have relied on evaluating individuals' feelings of happiness and unhappiness on a continuum (Joseph & Lewis, 1998). From this perspective, individuals experience a state of happiness when they report more positive feelings and thoughts than negative feelings and thoughts.

The link between work possible selves and psychological well-being is predicated on the notion that individuals' appraisals of psychological well-being reflect discrepancies in self-conceptions (Higgins, 1987; Markus & Nurius, 1986; Michalos, 1985). One theorist (Michalos, 1985) posited that psychological well-being is determined by discrepancies between what individuals believe they currently have and a set of aspirations (e.g., what they want, what they expect to have in the future, what they believe they need). Michalos found that multiple discrepancy theory could account for about 50 percent of the variance in ratings of happiness and life satisfaction. Similarly,

Higgins proposed that discrepancies between ideal and current self-conceptions are related to negative affective states. Research findings have supported the relationship between distinct patterns of self-concept discrepancies and one or both of these aspects of psychological well-being (Allen, Woolfolk, Gara, & Apter, 1996; Ogilvie, 1987; Penland, Masten, Zelhart, Fournet, & Callahan, 2000; Scott & O'Hara, 1993).

Another link between work possible selves and psychological well-being is based on the proposition that affect is associated with future-based cognitions regarding the self (Beck, Rush, Shaw, & Emery, 1979). Hopes and expectations have been shown to contribute to the explanation of variance in current affective states (Markus & Nurius, 1986). Researchers also have found that affective states, such as depression, are positively related to negative expectations of the self in the future (Beck et al., 1979) and lowered expectations for desired results (Abramson, Metalsky, & Alloy, 1989; Penland et al., 2000). Vocational choice theorists posit that implementing work values leads to greater psychological well-being (Brown, 1996; Dawis & Lofquist, 1984; Super, 1990). When individuals lower their expectations for implementing their work values, psychological well-being may be negatively affected.

In summary, individuals in early adulthood are engaged in the process of implementing and expressing a sense of self in work. The incipient task of this process is the formation of work possible selves. As individuals move through early adulthood, the work role becomes more salient. Research findings suggest that socioeconomic variables have profound effects on individuals' work possible selves and work role salience. Such effects include the formation of discrepancies between one's hopes and one's

expectations for implementing a work self-concept and a lowered work role salience. Work possible selves discrepancies offer insight into individuals' perceptions of their circumstances and future opportunities. Moreover, theory and research suggest that they are related to psychological well-being, assuming individuals continue to regard work as psychologically important to their self-concept.

Purpose of the Study

Individuals' vocational choice experiences are influenced by socioeconomic position via opportunities to implement particular behaviors that implement the self-concept (Blustein, 2002; Chaves, et al., 2004). Vocational choice experiences, in turn, affect psychological well-being (Gottfredson, 1981; Hellenga et al., 2002; Super, 1990). Examining individuals' hoped-for work selves in relation to their expected work selves will provide information about their perceptions of the discrepancy between the two, and how these perceptions can affect psychological well-being. To date, no study has 1) examined the relationship between work possible selves and socioeconomic position for individuals in early adulthood; 2) examined the relationship between work possible selves and psychological well-being; or 3) examined work possible selves in relation to work role salience. The specific purpose of this study, then, is to further our knowledge of work and this population by examining the relationship between work possible selves, work role salience, socioeconomic position, and psychological well-being for individuals in early adulthood.

Statement of the Problem

The problem addressed in this study revolves around our limited understanding of work in the lives of individuals from low socioeconomic positions. In particular, there has been limited examination of work possible selves of individuals in early adulthood, and no study of relationships between work possible selves and socioeconomic position. In addition the relationship among work possible selves, work role salience, socioeconomic position, and psychological well-being in early adulthood is unknown.

Research Questions

Research Question 1: Are there relationships between the five dimensions of hoped-for work selves and socioeconomic position?

Research Question 2: Are there significant differences in the five dimensions of hoped-for work selves between females and males?

Research Question 3: Are there relationships between the five dimensions of expected work selves and socioeconomic position?

Research Question 4: Are there significant differences in the five dimensions of expected work selves between females and males?

Research Question 5: Is there a relationship between work role salience and socioeconomic position?

Research Question 6: Is there a significant difference in work role salience between females and males?

Research Question 7: Is there a relationship between the variable set that includes each of the five dimensions of work possible selves discrepancies, socioeconomic

position, gender, and work role salience, and the variable set that includes affective balance, and life satisfaction?

Need for the Study

During the last decade, career development researchers have been called upon to examine the vocational development process of individuals from low socioeconomic positions, and to examine the role of work in relation to mental health and well-being (Blustein, 2001; Herr, 1989; Richardson, 1993; Savickas, 1993). At the same time, few researchers within the career development field have responded to these calls (Blustein; Brown et al., 1996). Consequently, there is little knowledge about the meaning and significance of the role of work in the lives of individuals from low socioeconomic positions. This lack of knowledge leads to counseling practice and counselor training that is entrenched in a middle class perspective to the detriment of individuals from low socioeconomic positions. It also leads to counselor training, practice, and research that do not consider the connection between career and the mental health issues of clients. This study is critical because it will point to the influence of the vocational development process on mental health for individuals from low socioeconomic positions. Moreover, it will explore the meaning and importance of the work role for individuals from low socioeconomic positions. This knowledge will allow counselors to design informed career counseling interventions for clients from low socioeconomic positions. This study also will add to the understanding of the link between career, work, and mental health.

Definition of Terms

This section will delineate the definitions of the primary constructs and key terms used in this study.

Hoped-for work selves

Hoped-for work selves are future-based cognitive images of the self in work as they pertain to the "ideal selves" individuals would like to become, or the ideal aspects of the self that they would like to have. They represent individuals' hopes of expressing and implementing the self in work through five dimensions of work values: ability utilization, autonomy, achievement, creativity, and personal development. Hoped-for work selves will be measured by the Work Possible Selves Questionnaire (WPSQ; Pisarik, 2005)

Expected work selves

Expected work selves are future-based cognitive images of the self in work as they pertain to the "realistic selves" individuals expect to become, or the realistic aspects of the self that they expect to have. They represent individuals' expectations of expressing and implementing the self in work through five dimensions of work values: ability utilization, autonomy, achievement, creativity, and personal development. Expected work selves will be measured by the Work Possible Selves Questionnaire (WPSQ; Pisarik, 2005).

Work Possible Selves Discrepancy

Work possible selves discrepancy is the difference between the levels of hoped-for work selves and levels of expected work selves. There are five discrepancy scores relating to each of the five dimensions of work values.

Work role salience

Work role salience is defined as the extent to which individuals' psychologically identify with the role of work. Work role salience will be measured by the Work Centrality Scale (WCS; Paullay et al., 1994).

Psychological Well-being

The subjective depiction of an individual's level of positive mental functioning conceptualized by life satisfaction and affective balance.

Life satisfaction.

Life satisfaction is an individual's subjective cognitive appraisal of their quality of life. Life satisfaction will be measured using the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS; Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985).

Affective balance.

Affective balance is the extent to which the subjective appraisal of level of positive affect outweighs the level of negative affect in an individual's life. Affective balance will be measured with the Depression-Happiness Scale (DHS; McGreal & Joseph, 1993).

Socioeconomic Position

Socioeconomic position is defined as a position within economic and prestige hierarchies as determined by the researcher, and is based on the current occupational levels of: 1) participants, 2) individuals who share financial responsibility with participants, or 3) participants' parents. Individuals ascribed to lower socioeconomic positions are assumed by the researcher to have lower levels of resources, control, and

prestige relative only to individuals classified as occupying higher socioeconomic positions in this study (Brown et al., 1996; Liu et al., 2004). Occupational level will be assessed using the Nakao and Treas (1992) socioeconomic index.

Organization of the Study

This study is organized in five chapters. Chapter I includes an introduction to the conceptual literature and research findings on early adulthood, socioeconomic position, work possible selves, work role salience, and psychological well-being. The purpose for the study, need for the study, statement of the problem, research questions addressed in this study, and the definitions of the terms used in this study also are presented in this chapter.

Chapter II is a review of the conceptual literature and research related to early adulthood, socioeconomic position, work possible selves, work role salience, and psychological well-being. Chapter III outlines the methodology of the study. This chapter includes the research hypotheses, a description of the participants, instruments to be used in the study, procedures, data analysis, and pilot study. Chapter IV presents the results of the study. Chapter V presents a discussion of these results, including a summary of the research study, an interpretation of the results, implications for counselors, counselor educators, and researchers, and the limitations of the study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter is to present the relevant literature and research that supports this study. The first section defines and explores early adulthood from a theoretical perspective, focusing specifically on vocational choice and development. The second section includes a definition of socioeconomic position and an explanation of the dimensions and shape of the social stratification hierarchy. It also includes a review of vocational choice theories that give credence to socioeconomic position as a contextual factor in the vocational choice process. The third section explores the construct of work possible selves. The concept of possible selves is reviewed, as are other constructs that support the quantitative assessment of work possible selves. The relationship among work possible selves and socioeconomic position in early adulthood also will be presented in this section. The fourth section defines work role salience from a theoretical perspective and examines the literature pertaining to the relationship between work role salience and socioeconomic position in early adulthood. The fifth section defines psychological well-being, and reviews the literature and research supporting its relationship to work possible selves, work role salience, and socioeconomic positions. The chapter will conclude with a summary of the relevant literature and research and implications for the proposed study.

Early Adulthood

Early adulthood has only recently been delineated as a distinct and socially recognized stage of life. The need for this delineation has come about as demographers and social scientists have become aware that the chronological ages in which individuals fill life roles associated with adulthood, and form stable identities is increasing (Furstenberg, Rumbaut, & Settersten, 2005). In 1999, a group of researchers assembled under the auspices of the Research Network on Transitions to Adulthood and Public Policy, which was funded by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. The objective of this group was to cultivate research focused specifically on human development in early adulthood, which they define as ages 18-34. Researchers contend that it is difficult to defend the use of specific chronological ages to determine this stage (Hogan & Astone, 1985) and variation exists in the age range that defines this life stage (Rindfuss, 1991). Age 18 marks the lower boundary of early adulthood because it is legally recognized as the age when individuals can first vote, and when young men register for selective service. Further, for those who continue their education, 18 is the predominant age when individuals leave high school and enter into the more adult world of college (Arnet, 2000). Contemporary life-span developmental theorists recognize early adulthood as a distinct stage of adult life, however, that includes the age range 20-35 years of age (Dacey & Travers, 1996).

Researchers suggest that five transitions delineate entry into adulthood: completing school, leaving home, marrying, becoming a parent, and beginning one's career (Shanahan, Porfeli, Mortimer, & Erickson, 2005). Although it is commonly

believed that these transitions occur later in life than in past years, and fewer adults negotiate all of these transitions, research indicates that by the age of 35, most individuals have made all of these transitions through early adulthood into adulthood (Fussell & Furstenberg, 2005). For instance, for adults between 30 and 34, 91.2% are not attending school, 91.4% are not living with parents, 76.7% are married or have been married, 56.4% have children, and 74% work full time. By the end of this period, most people have made choices that have life long implications. When adults later consider the most important events in their lives, they most often name events that took place during this period (Martin & Smyer, 1990).

The transition into the world of work and movement into a viable career are considered particularly important transitions in early adulthood (Erikson, 1968; Levinson, 1978). These transitions are complex and occur gradually. Hopes and expectations related to work are regarded as principle features of this transition in that their formation is regarded as an important task in vocational choice and development (Baly, 1989). Individuals form hoped-for images of the self in work (Cross & Markus, 1991; Hooker, 1999). As individuals evaluate the feasibility of achieving these hopes, they begin to form realistic vocational expectations (Gottfredson, 1981, 1996). Eventually, individuals in early adulthood explore vocational possibilities, make tentative commitments, and begin establishing themselves in what they hope to be a suitable occupation (Levinson).

Early adulthood also represents a period in which individuals' senses of self continue to form and emerge. Developmental theorists posit that individuals express their emerging and developing self-concepts through their hopes and expectations

(Gottfredson, 1981; Super et al., 1996) and eventually through the role of work (Erikson, 1968; Levinson, 1978; Super et al.). So central is the role of work to adults' development and expression of a sense of self that many developmental theorists place vocational development in the forefront of adult developmental theory (Erikson; Havighurst, 1972; Levinson; Schlossberg, 1984).

Theories of Adult Development

Although several developmental theories describe and explain the early years of adult development, it is the theories of Erikson (1968) and Levinson (1978; 1996) that offer the most explanation of this period in terms of the role of work as part of an individual's emerging sense of self. These two theorists describe the implementation of a sense of self through work as a complex and continuous process that begins well before an individual enters early adulthood. Moreover, both theorists emphasize that during early adulthood individuals are focused on projecting themselves into the future, and creating hopes, dreams, and expectations of what lies ahead (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2000).

Erikson's Theory of Psychosocial Development

Erikson (1968) proposed a stage theory of lifespan development that has become one of the primary models for understanding the development of self during adolescence and early adulthood. Erikson's theory has been instrumental in explaining vocational development as an essential component of overall development. Consequently, prominent vocational psychology theorists and researchers have built on Erickson's stage of identity formation and extrapolated this into the vocational realm (Blustein, Devenis, & Kidney, 1989; Holland, 1997; Super, Savickas, & Super, 1996; Vondracek, 1992).

Embedded in Erikson's writings is the notion of a future self, based on hopes and expectations, as an essential and dynamic factor in human development.

Erikson's theory (1968) focuses on the development of the ego through a series of eight life stages. Each stage is characterized by a crisis or a primary focal task in which particular stage-specific issues emerge as primary challenges to the ego. These challenges are viewed as conduits toward enhanced potential. Erikson believed that resolving each stage-specific crisis leads to psychological well-being. Further, Erikson's theory is epigenetic. Each stage unfolds from the previous stage, and is dependent on the successful completion of tasks in previous stages.

The formation of one's identity has traditionally been viewed as the major developmental stage of adolescence. It has long been recognized, however, that the formation of identity continues well into adulthood (Marcia, 2002; Marcia, Waterman, Matteson, Archer, & Orlofsky, 1993; Waterman & Archer, 1990; Whitbourne & Connelly, 1999). Erikson's concept of identity (1968), although vague, refers to a self-definition, or a firm and coherent sense of self. Specifically he states, "The young person, in order to experience wholeness, must feel a progressive continuity between that which he has come to be during the long years of childhood and that which he promises to become in the anticipated future; between that which he conceives himself to be and that which he perceives others to see in him and to expect of him" (1968, p. 87). Thus, identity is a wholeness that is to be achieved as individuals find continuity between their past and anticipated futures. An essential factor in achieving a positive identity is the understanding by adolescents of their present self in terms of their past developmental

achievements, and the ability to unite this with their future aspirations and expectations of competence (Shirk & Renouf, 1992). This sense of continuity between present, past, and future self is a hallmark of the ability to resolve the identity crisis.

A unique characteristic of Erikson's approach to identity is the differentiation between overall identity and identity in specific domains. Erikson named several identity domains such as sexual and spiritual. Yet, he singled out the importance of the occupational domain in the overall development of identity and used many examples of how vocational decisions impact overall identity development. Erikson states, "In general it is primarily the inability to settle on an occupational identity which disturbs young people" (Erikson, 1959, p. 92). Researchers indicate that identity in the domain of vocation follows similar patterns of overall identity development (Blustein, Devenis, & Kidney, 1989) and may, in fact, facilitate the development of individuals' overall identities (Vondracek, Schulenberg, Skorikov, Gillespie, & Wahlheim, 1995).

Erikson's theory has received criticism over the years. Notably, Erikson places the tasks to be accomplished in each life stage in strict chronological order. In light of recent research that indicates the multiple and non-linear pathways individuals experience in early adulthood (Furstenberg, et al., 2005), this may hinder the application of the theory to all individuals. Marcia (2002) has recently created a model based on Erikson's original theory that illustrates a non-linear process of development throughout the life-span. In addition, Erikson's theory has been criticized for its lack of attention to issues of gender equity.

Erikson viewed the roles of mother and wife as essential for the completion of womanhood (Peterson & Stewart, 1996). Further, a woman's reproductive capacity and commitment to the care of children were viewed as essential for the continuing development of a woman through her life span (Sorell & Montgomery, 2001). In accordance with Erikson's epigenetic view of development, a childfree woman would be unable to successfully encounter and achieve the subsequent life stages of middle and late adulthood. According to the 2000 United States census, by the age of 34, 20% of women have not yet been married, and 33% of women have not yet had children (U.S. Census Bureau, 2004). Indeed, many women develop a sense of self in addition to or instead of that related to the role of mother, locating their identity in the work role (Noor, 2004). Levinson's theory of adult development (1978) provides a more flexible and less gender-constricted explanation of early adult development.

Levinson's Theory of Adult Development

According to Levinson (1978), early adulthood may be the most dramatic of all life stages. It is a period of life when individuals form adult identities and make major life choices. His theory elaborates on the role of occupation in self-concept formation, the future sense of self that embodies individuals' hopes and expectations, and the importance of the experiences of women. Levinson viewed occupational choice as paramount in that work is a primary factor in defining an individual's place in the adult world. Levinson also believed that work is the foundation of a person's life, psychologically fulfilling or negating the self. In addition, Levinson gave great credence

to the developmental task of forming a future sense of self, embodying individual hopes and expectations often focused on occupation.

Levinson derived his theory of adult development from the results of two studies, one of men (1978) and one of women (1996). His original study consisted of in-depth biographical interviews with 40 male subjects ranging in age from 35 to 45. These men represented four occupational categories: blue-collar workers, middle-level executives, academic biologists, and novelists. Levinson defined the period of early adulthood as ranging from age 17 to 40 years, and consisting of four separate periods: 1) early adult transition (age 17 to 22 years), 2) entering the adult world (age 22 to 28 years), 3) age 30 transition (age 28 to 33 years), and 4) settling down (age 33 to 40years). Prior to Levinson's study, there was a lack of research and useful theories concerning the development of individuals in early adulthood.

Inherent in Levinson's theory (1978) are the concepts of life course and life cycle. There is an underlying order throughout the life-span, and he labeled this the life cycle. Individuals progress through the same sequence or cycle, each in their own unique way. The life course includes the events, relationships, achievements, and failures that individuals experience as they follow the life cycle. Levinson referred to the universal structures of the life cycle as eras, and noted that individuals vary widely in their movement through each era. Levinson also viewed human development as a product of the interaction between the self and the social environment. Levinson thus explained development as being "biopsychosocial" in nature.

Central to Levinson's theory of development is the concept of the adult life structure, which is the underlying pattern or design of a person's life at any given time. The adult life structure reflects individuals' priorities and relationships within the larger society. Individuals build their initial life structure during early adulthood, and then enter a repeated process of questioning and altering it as they progress throughout the life-cycle. A life structure has three aspects: 1) an individual's socio-cultural world, including class, race, ethnicity, and historical events, 2) an individual's participation in the world, including relationships and life roles, and 3) an individual's aspects of self that are expressed and lived in various relationships and roles.

According to Levinson (1978), two major tasks within early adulthood are the formation and placement of "The Dream" in the life structure, and the formation of an occupation. The Dream is, "a vague sense of self-in-adult-world. It has the quality of a vision, an imagined possibility that generates excitement and vitality…It may contain concrete images" (Levinson, pp. 91-92). As individuals move through early adulthood, the Dream takes shape, becoming more vivid and salient as it is integrated into their senses of self. For many people in early adulthood, the Dream centers mainly on work related goals (Drebing & Gooden, 1991). Although Levinson's definition of the Dream is somewhat vague, his description of it appears to be presented as an affect-laden cognitive image of the self in the future.

Levinson focused specifically on the development of women in his second study (Levinson, 1996). Similar to his first study, Levinson developed an image of the life development of women in early adulthood through in-depth interviews of forty-five

women 35 to 45 years old. The participants were divided into three groups: homemakers, college educators, and business executives. The results of this study suggested that the experiences of women were different than those of men, especially in regards to the vocational development of those women who encountered vocational barriers due to current socializing forces and due to socioeconomic positions. Levinson's studies (1968, 1996) resulted in his comprehensive model of adult development. Many of his ideas, however, particularly in terms of the development and importance of vocation in individuals' lives, are extensions of various vocational development models of the 1950's.

Vocational Choice and Development in Early Adulthood

Beginning in the early 1950's, vocational theorists began to conceptualize vocational behavior as a process occurring over many years, and as an integral part of the total human development process. The developmental approaches to vocational theory tend to highlight the importance of the self-concept in the vocational development process. More specifically, these approaches postulate that through vocational choice, individuals attempt to implement a self-concept by securing work in which they are able to express their sense of self (Herr & Cramer, 1996). These theories include concepts that place emphasis on tasks that are centered on the formation of future-based self-images that reflect hopes, and the assessment of these images in relation to the realities of current work possibilities. Finally, these theories present vocational choice as a process of compromise between individuals' hopes, ideals, and dreams, and realistic expectations that begin to form through experience (Ginzberg, Ginzburg, Axelrad, & Herma, 1951,

Gottfredson, 1981; Super, 1990). Ginzberg and his colleagues put forth the first developmentally oriented vocational choice theory in 1951.

Ginzberg's Theory of Occupational Choice

According to Ginzberg et al. (1951), vocational choice is a process in which individuals are faced with developmental tasks that will be completed primarily during preadolescence and adolescence. As individuals confront each task of development, they engage in a process in which they must compromise between wishes, fantasies and desires, and actual occupational possibilities. This process culminates in an ultimate vocational choice. Thus, individuals' vocational choice becomes more reality-oriented as they mature and move toward the actual choice or decision. Moreover, Ginzberg et al. identified values, emotional factors, education, and environmental pressures as influencing the choice process. Therefore, vocational choice is understood as a function of both the individual and the environment.

Ginzberg et al. (1951) contended that three life stages were included in the vocational choice process: the fantasy stage (from birth to 11), the tentative stage (12 to 17), and the realistic stage (18 to early twenties). The choice process begins early in life as individuals generate desires, wishes, and possibilities unencumbered by reality. Gradually, individuals begin evaluating their interests, values and capacities within the context of their desires and wishes. Finally, usually during adolescence and early adulthood, individuals engage in three tasks as part of the realistic stage. First, individuals narrow their choices through exploration. Second, they crystallize their choices by selecting a career field. Finally, they decide upon a specific job leading to a

particular career choice. This three-phased choice process culminates in a compromise in which individuals try to choose an occupation against the backdrop of the reality of opportunities. Further, they match their desires, wishes, and goals in a manner that will secure a maximum degree of satisfaction in work and life.

Although Ginzberg et al. (1951) were the first to publish a developmental perspective of career choice there are notable shortcomings in the theory. First, it failed to delineate the process of compromise. Ginzberg et al. implied that individuals form different types of cognitive representations of the self in work, such as fantasized expressions of wishes and desires, as well as those that express preferences tempered by reality. However, the specific aspect of the self that is compromised, and the reasons for compromise were never addressed. Second, the original theory viewed choice as an irreversible process that ended in early adulthood. Ginzberg (1972; 1984) has revised the theory twice, conceptualizing career choice as a life-long process during which individuals often make important vocational decisions long after adolescence. In spite of the importance of Ginzberg et al.'s work, Super's (1990) life span-life space approach to career development has been a more frequently used model of vocational development.

Super's Self-Concept Development Theory

Elaborating on the theory proposed by Ginzberg et al. (1951), Donald Super (1951; 1990) introduced a comprehensive theory of career development that has been the most influential in introducing the construct of self-concept to the vocational literature. Like Ginzberg et al., Super characterized vocational choice as a process of compromise. According to Super, the central aspect of this compromise process was the development

and implementation of an individual's self-concept throughout the life span. Further, he contended that developing a future-based sense of self that depicts hopes, dreams, and expectations is central to this process. Super's theory also highlights the importance of environmental variables in the vocational development process and the relationship between vocational development and psychological well-being.

Super (1951; 1963; 1990) defined self-concept as a "picture of the self in some role, situation, or position, performing some set of functions, or in some web of relationships" (Super, 1963, p. 18). According to Super, the self-concept includes abilities, values, and interests that are formed through the interaction between the individual and society. Super viewed the self as changing, evolving, and highly influenced by environmental situations. Vocational choice and development, therefore, is framed as a continuing process of improving the match between the self-concept, vocational situations, and reality (Super, 1990). Extrapolating from some of the central propositions of Super's theory, it can be expected that individuals will experience more satisfaction in work and life when they are able to fully implement their self-concepts in work.

Super's stages of vocational development involve increasingly complex tasks that individuals encounter at different stages. Super's career development theory includes five stages: the growth stage (from birth to 14 years of age), the exploratory stage (ages 15 to 25), the establishment stage (ages 25 to 40), the maintenance stage (ages 40 to 65), and the disengagement stage (from age 65 until death). The stages of exploration and establishment usually occur during early adulthood. In later versions of his theory,

however, Super clearly noted that the age ranges of the various stages were not steadfast markers.

During the stages of exploration and establishment, individuals engage in the tasks of implementing a self-concept. Individuals create future images of themselves, or engage in "daydreaming about possible selves they may construct" (Super et al., 1996, p. 132). These images begin to crystallize into preferences, and eventually choices, through the process of compromising among these images, the influence of social factors, and the reality of current opportunities. Like Ginzberg, et al. (1951), Super implies that individuals form different types of cognitive representations that express the self in work: those that are fantasized expressions of hopes, wishes and desires, and those that express preferences tempered by reality. Eventually, most individuals make an initial vocational choice, assimilate into the world of work, cultivate productive work habits, and advance to new levels of responsibility.

Although Ginzberg et al. (1951) and Super (1990) provided foundations for conceptualizing vocational choice as a developmental process influenced by self and social factors, it is worth noting that both theories reflect a portion of the workforce of 20 or 30 years ago that was highly studied, yet narrow in scope: white middle-class educated males (Blustein, 2001; Richardson, 1993). Neither theory addressed gender differences in vocational development, nor did they address the affect of socioeconomic position on the implementation of self-concept in a vocational choice. Linda Gottfredson's Theory of Circumscription and Compromise (1981; 1996) attempted to explain more thoroughly

how gender and certain social factors such as socioeconomic position influence individuals' vocational choices.

Gottfredson's Theory of Circumscription and Compromise

Gottfredson's theory (1981; 1996) extended the work of Ginzberg et al. (1951) and Super (1951; 1963; 1990) by offering a social psychological perspective of the compromise process in which individuals engage as they attempt to implement a self-concept. Gottfredson's work was similar to that of Ginzberg et al. and Super in that it explained vocational choice as a process encompassing various stages of development. Her theory diverged from the other two, however, by focusing on several more overt and public aspects of the self and elaborating more thoroughly on the influence social factors on the process of vocational compromise.

Gottfredson (1981) referred to self-concept as one's view of oneself. This includes a view of one's abilities, interests, values, and personality. Gottfredson also explicitly referred to the concept of a future sense of self that embody hopes and expectations. She stated, "when projecting oneself into the future, self-concept also includes who one expects or would like to be (p. 547)." Gottfredson emphasized the public aspects of self such as gender, social class, and intelligence, rather than the psychological aspects of self. Thus, vocational development and eventual vocational choice is the individual's attempt to place herself or himself in a broad social context.

Gottfredson (1981) presented two separate and related aspects of vocational choice and development: circumscription and compromise. Individuals form images of occupations and assess the compatibility of these occupational images with the images of

who they would like to be. As individuals develop, they engage in a process of circumscription by which they narrow the range of occupations that are compatible with images of themselves. Compatible images are referred to as idealistic aspirations. However, individuals also engage in a process of compromise in which they relinquish their ideal aspirations as they are influenced by social forces that may restrict their understanding of the likelihood of or their ability to implement these preferences. When ideal aspirations are tempered by perceptions of future opportunities, they are referred to as expectations (Gottfredson, 1996).

Gottfredson (1996) suggested that the processes of circumscription and compromise take place during four life stages. Although she stated that the compromise process starts early in life, it is thought to take a more influential role in vocational choice during early adulthood. The stage of development that begins at age 14 and that may continue past adolescence is referred to as the "orientation to the internal, unique self." During this period, individuals strive to take their place in society, concern themselves with who they are as individuals, and forge a personal sense of self. While early life stages are devoted to rejecting unacceptable alternatives, this stage is devoted to finding and securing occupations that allow expression of interests, values, and unique capacities within the remaining sphere of acceptable alternatives. During this stage, individuals are considering perceived probable social and psychological barriers to implementing vocational choices. For many individuals, such barriers may be due to socioeconomic position and are reflected in the hopes and expectations for the self in work.

Socioeconomic Position

Vocational choice is a complex process in which individuals generate hopes and expectations of expressing a sense of self through the role of work (Gottfredson, 1981; Levinson, 1978; Super, 1990). Theorists and researchers have long acknowledged the fact that socioeconomic position has profound effects on individuals' vocational development and choice, and thus, should be examined as a contextual factor in this process (Blau & Duncan, 1967; Hotchkiss & Borow, 1996; Schulenberg, Vondracek, & Crouter, 1984; Sewell & Hauser, 1975; Vondracek, Lerner, & Schulenberg, 1986). Yet, researchers have largely overlooked socioeconomic position as a central focus in investigations of vocational development. Generally, researchers have employed measures of socioeconomic position as control variables rather than as independent variables. Moreover, socioeconomic variables are often poorly defined or poorly operationalized in many research studies (Brown et al., 1996).

Despite the inadequacy of theory and research to explain the effects of socioeconomic variables, the available research suggests that socioeconomic position influences many aspects of vocational choice and behavior throughout the life-span (Brown et al, 1996; Hotchkiss & Borow, 1996; Osipow & Fitzgerald, 1996). Research indicates that individuals from higher socioeconomic positions exhibit more internal locus of control in the career choice process (Riverin-Simard, 1992), and exhibit more career self-efficacy (Lauver & Jones, 1991). Socioeconomic variables have been linked to levels of occupational aspirations and perceived abilities (McDonald & Jessell, 1992), occupational preferences (Mullet, Neto, & Henry, 1992), time spent on career

development related activities (Trusty, Watts, & Erdman, 1997), occupational choice (Bell, Allen, Hauser, & O'Connor, (1996), and retirement decisions (Fridlund, Hansson, & Ysander, 1992). Moreover, individuals from low socioeconomic positions report more difficulty implementing their self-concepts through work, less career exploration and planfulness, and more external barriers to career choice than individuals from middle and high socioeconomic positions (Blustein et al., 2002).

The conceptualization, definition, and measurement of socioeconomic variables vary widely in these studies, highlighting the lack of agreement on the definition and measurement of socioeconomic position in social science research (Liu et al., 2001). There has been a call, however, for researchers who examine variables related to socioeconomic position to define these variables carefully, while making attempts to link these variables to theory (Liu et al.; Smith & Graham, 1995).

Defining Socioeconomic Position

The term "socio-economic" was introduced into the sociological literature in 1883 by Lester Ward as a way to tie together important social and economic variables that affect people's lives (Jones & McMillan, 2001). Since that time, the conceptualization, definition, and measurement of the social and economic components that impact individuals has been inconsistent, with no clear theory for the inclusion or exclusion of variables that constitute individuals' socioeconomic reality (Liu et al.). Consequently, it is common for researchers to use a variety of terms to describe issues related to individuals' social and economic lives (e.g., social class, socioeconomic status, economic background, income level). Suffice it to say that no classic definition of a socioeconomic

position exists (Crompton, 1998). However, researchers concerned with socioeconomic variables generally acknowledge that in society, individuals are hierarchically stratified along one or all of the aforementioned variables (Rossides, 1997; Smith & Graham, 1995).

Dimensions and Shape of the Stratification System

Researchers conceptualize the dimensions and shape of the stratification system in quite different ways depending on their theoretical perspective of how individuals become stratified. Conflict theorists contend that individuals with the most economic resources determine decisions regarding economic rewards and social position. The major thrust of conflict theorists is the role of power and coercion in the maintenance of inequality (Gilbert, 2003). Social scientists adhering to a conflict perspective of stratification tend to view discontinuous and objective divisions that create groups of individuals (Kerbo, 2000). Within this perspective, it is thought that individuals within a particular class group have common characteristics such as educational and occupational levels that influence life chances. Traditionally, conflict theorists defined class and class position predominantly in economic terms. The occupational structure is currently viewed, however, as an important determinant of class position for conflict theorists. Yet, individuals' positions in the occupational structure are viewed in relation to the importance of their skills and their job characteristics from the perspective of those in control of economic rewards (Crompton, 1998; Gilbert; Hurst, 2001).

According to the functionalist perspective, class divisions in society are not outcomes of oppression or conflict; they are inherent and necessary functions of society

(Crompton, 1993). The functionalist perspective was put forth most staunchly by Davis and Moore (1945) who contended that social inequality is an unconsciously evolved device by which societies ensure that the most important positions are conscientiously filled by those most qualified to hold such positions. Thus, functionalists believe that individuals who make the largest sacrifices are offered the greatest rewards. These rewards motivate the most capable individuals to perform task that require the greatest sacrifices (Rossides, 1997). Differential rewards, therefore, create stratified categories of individuals who differ in power, prestige, and wealth.

Functionally oriented social scientists view society as a system of structures in which individuals fill various roles. For example, individuals work in an occupational structure, and vote in a political structure (Grabb, 1997). Moreover, individuals' occupy statuses, or positions, within each structure that afford them certain rights. Within this perspective, stratification is envisioned as a continuous hierarchy in which individuals can be ranked along specific status roles. Occupation is seen as the best indicator of general stratification rank as it is the most significant functional role in society for most individuals (Grabb).

Most contemporary social scientists currently accept a multi-dimensional concept of stratification put forth by Weber (1968) based on economic resources, social prestige, and power (Smith & Graham, 1995). The corresponding variables most frequently assigned to socioeconomic position and most widely used as indicators of socioeconomic position are occupation, income, and formal education. Occupation is related to Weber's economic, prestige, and power dimensions. Income relates to the economic and power

dimensions. Education is related to the prestige dimension. The measurement of these dimensions, however, has been an ongoing issue within social science research.

Measurement of Socioeconomic Position

Although education, income, and occupation are moderately correlated, each of these indicators can explain distinct aspects of social position. Moreover, each provides researchers with distinct challenges and benefits (Krieger, Williams, & Moss, 1997). Therefore, researchers commonly use one of these indicators as a sole measure of socioeconomic position, or combinations of these indicators. Income is believed to be one of the strongest indicators of socioeconomic position. It is also very unstable, however, due to its sensitivity to life changes and its vulnerability to reporting error (Krieger et al.). Education, on the other hand, is easily determined for all individuals. Moreover, the family variable of parents' educational attainment is correlated with hopes and expectations (Sewell & Hauser, 1975). Occupational status reflects educational attainment, is a better indicator of income over the long term, and is correlated with hopes and expectations for work (Sewell & Hauser, 1975; Sewell & Hauser, 1980; Williams & Collin, 1995). Thus, it is frequently employed as a socioeconomic variable in social science research.

Socioeconomic prestige scales have been the predominant measurement scheme in the social sciences (Kerbo, 2000). In 1947, the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) conducted the first study of occupational prestige. Based on the opinions of 2,920 individuals, ninety occupations were rank ordered in terms of individuals' judgments about service to humanity, income, and prestige (Gilbert, 2003). The fact that

there were only ninety occupations mentioned in the survey results, however, gave it little use as a measurement tool. In 1961, Duncan created an index called the Socioeconomic Index of Occupations (SEI) by demonstrating the high correlation between income and educational level and the prestige scores of the (NORC) occupations. Thus, he was able to estimate prestige scores for occupations not listed on the (NORC) survey. Due to the simplicity of its use and high criterion validity, the Duncan SEI, and updated versions of the SEI, has proven to be one of the most frequently used measurement tools for measuring socioeconomic position (Hauser & Warren, 1997).

Conceptualizing the stratification system as distinct groups, or levels, for the purposes of measurement also has been used frequently in social science research. Such measurement techniques began with the small community studies of the 1940's and 1950's conducted by Lloyd Warner and August Hollingshead (Gilbert, 2003). Relying on observational data and subjective status judgments made by community members, these researchers found that occupation showed the highest correlations with the prestige rank accorded by community member. Subsequently, researchers have consistently shown that individuals at all levels of the stratification system perceive group differences based on economic and prestige factors (Jackman, 1979). Moreover, the groups that individuals and researchers perceive as encompassing the stratification system are consistent with categories of occupations specified by socioeconomic indices (Gilbert, 2003).

The fact that one's position in the stratification system is influenced by family background and it is subject to change over the life-course makes the measurement of

socioeconomic position of individuals in early adulthood particularly difficult (Furstenber, et al., 2005). Most researchers examining the effects of socioeconomic position on vocational choice and behavior have focused on childhood and adolescence. Thus, researchers have relied almost solely on family background variables such as parental educational and occupational levels. This assumes that social status is a constant feature in individuals' lives. However researchers indicate that there is a temporal scope of stratification. Inequalities among social classes, in terms of available supports and resources, matter during childhood and adulthood as advantage and disadvantage accumulates over time (Furstenber, et al.). Therefore, schemes for measuring socioeconomic position of individuals in early adulthood should attempt to measure family background variables as well as present socioeconomic realties (Krieger et al., 1997; Williams & Collins, 1995).

For the purposes of this study, socioeconomic position is defined as a non-fixed position within an economic hierarchy based on the educational and occupational levels of the participants and the participants' families of origin (Liu, et al., 2001; Smith & Graham, 1995). Although it is assumed that groups of individuals share approximate socioeconomic positions within a stratification hierarchy, socioeconomic position does not necessarily connote a group awareness or consciousness of others in the same position (Liu et al.).

Socioeconomic Position and Early Adulthood

Early adulthood is a period in life in which many individuals experience vulnerability across the socioeconomic variables of income, education, and occupation

(Rumbaut, 2005). With a national poverty rate of 15.7% in the year 2000, 30% of individuals between the ages of 18 and24 were below the poverty line. This is double the 15% poverty rate of individuals between the ages of 25 and 34, and triple the 10% rate of individuals between the ages of 35 and 64.

This economic vulnerability seems to be a function of the transition to adulthood experienced by individuals between the ages of 18 and 24 (Rumbaut, 2005). Many individuals between these ages have not completed the school to work transition (e.g., 45% were still attending school). Moreover, 25% had not completed high school compared to 16% of the 25 to 34 year olds. Further, only 71% of the individuals between 18 and 24 years old were in the labor force, compared to 79% of the 25 to 34 year olds. In terms of occupational status, 41% of 18 to 24 year olds, and 30% of 25 to 34 year olds, were employed in jobs with Duncan SEI scores below 25, considered low-skill and low-wage jobs (Rumbaut). Despite the socioeconomic vulnerability experienced by many individuals in early adulthood, researchers have for the most part ignored the relationship between socioeconomic position and the overall developmental process of individuals in early adulthood (Brown et al., 1996; Fouad & Brown, 2000).

Socioeconomic Position and Vocational Choice

Vocational choice theorists have long been aware of the influence of socioeconomic variables on the choice process, specifically regarding individuals' hopes and expectations. For the most part, however, vocational choice theorists and researchers do not directly address this issue with any depth or scope. For example, Super (1990) noted that socioeconomic position most likely affects vocational development by opening

and closing opportunities for experiences that may shape elements of the self-concept, yet offered no specifics beyond this. Those theorists who give more detailed information about the possible effects of socioeconomic position on individuals' vocational choice, specifically regarding hopes and expectations, tend to adhere to two general theoretical positions. Some theorists adhere to a sociological perspective, postulating that hopes and expectations are the result of socialization early in life (Sewell & Hauser, 1975). Thus, they recognize the association between background, goals, and achievement. Others adhere to a social psychological perspective, acknowledging and focusing on the structural impediments to choice and how these impediments affect the psychological factors involved in choice (Blustein et al, 2002).

Sociological Perspective

Status attainment theory approaches vocational choice from a sociological perspective, identifying socioeconomic background factors as critical in vocational achievement (Rojewski, 2005). Moreover, status attainment theory views individuals' hopes and expectations "as embedded in a broad system of social stratification" (Hotchkiss & Borow, 1990, p. 263). Thus, they reflect the effects of imposed social attitudes, cultural expectations, and stereotyped experiences based on race, gender, and social class (Hotchkiss & Borow). Essentially, societal attitudes and expectations impose lower statuses on certain individuals, resulting in lowered aspirations and expectations. The original status attainment model put forth by Blau and Duncan (1967) posited that the social status of individuals' parents affects the level of education attained, which in turn affects the occupational level achieved (Hotchkiss & Borow).

Elaborating on Blau and Duncan's (1967) original model, Sewell and Hauser (1975) placed occupational aspirations as the central component in a model of occupational attainment. Sewell and Hauser define occupational aspirations as the desired occupation an individual states they would eventually like to enter. Within this perspective, occupational aspirations and expectations represent rudimentary and central tasks in the vocational choice process, and serve as mediators between individuals' socioeconomic backgrounds and eventual achievements (Sewell & Hauser). Status attainment relies on a functionalist model, maintaining that aspirations are formed at early ages through social interaction. The process of socialization leads children from different backgrounds to plan for and move toward different goals (Jacobs, Karen, & Mclelland, 1991). Therefore, career goals are constrained by structural forces, which are considered highly influential in determining occupational attainment. External factors such as socioeconomic position act as barriers limiting career options, but these operate through the process of socialization (Rojewski, 2005).

The status-attainment model has generated a large amount of research that has held up well under extensive scrutiny (Hotchkiss & Borow, 1996). This research has come under considerable criticism, however, due to the fact it does not work as well with women or individuals from low socioeconomic status as it does with white middle-class males (Rojewski, 2005). Moreover, it does not acknowledge that the background to attainment process may result from psychological forces such as individuals' perceptions and recognition of barriers and restricted opportunity structures.

Social Psychological Perspective

Gottfredson's theory (1981, 1996) recognizes psychological, social, and structural factors within the choice process. Gottfredson outlines two processes in the development of hopes and expectations: circumscription and compromise. Both are influenced by socioeconomic factors. Gottfredson postulated that individuals' senses of self, which includes their hopes and expectations, reflect their socioeconomic position. Individuals eliminate occupational alternatives, through the circumscription process, that conflict with their social space. The occupational options that remain reflect their socialized self-concept.

Gottfredson states that structural factors also are responsible, however, for restricting choice and limiting individuals' abilities to implement vocational hopes. The compromising of hopes for more realistic expectations takes place as individuals observe and experience the restrictions to future opportunities. Thus, they form perceptions of the opportunity structure, which are embedded within the stratification system (Rojewski, 2005). Research examining Gottfredson's theory has focused largely on which aspects of individuals' hopes will be compromised to maintain a desired self-concept. This research has been limited in its ability to assess individuals' perceptions of the need to compromise due to perceptions of the opportunity structure (Armstrong & Crombie, 2000). By comparing aspirations and expectations, it may be possible to examine these perceptions.

Mickelson (1990) suggested that the discrepancy between hopes and expectations typically found among individuals from lower socioeconomic positions is the result of

conflicting ideological beliefs. Mickelson argues that measuring individuals' aspirations typically measures internalized ideological beliefs regarding the dominant notions of the "American dream," which typically contain the assumption of equal opportunity, and upward mobility. Given the prevalence of this ideological belief within the dominant culture, Mickelson argues that individuals internalize high aspirations for occupational success. This argument follows Merton's (1968) assertion that the pervasive and entrenched American ideology of occupational success encourages everyone to set high occupational goals. Thus, the only officially recognized barriers to success are personal. Therefore, Merton argues that hopes and aspirations will reflect as overambition.

Mickelson (1990) also argues that expectations represent those goals that are grounded in concrete experience and personalized understanding of the opportunity structure. Thus, differences in the aspirations and expectations for work reflect conflicting attitudes and beliefs regarding opportunity, and can indicate the structural impediments to vocational choice perceived by individuals. For example, students may hope for the ideals of the "American dream;" as this is the guiding ethos in society. Individuals may form very different expectations, however, due to their understanding of the opportunities to achieve their hopes. The work possible selves construct offers clear conceptual distinctions between hopes and expectations, therefore it is a useful construct for examining individuals' perceptions of opportunities within the vocational choice process (Yowell, 2002).

Work Possible Selves

Markus and Nurius (1986) refered to individuals' future-based senses of self as "possible selves." Possible selves usually take form as visual images, or cognitive representations, of the self in future situations. Work possible selves are future-based images that represent the expression and implementation of the self in work as depicted by personally held work values. In this study, the following two types of work possible selves will be examined: hoped-for work selves and expected work selves. Hoped-for work selves are those images that represent individuals' desires, dreams, and wishes that pertain to work and that are unhampered by reality. They are the "ideal work selves" we would like to become (Markus & Nurius, 1986). Expected work selves are those images that represent the more likely perceived outcomes, also referred to as "realistic work selves" (Markus & Nurius).

The construct of work possible selves is a derivative of the concept of possible selves put forth by Markus and Nurius (1986). The development of the construct of work possible selves is supported by several adult development and vocational development theories that explain vocational development and choice as a process that includes the generation of hopes and expectations as individuals attempt to implement a self-concept (Gottfredson, 1981; Levinson, 1978; Super, 1990). The development of this construct also draws directly from the work of Super (1951; 1957; 1963; 1980; 1990) and Brown (1996; 2002) who view work values as specific content within the self-concept critical to the vocational choice process. An overview of the various theories and concepts that support the work possible selves construct is provided in this section. This discussion

provides the necessary foundation for understanding the work possible selves construct, and the quantitative exploration of the relationship among work possible selves, socioeconomic position, and psychological well-being in early adulthood.

Cognitive Self-Theory

The theoretical underpinning of this study lies in a cognitive perspective of the self along two temporal dimensions: the present and the future. This perspective is grounded in a cognitive information processing approach in which the self-concept is referred to as a system of affective and cognitive memory structures (Kihlstrom & Cantor, 1984; Markus, 1977; Markus & Sentis, 1982; Markus & Wurf, 1987; Stryker, 1991). Within this approach it is believed that individuals' collect and store information regarding the self. This information is referred to as cognitive representations, self-conceptions, and schemas. Markus (1977) used the term self-schemas to refer to major subsets of all the cognitive self-conceptions, representations, or schemas of the self that are formed through individuals' experiences. As individuals gain recurring information about the self, they develop self-schemas to organize, guide, and provide coherence to this information. Self-schemas represent the way the self is articulated in memory through specific events, or repeated evaluations of individuals' behavior by themselves (Markus, 1977). Self-schemas become generalized present conceptions that individuals hold regarding themselves (e.g. "I am confident," "I am a hard worker"). Self-schemas also determine which new information individuals will select for attention. Therefore, it is believed that self-schemas influence individuals' senses of self (Markus & Sentis, 1982). Markus (1977) referred to self-schemas as self-concepts and viewed an

individual's overall sense of self, or self-concept as the sum total of one's self-schemas. Within this perspective individuals' self-concepts are not viewed as unitary entities but rather as constellations of conceptions that individuals hold of themselves.

Possible Selves

One particular difference among self-conceptions is their temporal orientation (Cross & Markus, 1991). Individuals hold self-conceptions of themselves in the future as well as the present. Markus and Nurius (1986) referred to future-based images as possible selves and stated that they are future-oriented components of the self-concept. Thus, possible selves extend the cognitive approach to the self to include the self within a future perspective. They give cognitive form to individuals' values, goals, hopes, aspirations, expectations, and fears (Markus & Nurius; Nurius, 1991). More specifically, possible selves are individuals' representations (visual, semantic, or symbolic) of themselves in future states and circumstances (Markus & Wurf, 1987). Possible selves offer insights into individuals' beliefs about what they would like to have happen, what could happen in the future, and about what is possible.

The idea that individuals' self concepts extend forward through time has been noted in the psychological literature for over one hundred years. James (1890) referred to the term "potential social self" to describe individuals' self-images of an ideal state of being. James noted that the potential social self might represent images that individuals recognize as barely realistic, yet these images harbor individuals' future hopes. He further introduced the concept of "the immediate social self" as distinguished from the "potential social self." Contemporary self-theorists have bolstered this idea. Rogers

(1951) referred to the notion of the "ideal self" as individuals' perceptions of how they wish to be regarded by themselves. Rogers believed that the ideal self motivates individuals to grow and develop in positive directions. More recently, Levinson (1978) described future images of self as "the dream", which is a collection of fantasized goals and aspirations constructed by individuals. The dream represents ideas of what is possible; it is an individual's vague sense of self in the future.

Markus and Nurius (1986) noted that possible selves often vary in their importance in defining the self. Drawing upon a symbolic interactionist perspective (Stryker, 1980; 1991), social roles are believed to confer the self-schemas and possible selves that individuals create and sustain (Cross & Markus, 1991). Social roles are sets of expectations for behavior, and are a means through which individuals draw inferences about themselves. Those possible selves that are chronically instrumental to self-definition include major life roles such as the role of work (Cross & Markus, 1991; Markus & Nurius; Nurius, 1991; Stryker, 1991; Thoits, 1999). In their initial research, Markus and Nurius identified occupation as one of six categories of possible selves that individuals generate and maintain.

Vocational choice researchers have long been focusing on individuals' hopes and expectations regarding work; however, they are most commonly referred to as vocational aspirations, vocational preferences, goals, and vocational expectations (Johnson, 1995). These constructs are often defined in terms similar to work possible selves. However, There are, however, also important differences in the constructs. Therefore, the literature

examining these constructs offers important insights into the relationship among work possible selves, socioeconomic position, and psychological well-being.

Vocational Aspirations and Expectations

Vocational aspirations and expectations are typically referred to within the vocational choice literature as different types of expressions of individuals' vocational goals. As such, they have widespread acceptance as valid predictors of vocational behavior (Holland & Gottfredson, 1975; Prediger & Brandt, 1991). The literature notes, however, inconsistent and ambiguous definitions and measurement strategies associated with these terms (Crites, 1969; Kuvlesky & Bealer, 1966; Johnson, 1995). Noting these inconsistencies more than thirty years ago, Crites (1969) suggested that these concepts differ to the extent that reality factors are considered in selecting an occupation. Crites defined a vocational aspiration as the "ideal" occupation an individual would select if there were no constraints or considerations of reality. As such, vocational aspirations are similar to hoped-for work selves. Kuvlesky and Bealer (1966) suggested using the term expectation in reference to individuals' estimations of a probable attainment of an occupation and, thus, it is similar to expected work selves.

Vocational aspirations and expectations have also lacked conceptual depth and clarity within the literature. Kuvlesky and Bealer (1966) addressed this conceptual ambiguity by stating "as the individual visualizes himself in future statuses, he can and usually does have relatively specific aspirations for each goal area" (p. 270). They further stated that although most research emphasizes the status dimension of aspirations, individuals in fact visualize specific work conditions and job characteristics that may not

be relevant to the prestige level or status of a particular job. Johnson (1995) conducted a multidimensional analysis of the vocational aspirations of college students. The results of this study suggest that the mental images individuals create of themselves in the future in terms of work are in fact comprised of a complexity of several dimensions that go beyond levels of prestige. Research conducted using vocational aspirations and expectations, however, typically asks individuals to list occupational titles in reference to goals and expectations (Rojewski, 2005). This offers little information on the specific content of individuals' self-concepts that might influence motivation, behavior, or affect.

An advantage of viewing goals and aspirations in terms of work possible selves is that it provides a theoretical link to the cognitive and affective systems. Work values have been identified as specific and critical components within the self-concept (Brown, 2002; Dawis, 1996; Ginzberg, 1951; Gottfredson, 1981; Super, 1990; Super, Savickas, & Super, 1996). As such, work values can be reflected in individuals' possible selves (Markus & Nurius; Meara, Davis, & Robinson, 1997), thus offering specific content regarding individuals' hopes and expectations for the future as they relate to work.

Work Values

Work values have been incorporated into vocational choice and development theory over the last fifty years (Brown, 1996; 2002; Dawis, 1996; Ginzberg, 1951; Gottfredson, 1981; Super, 1990). Super (1990) and Brown (1996) have been instrumental, however, in highlighting the importance of work values within the vocational choice literature. Super (1970) defined values as desirable end states. "They are the qualities which people desire and which they seek in the activities in which they

engage, in the situations in which they live"…(p. 4). Super (1963, 1990) asserted that the self-concept consists of the mental images that individuals hold of themselves in a specific role, such as work. According to Super, these images contain individuals' subjective appraisals and personal meanings of needs, interests, abilities, and values. Super contended that values are most fundamental to the self-concept because they represent individuals' desires, interests, and goals (Super, 1990).

Brown (1996; 2002) put forth a value-based, holistic model of career choice and satisfaction in which work values are conceptualized as critical components of individuals' self-concepts. Brown defined work values as the cognitive manifestations of desired end states, interests, and needs that reflect individuals' wants, hopes, and expectations from work. Similar to possible selves, they are cognitive structures that contain information about desired goals, and are affective components that form the basis for self-evaluation (Brown, 2002). Like work possible selves, work values have been conceptualized as representations of what individuals hope to be in work (Ros, Schwartz, & Surkiss, 1999).

Work values have generally been classified in terms of orientations toward work, or how work is perceived in relation to achieving values (Knoop, 1991; Mottaz, 1985; Roberson, 1990). Most researchers recognize two major types of orientation toward work: intrinsic and extrinsic (Brief, Nord, Atieh, & Doherty, 1990; Elizur, Borg, Hunt, & Beck, 1991; Ginzberg, et al., 1951; Knoop, 1993; Mottaz, 1985; Pryor, 1987). An intrinsic orientation to work refers to the belief that work itself results in desired outcomes, is interesting, engaging, and in some way satisfying in its own right.

Moreover, working as an activity is valued because it gives opportunities to attain valued outcome. In contrast, an extrinsic orientation to work refers to the belief that the inherent value in work derives from the outcomes work can provide that are not work-centered. The value of work is not the content or the process of work; it is a means to an end (Roberson, 1990). Researchers have traditionally viewed intrinsic and extrinsic work values as dichotomous (Elizur, 1984). Recent research indicates, however, that valuation of one aspect of work does not preclude valuation of the other (Kirkpatrick-Johnson, 2001; Loscocco, 1989).

Work Possible Selves in Early Adulthood

Most of the research examining changes in work possible selves has focused on the factors that contribute to the social origins of achievement orientations in children and adolescents, such as vocational aspirations, expectations, and work values. Such factors include gender, education, occupation, personality, age, and family socioeconomic background (Kirkpatrick-Johnson, 2002; Knox, Lindsay, & Kolb, 1993; Kohn, & Schooler, 1983; Marini, et al., 1996; Sewell, Haller, & Portes, 1969; Sewell & Hauser, 1975). Researchers investigating the status attainment model have provided the most conclusive evidence suggesting that work possible selves take shape through a process of socialization early in childhood and remain static through adolescence (Mortimer, 1996). This research, coupled with the lack of research on achievement orientations in adulthood, has led to the predominant view that work possible selves are not subject to change across the life course (Kirkpatrick-Johnson, 2002). Recently, however,

researchers have approached the study of work possible selves from a life course perspective.

From this perspective, research suggests that constructs related to work possible selves show striking and consistent patterns of change across the life-span. Specifically, individuals' develop hoped-for images of themselves in work, which are among the most prominent images for individuals in early adulthood (Bybee & Wells, 2002; Cross & Markus, 1991; Hooker, 1999; Ryff, 1991). Hoped-for images become increasingly salient and stable through childhood and adolescence, and then become less salient and reflect less ambition, thus, reflecting a downward trajectory as individuals move through early adulthood (Armstrong & Crombie, 2000; Csikszentmihalyi & Schneider, 2000; Jacobs, Karen, & McClelland, 1991; Rojweski, 1997; Rojewski & Yang, 1997; Trice, 1991). Moreover, for many individuals in early adulthood, a discrepancy exists between hoped-for and expected images of the self (Bogie, 1976; Hellenga at al., 2002; Yowell, 2002).

Researchers have noted that these patterns generally reflect the developmental process of vocational choice through the life span. Specifically, as individuals gain knowledge and experience in the world of work, they engage in a process of vocational realism in which they adjust their hopes, desires, and values to match existing opportunities to implement their self-concept through work (Ginzberg, 1984; Gottfredson, 1996; Super, 1990). Following is a discussion of the research related to the construct of work possible selves that explains in more detail these trends in early adulthood.

Research on Work Possible Selves in Early Adulthood

Cross and Markus (1991) studied differences in the quantity and content of possible selves across age groups. Their study included 173 individuals between the ages of 18 and 86. Fifty of the participants were college students enrolled in introductory psychology courses (25 male, 25 female). The remainder of the participants were recruited from various community organizations. These participants averaged 16.8 years of education. Thirty-four were male, and 89 were female. A large majority of the participants were Caucasian. Participants completed the open-ended Possible Selves Questionnaire. Findings indicate significant differences in the frequency of mentioned categories of hoped-for selves across age groups. Individuals between the ages of 18 and 39 mentioned significantly more hoped-for selves related to work then those individuals between the ages of 40 and 86, and the content of these hoped-for selves became more concrete and specific with age. Moreover, participants between the ages of 18 and 39 reported a greater likelihood that their hoped-for selves would come about than participants in the older groups. Cross and Markus concluded that the patterns of hoped-selves generated by individuals in the 18 to39 age range are indicative of the developmental tasks suggested by Levinson (1978) and Havighurst (1972), such as embracing the social roles of work and consolidating a personal identity.

Hooker (1999) reported findings from several studies that examined the prominence of possible selves in the various life domains that correspond to Havighurst's (1972) developmental tasks. The open-ended Possible Selves Questionnaire was used in each of these studies. In one study, Hooker, Kaus, and Morfei (1993) found that 68% of

a sample of 228 adults in their late twenties and mid thirties reported work related hoped-for selves, making it the second most prominent response category for this age group. In another study, Hooker and Kaus (1994) found that 56% of a sample of 84 adults between the ages of 40 and 59 reported work related hoped-for selves. The researchers suggest that the quantity and content of the hoped-for selves followed the developmental trajectories outlined by Havighurst's developmental tasks.

Rojewski and Yang (1997) analyzed the vocational aspirations of students in the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS: 88). A total weighted data pool (n = 18, 311) represented the 1988 U.S. ethnic and geographic diversity. Aspirations were examined at three points (8th grade, 10 grade, and 12th grade) in the career developmental process of adolescence. Aspirations were measured by asking students to indicate the job they hoped to have by age thirty from a listing of 17 occupational categories. Occupations were coded according to their prestige level. Results suggest that the aspirations of these individuals were relatively stable over a 4-year period. Further, earlier aspirations offered significant predictive power for subsequent aspirations. In a separate study, Rojewski (1997) examined the stability of adolescents' occupational aspirations between the 8th and 10th grades. Findings suggested that during this period, over half the students (52.9%) held stable aspirations as indicated by occupational prestige level.

Jacobs, Karen, and McClelland (1991) traced the trajectory of 5125 young men between the ages 15 and 27 by analyzing panel data set from the National Longitudinal Survey of Young Men (NLS). The researchers analyzed data from eight survey years

between 1966 and 1975. Aspirations were measured by asking individuals in which occupation they hoped to be employed by age 30. Occupations were measured by sorting job titles into 10 categories ranging from professional to manual labor. Findings suggested that more young men aspired to high-status positions than were actually likely to be employed in by age 30. Findings also suggested a downward drift in aspirations. Fifty-seven percent of 15 year olds aspired to the highest level of professional occupations, as compared with 26% of 27 year olds. Further, only 21% were actually employed in such positions by age 30. Moreover, the proportion of young men aspiring to be factory workers was below 6%, while 12% were employed in this work at age 30. The authors pointed to the American ideology of pervasive opportunity put forth by Merton (1968) to explain the high levels of aspirations held by young men.

These studies suggest that individuals' hoped-for work selves are generally ambitious and stable through childhood and adolescence, and then follow a downward trajectory toward less ambitious work as individuals gain experience in the workforce. Recent research examining work values trajectories indicate similar patterns of change (Johnson-Kirkpatrick, 2002; Marini et al. 1996).

Johnson-Kirkpatrick (2002) studied the trajectories of work values during the transition to adulthood. The researcher examined data from the Monitoring the Future Survey, a repeated cross-sectional survey of high school students carried out since 1976. The researcher examined changes in work values by evaluating seven biennial surveys. Data were collected using a cluster sampling technique that included 125 to140 public and private schools nation wide. The seven biannual surveys spanned 12 years, covering

the primary ages of the transition to early adulthood. The researcher used a 14-item measure, which when factor analyzed, produced a four-factor structure including extrinsic, intrinsic, altruistic, and social work values. The researcher found that as a group intrinsic work rewards were very important to adolescents and continued to be as important as individuals entered their 30's. Further, the average importance of extrinsic, altruistic, and social work values diminished between the end of high school and the early 30's. The researcher found this downward adjustment of work values to be related to the work rewards that were obtained through their work experience. The researcher suggested that youth tend to highly value many types of work rewards, exceeding what will be available to them as they enter the labor market. A pattern of adjustment to opportunities emerges, as increasing knowledge of what is realistically available leads to changes in values.

Work Possible Selves and Socioeconomic Position

The influence of socioeconomic position on constructs related to work possible selves has not received a great deal of attention (Osipow & Fitzgerald, 1996). The available research indicates, however, that socioeconomic position does influence work possible selves either directly or indirectly (Hotchkiss & Borow, 1996; Mottaz, 1985; Sewell et al., 1969; Sewell & Hauser, 1975; Rojewski & Yang, 1997). Generally, research indicates that individuals from higher socioeconomic positions hold higher vocational aspirations and expectations than individuals from lower socioeconomic positions (Bogie, 1976; Cook et al., 1996; Jacobs et al., 1991; Sellers, Satcher, & Comas, 1999). Researchers have tended to explain these results in terms of the status-attainment

model, and the effects of the socialization process. Research also suggests, however, that differences in vocational aspirations and work values are not large as individuals enter into early adulthood. This finding indicates support for Michelson's (1990) suggestion that hopes and aspirations are located in an ideological belief system that includes a belief in the opportunity for of upward mobility.

Research on Work Possible Selves and Socioeconomic Position

The research examining possible selves and socioeconomic position is scant. Kerpelman, Shoffner, and Ross-Griffin (2002) examined African-American mothers' and daughters' beliefs about daughters' possible selves and their relevance to future career goals. Participants included 22 rural African American female adolescents and their mothers from middle to low socioeconomic positions living in rural counties in the southeast. The researchers reported that in spite of an array of economic barriers facing many of the participants, nearly all the participants reported career related possible selves that reflected a high degree of optimism about their futures, and which required at least a bachelor's degree.

In the study conducted by Jacobs et al. (1991), the researchers found that individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds are somewhat less likely to aspire to the highest professional occupations at age 15, and somewhat less likely to persist with these aspirations by the age of 27. Those from disadvantaged backgrounds, however, have aspirations at least as high as those from advantaged backgrounds in managerial and all other white-collar occupations. Moreover, differences in non-professional aspirations converge between advantaged and disadvantaged participants by age 27.

Considerable attention has been focused on the relationship between work values and socioeconomic position, however research findings are not entirely consistent (Brief & Nord, 1990; Mottaz, 1985). It has been suggested that individuals at different levels of the occupational hierarchy differ considerably in terms of work-related values. More specifically, it has been suggested that lower-level workers have an instrumental orientation toward work and place greater value on extrinsic rewards, whereas higher level workers place greater importance on intrinsic rewards (Aronowitz, 1973; Loscocco, 1989; Mottaz, 1985). Other findings indicate that intrinsic rewards are important to a large proportion of workers in lower level occupations (Locke, 1973; Loscocco, 1989; Mannheim, 1993).

Loscocco (1989) examined differences in levels of intrinsic and extrinsic work values among 3,637 blue-collar factory workers in jobs ranging in level of complexity and autonomy. Results of this study indicated that the factory workers tended to choose their present jobs based on extrinsic rewards such as job security, good pay, and benefits. When asked about their "ideal jobs," however, a large majority of these workers stated that they would prefer work that offered opportunities to utilize their abilities, offered opportunities for creativity, and that were personally fulfilling and challenging. The researcher suggested that the results support Maslow's (1954) basic premise that there is a hierarchy of needs, and that extrinsic rewards fulfill more basic needs than do intrinsic rewards. Results also suggest, however, that extrinsic values do not preclude intrinsic values. Further, the results suggested that the importance these workers placed on

extrinsic rewards were more a function of their lowered future expectations of obtaining intrinsically rewarding work rather than their desires for extrinsic rewards.

Work Possible Selves and Gender

Research consistently indicates significant differences in the constructs related to work possible selves across gender (Bridges, 1989; Herzog, 1982; Johnson-Kirkpatrick, 2001; Marini, et al., 1996; Rojewski & Yang, 1997). Given this research, there is not much debate that the career development and the status attainment process of women is different than that of men. The traditional status attainment model, however, has not achieved the same level of predictive success for women as it has for men (Hellenga et al., 2002). Numerous possibilities for these differences have been suggested, such as gender bias in socioeconomic index scales, greater geographic restriction of females, increasing occupational opportunities for females in high-prestige careers, and multiple role conflicts (Apostal & Bilden, 1991; Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987; Gottfredson, 1981). Researchers have found that young women are likely to express higher vocational aspirations than men, and are more likely to aspire to either higher or lower prestige occupations than men (Rojewski & Yang). Moreover, women generally place greater importance on intrinsic work rewards than men (Bridges, 1989; Herzog, 1982; Marini, et al.).

Research on Work Possible Selves and Gender

In the study conducted by Rojewski and Yang (1997) females reported significantly higher occupational aspirations than males across all three grades, and the magnitude of these differences increased with age. Moreover, females were more likely

to aspire to high and low prestige occupations than males. Kirkpatrick-Johnson (2001) examined the differences in work values between men and women, as well as the changes that occur in these differences as individuals mature through early adulthood. The results of her study suggested that although women place greater importance on intrinsic work values than men, these differences are small. Further, intrinsic work values did not show a downward drift with age for either males or females. These finding are consistent with previous research examining gender differences in work values.

Marini et al. (1996) examined the gender differences in the work values of U. S. high school seniors from 1976 to 1991. The study was based on data from Monitoring the Future, a repeated cross-sectional survey of students in 125 public and private high schools across the United States. Data were analyzed from eight separate years between 1976 and 1991. Sample sizes ranged from 2,500 to 3,500. The researchers used a work values instrument created by them. Seven latent constructs were observed through a factor analysis. Results suggested that both males and females placed as much value on intrinsic rewards as extrinsic, social, and altruistic work rewards, and that there was a high degree of similarity in the work values of young males and females. Women were found, however, to attach more importance than men to intrinsic rewards, such as “a job which utilizes your skills and abilities,” and “a job that lets you do things you can do best.” Moreover, the importance placed on intrinsic rewards for both sexes did not decline over the period studied.

Work Possible Selves Discrepancies

The notion of a discrepancy between one's hoped-for work self and one's expected work self is implicit in vocational choice theory. Ginzburg et al. (1951) stated that as individuals mature and enter into the realistic stage of vocational development their occupational choices become increasingly realistic as they compromise their ideal preferences. Similarly, Gottfredson (1981, 1996) stated that vocational choice hinges on the process of compromise in which individuals close the gap between their most ideal aspirations and their newly formed realistic expectations. As Gottfredson pointed out, "people begin to moderate their hopes with their perceptions of reality. As they do, the aspirations they voice will shift away from their ideal and toward the expected" (p. 196).

Research examining discrepancies between individuals' hopes and expectations within the role of work originally was conducted to examine the occupational choice process described by Ginzberg et al. (1951), and Gottfredson (1981). This research typically refers to the discrepancy between hopes and expectations in the domain of work as "anticipatory occupational goal deflection" (Bogie, 1976; Cosby & Picou, 1971; Kuvlesky & Bealer, 1966), or more simply the aspiration-expectation gap (Cook et al., 1996; Hellenga et al., 2002). This research indicates that discrepancies between occupational hopes and expectations do exist in childhood, adolescents, and into early adulthood. Moreover, the research indicates that individuals from low socioeconomic positions typically demonstrate larger discrepancies between their hopes and expectations within the role of work than individuals from middle socioeconomic positions (Bogie, 1976; Cook et al., 1996). However, the assumption underlying vocational theories is that

compromises have been made, to a large extent, before individuals enter into early adulthood. Thus, research examining the discrepancies between vocational hopes and expectations in early adulthood and beyond is scant.

Research on Work Possible Selves Discrepancies

Yowell (2002) examined the career related possible selves among Latino ninth grade students from low socioeconomic backgrounds (N = 415; 55% male, 45% female). Students completed the Think About Your Future Survey in which hoped-for selves were defined in terms of dreams or hopes for the future, "they are what you most wish you will do in your life." Expected selves were described as what an individual believes is most likely to happen in the future, "they are the things you think will really happen in your life." Results suggested significant differences between hoped-for and expected selves in the domain of occupation. Forty-five percent of the hoped-for selves reported required a bachelor's degree or higher, while 31% of the expected selves reported required a bachelor's degree or higher.

Cook et al. (1996) studied the occupational aspirations and expectations of elementary and middle schoolboys from two distinct populations: those from low socioeconomic backgrounds and those from more privileged backgrounds. Aspirations and expectations were measured using both open-ended and closed-ended assessment methods utilizing a graphic response format. Occupational aspirations were assessed by asking each child, "If you could have any job you wanted when you grow up, what job would you really like to have?" Occupational expectations were assessed by asking each child, "Of all the jobs there are, what job do you think you'll probably get when you

grow up?" Results suggest that the discrepancy between aspirations and expectations are larger for boys from low socioeconomic positions, and the size of the discrepancy increases with age. Moreover, the two groups of boys differed more in occupational expectations than aspirations. This suggests that it is the lowering of expectations, which leads to larger discrepancies for individuals from low socioeconomic backgrounds.

Bogie (1976) examined the relationship between aspirations-expectations gaps and socioeconomic status among 1,835 rural high school seniors. Aspirations were measured with an open-ended question, "If you were completely free to choose, what kind of work would you prefer as a lifetime occupation?" For expectations, respondents were asked, "What kind of work do you actually expect that you will be doing as a lifetime occupation?" The results indicate that 35.7% of the males were characterized by discrepancies, while 44.7% of the females were. Moreover, discrepancies between aspirations and expectations were observed least often among those from high socioeconomic backgrounds, and most frequently among those from low socioeconomic backgrounds.

Work Role Salience

Josselson (1987) stated that operationalizing one's sense of self by exploring one's social roles is to examine that facet of the diamond that we can actually see. Work role salience implies psychological involvement in the role of work, which in turn implies psychological identification with the role of work (Kanungo, 1982). Therefore, the saliency of the work role indicates the importance of work in defining individuals' senses of self (Kanungo; Noor, 2004; Paullay et al., 1994). Work role salience implies that

individuals have the capability and tendency to organize and differentiate life roles with respect to the importance of a role to their self-concept (Gecas & Seff, 1990; Stryker, 1980; Super, 1990). This phenomenon implicates the self-concept in the maintenance and detraction of individuals' psychological well-being. This section discusses three closely related theoretical perspectives that offer clarity on how work role salience is implicated in the self-concept and the regulation of individuals' psychological well-being.

Role-Identity Theory

Role-identity theory is based on the symbolic interactionist perspective, which adheres to the idea that society shapes self, and self impacts behavior (Stryker, 1980). Within this framework the self emerges through a reflexive process of societal interaction as individuals engage in various roles. Roles are defined as clusters of expectations for behaviors as well as the forums for behavior (Stryker). Role-identity theorists define the self as a collection of identities. Identities are derived from experiences acquired from occupying a particular role (Stryker, 1968). Thus, role-identities are defined as the subjective meanings that form through individuals' experiences in various roles (Stryker & Serpe, 1982; Thoits, 1991). As individuals gain experience through engagement in various roles, they internalize these experiences. Role-identities store information, serve as frameworks for interpreting experiences, and are the subjective meaning individuals attach to themselves within a specific role (Stryker, 1980; Thoits, 1992). Thus, roles are the social structural sources of identity, and the external display of internal meaning.

Role-identity theorists define the self as a hierarchically arranged set of identities, or internalized social roles. Individuals' are involved in a number of roles at any given time, however the level of psychological involvement in each role may vary. Role salience refers to this hierarchy of involvement. The extent to which individuals are psychologically involved in a particular role depicts the extent to which that role is important to their self-concept. Role-identities are believed to influence behavior in that each role has a set of associated meanings and expectations for the self (Burke & Reitzes, 1981). Therefore, a more salient role holds more meaning, and is expected to influence psychological well-being to a greater extent (Thoits, 1992).

Cognitive Perspective of Work Role Salience

The cognitive perspective conceptualizes the self-concept as a constellation of self-knowledge structures often referred to as self-representations, schemas, and self-conceptions (Kernberg, 1977; Markus, 1977). Individuals gain self-knowledge through social interactions, primarily through their involvement in roles. Thus, self-schemas can be thought of as equivalent to the concept of identities put forth by role-identity theorists (Stryker, 1991). Within this perspective roles provide individuals with a framework for self-definition. Further, individuals' self-concepts are multidimensional, limited only by the number of self-schemas that are developed through their experiences within social roles.

The construct of role salience within this perspective is embedded in Markus & Nurius' (1986) notion of the working self-concept. The working self-concept is a collection of self-schemas, or self-conceptions that are activated or invoked by a response

to an experience, event, situation, or role (Markus & Nurius). Some self-schemas are more important in defining the self in a particular situation, or at a particular point in time; therefore they are more accessible or salient at that point in time (Markus & Nurius). For instance, a manager who receives a promotion at work may have a working self-concept comprised of positive images of him/herself as successful in his/her work. Other roles, because of their importance in self-definition and self-identification, are chronically accessible (Markus & Nurius).

Motivational Approach to Work Involvement

The motivational approach to work involvement implies that identification with the role of work depends on the saliency of individuals' needs, and individuals' expectations about the potential of work to satisfy these needs (Kanungo, 1982). It considers how experiences help determine individuals' levels of psychological involvement in the role of work, and thus, how much individuals' senses of self will include the role of work. If individuals conclude that their experiences in the work role is meaningful, they will become more psychologically involved in, and more fully identified with the role of work (Kanungo, 1982).

Work involvement has its roots in sociological and organizational behavior research and has been incorporated in contemporary career development theory (Super, 1990). Work involvement has been described in many different terms, such as central life interests (Dubin, 1956), job involvement (Lodahl & Kenjner, 1965), work centrality (Paullay, et al., 1994), and work salience (Super, 1990). Early attempts to operationalize and measure work role salience were fraught with conceptual ambiguities (Kanungo,

1982). Lawler and Hall (1970) clarified the concept by defining job involvement as the "psychological identification with one's work" or "the degree to which the job situation is central to the person or his identity" (pp. 310-311). Further, Maurer (1969) considered work involvement as the degree to which an individual's work role is important to self-definition. Kanungo (1982) offers a conceptualization of work involvement that builds on Lawler and Hall's notion of work involvement as a component of self-definition.

Kanungo (1982) defines work involvement as a cognitive state of psychological identification with work in general. Psychological identification with work is, in turn, dependent on the saliency of individuals' intrinsic and extrinsic needs, and the perceptions individuals have about the need satisfying potential of work. Kanungo emphasizes the fact that such cognitions regarding work are more central to, and can have major impacts on individuals' lives. They are cognitions that represent the self, and thus add significantly to the self-concept. Kanungo settled on a uni-dimensional cognitive concept of work involvement that is conceptually distinct from concepts such as job involvement, work satisfaction, intrinsic motivation, and Protestant Work Ethic (Kanungo, 1982; Paullay, et al., 1994)

Work Role Salience and Early Adulthood

Life-span and vocational choice theorists assert that as individuals enter early adulthood they begin to fully explore career options, gain experience, and make decisions that lead to the implementation of the self-concept through the role of work (Gottfredson, 1981; Levenson, 1978; Super, 1990). These assertions lead to an assumption that the work role becomes an increasingly salient life role for individuals as they enter into and

move through early adulthood. Research examining the importance of work in individuals' lives supports this assumption.

Research on Work Role Salience and Early Adulthood

The Work Importance Study (WIS) was developed as a network of coordinated national research projects aimed at investigating the relative importance of work and the rewards that youth and adults seek in the work role (Ferreira-Marques & Miranda, 1995). Eleven national teams contributed to the project, including the United States. Samples in the United States included individuals from secondary schools, higher education, and adults. Results of these research projects suggest that Americans are characterized by very high work role salience compared to individuals in other countries, and the work role is more salient for adults than for secondary school students (Kulenovic & Super, 1995).

A series of (WIS) research projects examined the relationship among work role salience, career maturity, and educational level. The results of this research suggest that the salience of the work role increases as individuals enter into college (Kulenovic & Super, 1995). This increase in work salience in early adulthood is related to levels of career maturity, which is defined as individuals' cognitive and affective resources for coping with a current vocational task (Nevill & Super, 1988; Super & Nevill, 1984). As individuals begin to engage in vocational behaviors, such as exploration, they become more committed and identified with the role of work (Nevill, 1995).

Work Role Salience and Socioeconomic Position

The relationship between work role salience and socioeconomic position has long been proposed. Marx asserted that when individuals are forced to surrender their free will and control over their labor, they become estranged from themselves, losing their sense of self through the role of work (Marx, 1964). Moreover, as this happens, individuals find outlets other than work for self-definition and satisfaction. Super (1990) contended that socioeconomic position might be an important determinant of the extent individuals self-concepts are implemented through work, and the extent it provides a focus for the organization of one personality. It has been shown that work role salience is a function of demographic and social status variables such as education (Lindsay & Knox, 1984), occupational status (Mannheim, 1975; 1993), work autonomy, creativity, and ability utilization (Mannheim & Dubin, 1986; MOW International Team, 1987).

Research on Work Role Salience and Socioeconomic Position

Mannheim (1975) compared work centrality scores of 778 males across seven occupational categories. The researcher found that individuals involved in occupations requiring specific skills and abilities (e.g., professionals, scientists, and technicians) had the highest work role salience scores, and that these scores differed significantly from other groups. Workers employed in service jobs had lower salience scores then all other groups. Administrators, clerical workers, craftsmen, and production workers all had scores that were significantly lower than professionals but significantly higher than those individuals employed in service positions.

In a recent qualitative study Blustein et al., (2002) examined the impact of social class on the school-to-work transition of young adults in working-class occupations. The sample included 10 men and 10 women stratified by socioeconomic status. Participants were grouped into two cohorts based on their family's socioeconomic background: higher socioeconomic status (HSES) and lower socioeconomic status (LSES). Extensive narratives were gathered describing the participant's experiences with the school-to-work transition. Findings were organized into five categories, two of which reflected the work role salience construct: function of work, and self-concept implementation. The results suggest that individuals differ in the meaning and significance they attach to the work role, and these differences are based in part on socioeconomic status. LSES individuals reported less psychological involvement and identification with work than the HSES group.

Research on Work Role Salience and Gender

In a study consisting of 209 working men and 136 working women of various socioeconomic positions, Mannheim (1993) examined the effects of gender and socioeconomic status on work role salience. Results suggest that socioeconomic status, as measured by occupational status, has a significant effect on work role salience for both sexes. However, the research findings also suggest a tendency for women to have lower work role salience than men, mainly in the intermediate socioeconomic status group. Women's work role salience did not differ from men's in both the highest socioeconomic statuses or in the lowest socioeconomic statuses. Moreover, status inconsistency, which is defined as holding an occupational position below a participant's educational level,

was negatively related to levels of work role salience for both males and females. The researchers surmise that both men and women in the lowest socioeconomic statuses do not receive sufficient rewards, challenge, and autonomy to generate a high work role salience.

Psychological Well-being

Psychological well-being is defined as a general area of scientific interest rather than a specific construct (Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999). Psychological well-being provides a reference point to assess distress and mental health. As such it is of central interest to the counseling profession (Christopher, 1999). It guides counseling practice by offering insights into individuals' perceptions of fulfillment, meaning, and purpose. Moreover, it directs appropriate counseling related interventions (Christopher).

Although there are numerous definitions and methods of measuring psychological well-being, subjective well-being is the predominant approach (Andrews & Robinson, 1991; Diener, 1984). The area of subjective well-being has three hallmarks. First, it refers to individuals' evaluations of their lives; thus, it resides within the experience of the individual (Campbell, 1976). Individuals may have different levels of well-being based on any number of internal or external factors, however subjective well-being places the onus of well-being on the individual. Therefore, it is the individual who determines the standards and criteria for evaluating the well-being of their own life (Christopher, 1999). Second, it usually includes both cognitive judgments of life satisfaction, and affective evaluations of moods and emotions (Diener & Lucas, 1999). Third, it includes positive measures rather than just the absence of negative measures.

The concept of psychological well-being within this study will include two components traditionally included within the approach to studying subjective well-being: cognitive judgment of life satisfaction, and affective balance, or the extent to which the level of positive affect outweighs the level of negative affect.

Life satisfaction has been defined as "a global assessment of a person's quality of life according to his chosen criteria" (Shin & Johnson, 1978, p. 478). Life satisfaction is a cognitive judgmental process that "relies on the standards of the respondent to determine what is the good life" (Diener, 1984, p. 543). The judgment individuals make in terms of their satisfaction is based solely on the standard individuals set for themselves with no externally valued and imposed criterion by the researcher. Life satisfaction has been extensively researched, and is a strongly supported component of psychological well-being (Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999).

Affective balance is a component of psychological well-being that corresponds to the concept of happiness. Happiness is an affective evaluation of well-being that entails a "preponderance of positive affect over negative affect" (Diener, 1984, p. 543). Within this perspective, individuals are assumed to be experiencing high levels of well-being when they report more positive feelings than negative feelings in their lives. Happiness is not just the absence of depression; it also includes the presence of positive emotions. Positive affect and negative affect have been thought of as two separate yet highly correlated concepts (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). However, in this study affective balance will consist of happiness and depression represented as falling at opposite ends of a continuum (Joseph, Linley, Harwood, Lewis, & McCollam, 2004).

Psychological Well-being and Early Adulthood

Early research indicated that youth was a reliable predictor of psychological well-being (Wilson, 1967). Recent research, however, has challenged this conclusion (Butt & Beirser, 1987; Inglehart, 1990; Veenhoven, 1984). Diener and Suh (1998) recently examined the relationship between age and psychological well-being in a survey of 60,000 adults from 40 nations. Results suggest that life satisfaction increases slightly with age from the 20's to the 80's, negative affect remains constant, and positive affect decreases slightly with age. The decline in positive affect over the life span however, has been found to be the result of a general decline in emotional intensity that corresponds with an increase in age (Mroczek & Kolarz, 1998).

Psychological Well-being and Work Possible Selves

The relationship between work possible selves and psychological well-being is predicated on two general types of theories: self-discrepancy theories and cognitive theories of depression. Self-discrepancy theories ascribe to the notion that individuals have conflicting temporal representations of the self, and these conflicts affect psychological well-being (Higgins, 1987; Micholas, 1985). Cognitive theories of depression maintain that perceptions of the self, such as hoped-for and expected work possible selves, have affect attached to them, therefore they can explain variance in individuals' current affective states (Beck, et al, 1979; Markus & Nurius, 1986). The following section reviews these theories and the corresponding research that supports the relationship between psychological well-being and work possible selves.

Self-Discrepancy Theory

It is widely believed that levels of psychological well-being reflect discrepancies between what individuals' desire and hope for, and what they perceive themselves as having (Andrews & Withey, 1976; Campbell, Converse, & Rodgers, 1976; Crosby, 1982, Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999; Wilson, 1967). The idea that individuals can have conflicting temporal representations of the self, and that these conflicts can affect psychological well-being has played an important role in psychological theory and research dating back to William James (1890). James put forth the proposition that one's psychological well-being depends on the perceived distance between the "potential self" and the "immediate self." This idea was brought to prominence through the writings and research of Carl Rogers (1951). Rodgers postulated that clients entered therapy with large discrepancies between their "ideal self' and their current perceptions of self, and were inclined to move toward their "ideal self" through the process of therapy.

More recently Micholas (1985) put forth the multiple discrepancy theory of psychological well-being which elaborates on this idea. According to Micholas's theory, psychological well-being is determined by the mental evaluations an individual makes regarding discrepancies between what one perceives oneself to have, and a set of aspirations or desires. These discrepancies are determined by what others have, the best one has had in the past, what one expects to have in the future, what one deserves, and what one believes one needs.

Higgins (1987) put forth a theory of self-concept discrepancy, which relates specific types of discrepancies to specific patterns of psychopathology. Higgins posited

that there are three domains of the self: the "actual self", the "ideal self", and the "ought self." Disparities between individuals' current perception of self (actual self) and the self individuals wish to be (ideal self) signifies a lack of positive outcomes, and is related to negative emotions such as dejection, and depressive disorders. Whereas disparities between individuals' current perception of self and the self that individuals believe they ought to be is related to anxiety related disorders. Research has supported the notion that these self-concept discrepancies lead to the posited affective pattern (Scott & O'Hara, 1993).

Vocational choice theories do not explicitly address self-concept discrepancies that become evident in the vocational choice process; however there is implicit reference to the phenomenon in Gottfredson's theory. Gottfredson (1996) implies that during the compromise process individuals develop discrepancies between their ideal aspirations and their realistic choices or expectations. Gottfredson states that, "compromises can range from minor to wrenching. They can be very painful when the choice is among alternatives the individual deems unacceptable, that is, outside the person's social space" (p. 198). However, research examining Gottfredson's theory has focused primarily on the compromise process rather than the psychological implications of compromise.

Cognitive Theories of Depression

Cognitive theories assume that psychological well-being is related to lowered aspirations, lowered expectations, or both. Beck et al., (1979) hypothesized that a cognitive triad constructed of negative thoughts about one's self, the world, and one's future expectations characterize depressed individuals. Empirical research has supported

the view that individuals suffering from depression have pessimistic views of their futures, and generally hold lowered expectations that positive events will happen (Anderson, 1990). Similarly, hopelessness theory of depression posits that individuals' expectations that highly desired outcomes will not occur, or that negative future outcomes will occur is a sufficient cause of the symptoms of depression (Abramson, Metalsky, & Alloy, 1989). Brown's (1996) value-based model of occupational choice draws upon cognitive theories of depression by linking values to those self-evaluations that lead to depression. Brown hypothesizes that values are the basis for self-evaluation and the establishment of goals. Thus, when individuals believe that they cannot act on values (e.g. I'll never get what I want; my dreams are impossible to obtain), depression is likely to result.

Levinson's (1978) theory of life-span development offers theoretical support to both the self-discrepancy and cognitive theories. Levinson suggests that the Dream has important implications for individuals' psychological well-being. Individuals may develop a conflict between a life direction that will express the dream, and one that will not. Individuals may be pushed toward the later by parental influence, by external constraints such as lack of opportunity, or by personality traits. This can result in the surrender of the dream, the formation of a life structure that does not center on the Dream, and ultimately lower levels of life satisfaction (Levinson, 1978).

Research on Psychological Well-being and Work Possible Selves Discrepancies

Research examining the relationship between discrepancies, specifically related to individuals' vocational hopes and expectations, and psychological well-being is scant.

Therefore the following research draws from a variety of different theoretical perspectives that examine constructs related to work possible selves. Markus & Nurius (1986) conducted their original possible selves study (N = 136) to examine the relative contribution of hoped-for, and expected possible selves to measures of individuals' current affective states. The results of this research suggest that both self-components were significantly related to self-esteem, positive and negative affect, and hopelessness. Moreover, hoped-for and expected selves accounted for a significant portion of the variance in self-esteem, positive and negative affect, and hopelessness. The researchers contend that these independent dimensions of the self-concept are related to individuals' current affective states.

Only one other study examined the relationship between the possible selves construct exclusively and psychological well-being. In a study of 287 college students, Penland et al. (2000) found a significant positive relationship between negative possible selves and depression. The researcher used the Possible Selves Questionnaire (PSQ; Markus & Wurf, 1987) in which individuals respond to 80 possible selves, including both positive and negative scores. The results showed significant correlations between negative scores on the PSQ and high scores on the Beck Depression Inventory (Beck et al., 1979). The researchers report that subjects scoring high on depression appeared to conceptualize their futures with lower expectations for achieving their hopes.

Hellenga et al, (2002) examined the factors that predict large discrepancies between the occupational aspirations and occupational expectations of African-American adolescent mothers. This study included African American girls (N = 1600) between the

ages of 13 and 19 who were pregnant or who had just given birth. Participants were enrolled in an alternative school in the Midwest. Participants were asked one open-ended question about their vocational dreams for the future, assuming they faced no obstacles whatsoever, and a second question about their most probable future career. Job choices were coded based on a socioeconomic index. Participants also responded to the depression subscale of the Symptom Checklist 90-R (SCL-90-R; Deragotis, 1983). The aspirations-expectations gap was the numerical difference between the SEI codes for aspirations and expectations. Results suggest that 29% of the sample showed a discrepancy between their vocational aspirations and expectations. Moreover, in a comparison between students with and without a discrepancy, the discrepancy group reported similar levels of aspirations, and significantly lower levels of expectations. Further, the discrepancy group reported significantly more depressive symptoms than the non-discrepancy group.

Two research studies have examined the relationship between Levinson's concept of the Dream and psychological well-being. In a study of 65 mid-life male participants, Drebing & Gooden (1991) found that work was the focus of the Dreams for a majority of the participants. In addition, those men who had a Dream, felt they had achieved their Dream, or expected to succeed in achieving their Dream, experienced less depression, anxiety, and more purpose in life then those who did not expect to achieve their dream. In a follow-up study of 90 mid-life women, Drebing, Gooden, Van De Kemp, Maloy and Drebing (1995) found that Dream content was more multifaceted in nature then men, with work being the most frequent content for 38 percent of the respondents. Further,

having an occupational Dream, and having an expectation of fulfilling the occupational dream was negatively related to depression, although the relationships were less dramatic then for mid-life men.

Gooden and Toye (1984) investigated the relationship between occupational Dreams and depression among 63 college students (Male = 29, Female = 34) ranging in age from 17 to 23. A description of an occupational Dream was presented as the hopes and wishes a person has about his or her future life and the type of occupation one would like to enter. The researchers found that 73.4% of the participants had occupationally related Dreams. Moreover, significant correlations were found between having a Dream and depression, and giving up a Dream and depression. The researchers interpret these results as support for the notion that the level of expectations individuals hold for obtaining an occupational Dream is related to levels of depression.

Psychological Well-being and Work Role Salience

From a role-identity perspective the relationship between role salience and psychological well-being can be either direct or indirect. Roles provide an individual with a sense of who they are, and how they should behave. They offer individuals a sense of meaning and purpose, as well as behavioral guidance (Thoits, 1992). Roles and identities, in turn, provide opportunities for self-evaluation that lead to the augmentation or diminution of psychological well-being (Thoits, 1991). Moreover, a role that is highly salient, may moderate stressful life events within that role. For example an individual who finds high levels of meaning through work, may suffer more psychological

consequence from stressful work situations then the individual who does not look to work for self-definition (Thoits, 1992).

From a cognitive perspective the relationship between role salience and psychological well-being is grounded in the concept of the working self-concept and affect regulation, which also implies that the self-concept has direct and moderating affects on psychological well-being. The working self-concept essentially acts to regulate affective states, and protect individuals from psychological harm (Markus & Wurf, 1987). As individuals receive information that threatens positive views of the self, they attempt to reaffirm the self by recruiting positive self-conceptions into the working self-concept. Thus, salient conceptions of the self are self-affirming. For example, a college student may define himself/herself more as an employee than a student if this individual is excelling in her job, but getting D's in her courses. Therefore, the role of work may be more salient for this individual then the role of college student.

Research on Psychological Well-being and Work Role Salience

Although theory supports the relationship between work role saliency and psychological well-being, there has been little empirical research to support this relationship. Two recent quantitative studies suggest direct and moderating effects of work role salience on psychological well-being. Martire et al., (2000) investigated the relationship between the centrality of women's multiple roles and psychological well-being. In a sample of 296 women who occupied multiple roles, the researchers found the level of work centrality to be positively related to fewer symptoms of depression and greater life satisfaction. Moreover, higher levels of work related stress were associated

with more depressive symptoms only for those women who reported a high level of salience in the work role.

Noor (2004) examined the relationships among work-family conflict, work-family role salience, and psychological well-being. Participants included 147 employed women (56.5% were employed part-time, 43.5% were employed full-time). Results suggest a positive relationship between work role salience and job satisfaction. Moreover, for those women who reported high levels of work centrality, family role conflicts were reported to have greater effects on job satisfaction.

Chapter Summary

Life-span development and vocational choice theorists contend that early adulthood is the period of the life span during which individuals are engaged in multiple life tasks. Most notable among these tasks are the transition into a viable career, and the subsequent implementation of a sense of self through work (Erikson, 1968; Levinson, 1978; Super, 1990). Each of these development and vocational choice theories offers a similar account of the way in which implementation of a self-concept in work involves the process of forming future images of the self that reflect hopes, desires, and expectations. Individuals strive to find work that matches their hopes and desires. However, these hopes and desires are often compromised due to the reality of opportunities. Individuals eventually make vocational choices that approximate their ideal images of themselves as closely as possible (Gottfredson, 1996; Super, 1990). Psychological well-being is assumed to be contingent, to a large extent, on the accomplishment of these two developmental tasks (Gottfredson; Super). Although

vocational choice theorists give credence to the notion that environmental factors influence the vocational choice process, for the most part they assume that individuals have both volition and unlimited opportunity during this process (Blustein, 2001; Brown et al., 1996). For many individuals however, socioeconomic position may serve to restrict choice. Work possible selves provides a context for exploring how individuals' hopes and dreams reflect their views of their circumstances and opportunities, and how these views are related to psychological well-being.

Viewed from the context of possible selves, individuals generate at least two types of future-based self-concepts of themselves in work, those that reflect hopes for the future, and those that reflect expectations of the future (Markus & Nurius, 1986). Research findings suggest that most individuals enter early adulthood with high hopes and desires for expressing themselves through work. These hopes and desires are revealed through high achievement aspirations and high levels of intrinsically related work values (Jacobs et al., 1991; Kirkpatrick-Johnson, 2002). As individuals move through early adulthood, these hoped-for selves begin to become less salient, and reflect less ambition. Although research findings suggest that individuals from low socioeconomic positions enter early adulthood with lower hoped-for work selves than individuals from middle socioeconomic positions, these differences are generally small (Cook et al, 1996). However, there is little research that examines the influence of socioeconomic factors on these differences in early adulthood.

Research findings also indicate that as individuals enter early adulthood, the discrepancy between hoped-for and expected work selves is larger for individuals from

low socioeconomic positions (Bogie, 1976; Cook et al., 1996; Michelson, 1990; Yowell, 2002). Researchers generally explain these as differences as resulting from the socialization process. However, it has been suggested that hopes and expectations reveal different ideological beliefs, and thus, reflect individuals' assumptions of the opportunity structure (Mickelson, 1990; Yowell, 2002). Individuals' hopes and expectations within the domain of work offer researchers an opportunity to examine two future-based conceptions held by individuals. The discrepancy between individuals' hopes and expectations will provide information about how the influence of circumstances such as socioeconomic position on these selves.

Theorists contend that work is a fundamental life role in which individuals construct a sense of self (Erikson, 1968; Levinson, 1978). However, socioeconomic position is an important determinant of the extent to which individuals' self-concepts are implemented through the role of work. Research investigating work role salience has produced consistent results. Work role salience generally increases as individuals enter into early adulthood. However, individuals from low socioeconomic positions hold lower work role salience (Mannheim, 1993), and thus, psychologically identify with the work role to a lesser extent (Kanungo, 1982). Research findings also suggest that work role salience has direct and moderating effects on psychological well-being, exacerbating or diminishing the effects of socioeconomic position on psychological well-being.

Psychological well-being provides a reference point to assess distress and mental health, and thus, it guides counseling practice and directs counseling interventions. Life-span development and vocational choice theorists directly and indirectly point to the

relationships between the vocational choice process and psychological well-being. However, there is little research examining this relationship. Various theoretical propositions, including those of Gottfredson (1996) and Michalos, (1985), support the notion that discrepancies between individuals' hoped-for work selves and expected work selves would be related to psychological well-being. However, researchers have examined this relationship to a limited extent. In addition, the vocational choice process of individuals from low socioeconomic positions has rarely been examined. Examining the relationships among work possible selves, work role salience, socioeconomic position and psychological well-being is essential for counselors working with individuals in early adulthood.

Summary and Overview of Remaining Chapters

This chapter presented the relevant literature and research that supports this study. Life-span and vocational development theories that give credence to the development of hopes and expectations for work as elements of self-concept were introduced. Socioeconomic position, work possible selves, work role salience, and psychological well-being were defined, and the literature supporting the quantitative measurement of these constructs and the relationship among them was discussed. The methodology of the study, including hypotheses, descriptions of participants, data collection procedures, instrumentation, and data analysis can be found in Chapter III.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the design and methodology for the study, including research hypotheses, assessment instruments, participants, procedures, and statistical procedures to be used in data analyses. The results of the pilot study are reported in this chapter in the appropriate sections (refer to Appendix G for the complete pilot study). This study is designed to examine the relationships among the five dimensions of hoped-for and expected work selves, work role salience, and psychological well-being. The researcher also examines the influence of socioeconomic position and gender on these relationships. The following questions and hypotheses form the basis for this study.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Research Question 1: Are there relationships between the five dimensions of hoped-for work selves and socioeconomic position?

Hypothesis 1: There will be statistically significant correlations between the five dimensions of hoped-for work selves and socioeconomic position.

Research Question 2: Are there significant differences in the five dimensions of hoped-for work selves between females and males?

Hypothesis 2: There will be significant mean differences in the five dimensions of hoped-for work selves between females and males

Research Question 3: Are there relationships between the five dimensions of expected work selves and socioeconomic position?

Hypothesis 3: There will be statistically significant correlations between the five dimensions of expected work selves and socioeconomic position.

Research Question 4: Are there significant differences in the five dimensions of expected work selves between females and males?

Hypothesis 4: There will be significant mean differences in the five dimensions of expected work selves between females and males.

Research Question 5: Is there a relationship between work role salience and socioeconomic position?

Hypothesis 5: There will be a statistically significant correlation between work role salience and socioeconomic position.

Research Question 6: Is there a significant difference in work role salience between females and males?

Hypothesis 6: There will be significant mean differences in work role salience scores between females and males.

Research Question 7: Is there a relationship between the variable set that includes each of the five dimensions of work possible selves discrepancies, socioeconomic position, gender, and work role salience, and the variable set that includes affective balance and life satisfaction?

Hypothesis 7a: There will be a statistically significant relationship between the variable set that includes each of the five dimensions of work possible selves

discrepancies, gender, and work role salience, and the variable set of affective balance, life satisfaction, and socioeconomic position.

Hypothesis 7b: There will be a negative relationship between the five dimensions of work possible discrepancies and affective balance and life satisfaction.

Hypothesis 7c: There will be a negative relationship between the five dimensions of work possible discrepancies and work role salience.

Participants

The population of interest in this study is young adults between the ages of 20 and 35 years from varied socioeconomic positions. The sample population for this study was recruited from The University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG), and several community colleges within the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS). From these sites, it is expected that the researcher will have a sample of approximately 200 participants from varying socioeconomic positions.

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro is a state university located in Greensboro, North Carolina. UNCG has an approximate student enrollment of 16,092 students, with females representing 68% of the student population. African-American students account for 15% of the student body, and another 5% are individuals from other minority populations. UNCG participants will be recruited from undergraduate students enrolled in the elective courses Career and Life Planning (CED 210) and Helping Skills (CED 310).

Participants recruited from community colleges consisted of students enrolled in English Composition and College Success Skills courses. The community colleges that

are represented in this sample are Guilford Technical Community College (GTCC), Rockingham Community College (RCC), and Randolph Community College (RTCC). These community colleges were selected because they serve three North Carolina counties that vary in terms of socioeconomic factors such as employment rate, median income, and labor market structures.

There are 58 community colleges within the NCCCS. The mission of the NCCCS is to offer high quality, accessible educational opportunities that will improve the well-being of individuals, and support the economic development of North Carolina (NCCCS, 2005). To achieve this mission, all 58 community colleges offer a variety of programs that provide training and retraining for the workforce, basic skills and literacy education, and occupational and pre-baccalaureate programs. In support of this mission, these colleges have open door admission policies similar to most community colleges across the country. Consequently, the demographics of the student body at each community college are generally representative of the population of the county served by that particular college in terms of age, race, education and income.

Demographic Data of Accessed Population Samples

Guilford Technical Community College

GTCC serves Guilford County, which includes the metropolitan areas of Greensboro and High Point. The main campus is located in Jamestown, North Carolina. GTCC had a total enrollment count of 35,873 students in 2003. The following is NCCCS (2005) data on race and gender for GTCC students: White 57%, African American 32%,

Asian 3%, Hispanic or Latino 6%, American Indian or Native American .03%, and Some other race 1%. Women represented 51.4% of the student enrollment (NCCCS, 2005).

The latest United States Census (2000) data on race, ethnicity, education, gender, and income for Guilford County lists the following demographics: gender - female 52.1%, male 47.9%; ethnicity - White 64%, African American 29.3%, Asian 2.4%, Hispanic or Latino 3.8%, American Indian or Native American 0.5%, some other race 1.5%, two or more races 1.8%; and education - high school graduates 83%, bachelors degree or higher 30.3%. Women represented 52.1% of the total population.

The North Carolina Department of Commerce (2004) reports that at the end of the third quarter of 2004, the unemployment rate for Guilford County was 4.4%, median household income was $42,618, and the poverty rate was 10.6%. Individuals in manufacturing jobs accounted for 15.8% of the workforce; individuals in retail jobs accounted for 11.2% of the workforce; individuals in health care related jobs accounted for 10.2% of the workforce, and individuals in agriculturally related jobs accounted for 0.1% of the workforce.

Rockingham Community College

Rockingham Community College, which serves Rockingham County, had an enrollment of 11,240 students in 2003. The main campus is located in Wentworth, North Carolina. The following is NCCCS (2005) data on race and gender for RCC students: gender – female 56.8%, male 43.2%; ethnicity - White 75.1%, African American 20.4%, Asian 0.4%, Hispanic or Latino 2.9%, American Indian or Native American 0.4%, some other race 0.63%.

The United States Census (2000) states that Rockingham County is: 77.3% White, 19.6% African American, 0.3% Asian, 3.1% Hispanic or Latino, 0.3% American Indian or Native American, 1.7% some other race, and 0.8% two or more races. In addition 68.9% were high school graduates, 10.8% had a bachelors degree or higher, and women represented 51.7% of the total population.

The North Carolina Department of Commerce (2004) reports that the unemployment rate for Rockingham County was 7.5% at the end of the last quarter of 2004, and the poverty rate 12.8%. Median household income was $33,784. The manufacturing industry employed 31% of the workforce; individuals in retail jobs accounted for 11.1% of the workforce; individuals in health care related jobs accounted for 11.9% of the workforce, and individuals in agriculturally related jobs accounted for 0.3% of the workforce.

Randolph Community College

Randolph Community College, which serves Randolph County, had an enrollment of 11,964 in 2003. The main campus is located in Asheboro, North Carolina. The following is NCCCS (2005) data on race and gender for RCC students: gender – female 53.7%, male 46.5%; ethnicity - White 81.9%, African American 7.4%, Asian 1.0%, Hispanic or Latino 8.4%, American Indian or Native American 0.5%, some other race 0.4%.

The United States Census (2000) states that Randolph County is: 89.2% White, 5.6% African American, 0.6% Asian, 6.6% Hispanic or Latino, 0.4% American Indian or Native American, 3.0% some other race, and 1.1% two or more races. In addition, 70.0%

were high school graduates, 11.1% had a bachelors degree or higher. Women represented 50.6% of the total population.

The North Carolina Department of Commerce (2004) reports that the unemployment rate for Randolph County was 4.4% at the end of the last quarter of 2004, and the poverty rate was 12.3%. Median household income was $38,348. Individuals in manufacturing jobs accounted for 37.1% of the workforce; individuals in retail jobs accounted for 9.5% of the workforce; individuals in educational service related jobs accounted for 8.8% of the workforce, and individuals in agriculturally related jobs accounted for 0.5% of the workforce.

Instrumentation

The instruments used in this study included the Work Centrality Questionnaire (WCQ; Paullay, Alliger, & Stone-Romero, 1994) which measures work role salience, the researcher-designed Work Possible Selves Questionnaire (WPSQ; Pisarik, 2005) which measures hoped-for and expected work selves, the Educational-Occupational Status Questionnaire (Pisarik, 2005), which elicits socio-demographic information for use in determining the participants socioeconomic positions, the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS; Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985) which measures life satisfaction, and the Depression-Happiness Scale (DHS; McGreal & Joseph, 1993) which measures affective balance. The instruments are included in Appendices A through E.

Work Centrality Questionnaire

The Work Centrality Questionnaire (WCQ) was designed by Paullay et al., (1994) to assess the cognitive beliefs individuals have regarding the degree of importance that

work plays in their lives. The instrument was chosen for this study because of its conceptual clarity and consistency in terms of the work involvement literature. The WCQ is a uni-dimensional measure of individuals' cognitive involvement in the role of work.

The WCQ is a 10-item scale with responses formatted on a 6-point likert type scale with the following response options: 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = mildly agree, 4 = mildly disagree, 5 = disagree, 6 = strongly disagree. Total WCQ scores can be computed by summing the responses; items 1, 6, 8, and 9 are reverse scored. Scores range from 10 to 60, with low scores indicating higher levels of involvement in the work role.

The WCQ was developed for the purposes of conducting a construct validation study of work centrality. The researchers combined 47 items from existing measures of job involvement, work involvement, Protestant work ethic, and items generated by the researchers. Five graduate students were presented with a randomized list of the 47 items and conceptual definitions of job involvement, work involvement, and Protestant work ethic. The students were than asked to classify the items into the three categories. After sorting and pre-testing, a 41-item measure (with 27 items measuring job involvement, 10 assessing work centrality, and 4 measuring Protestant work ethic) was developed. The ten work centrality items constitute the Work Centrality Questionnaire. Six items from Kanungo's (1982) Work Involvement Questionnaire are included in the work centrality questionnaire, which the authors describe as conceptually equivalent to work centrality.

A confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to test whether Job Involvement, Work Centrality, and Protestant Work Ethic are in fact distinct constructs. The analysis was conducted with a sample of 313 human services employees working at a state psychiatric hospital. The results support the notion that work centrality is a distinct construct from job involvement and Protestant work ethic. This supports Kanungo's (1982) earlier findings that indicate a distinction between work involvement and job involvement. The internal consistency of the Work Centrality Questionnaire was reported as moderately high (Cronbach's $\alpha = .80$).

Work Possible Selves Questionnaire

The Work Possible Selves Questionnaire (WPSQ; Pisarik, 2005) that was used in this study was designed by the researcher to assess individuals' hopes and expectations for the expression and implementation of the self in work. These hopes and expectations are depicted by five dimensions: ability utilization, achievement, autonomy, personal development, and creativity. The decision to create the WPSQ for the purpose of this study was two-fold. Quantitative measurements of possible selves have been conducted with both open-ended and questionnaire assessments (Cross & Markus, 1991; Hooker, 1999). Current open-ended assessments, however, have not undergone the thorough psychometric evaluation that is needed for this study. Further, questionnaire type assessments have been designed to measure general possible selves not specific to a single domain such as work.

After an exhaustive review of the vocational literature, the researcher decided to use work values as the conceptual framework for the WPSQ due to the similar conceptual

definitions of possible selves and work values depicted in the literature. Work values are personal cognitive structures that contain information about desired end states within one's work (Brown, 1996). Possible selves are cognitive structures that depict the self in future states in various domains (Markus & Nurius, 1986). Moreover, after further review of the literature and in the subsequent construction of the items, the researcher chose to include only those work values that were depicted in the literature as intrinsic values. This decision was based on the concept that intrinsic work values pertain to individuals' expression and implementation of self through work (Locke & Talor, 1990; Mottaz, 1985). Further, research indicates that fulfillment of intrinsic values is related to psychological well-being (Knoop, 2001).

The WPSQ (Pisarik, 2005) consists of two parts; the first part is designed to assess individuals' hoped-for future self in relation to work and the second part is designed to assess individuals' expected future self in relation to work. Both parts consist of one open-ended question, a rank order exercise, and a series of likert type questions. The purpose of the open-ended question is to elicit a future image of the self in work and is based on the procedure for measuring possible selves developed by Cross and Marcus (1991). The rank order exercise serves as an advance organizer meant to offer cognitive structure and clarity to the questionnaire that follows. The questionnaire was based on existing instruments designed to assess work values as well as an extensive review of the work values literature.

The first part of the WPSQ (Pisarik, 2005) asks participants to think about themselves in the future in terms of work, specifically regarding their hopes for

themselves in work, and to briefly describe this hoped-for image. Participants are then asked to rank order five statements in terms of the degree each statement reflects their hoped-for work self. These statements are based on the five dimensions of work possible selves. Finally, participants are asked to respond to a series of questions related to this hoped-for image. The second part asks participants to think about themselves in the future in terms of work, specifically regarding their expectations for themselves in work, and to briefly describe this image. Participants are then asked to rank order five statements in terms of the degree each statement reflects their expected work self. Finally, participants are asked to respond to the same questions that they responded to regarding the hoped-for image, but in terms of their expected image.

The structure of the WPSQ (Pisarik, 2005) was derived from three assessment instruments that measure work values: the Values Scale (Nevill & Super, 1986), the Minnesota Importance Questionnaire (MIQ; Rounds, Henly, Dawis, & Lofquist, 1981), and the Work Preference Inventory (Amabile, Hill, Hennessey & Tighe, 1994). Although the researcher examined the factor structure and item content of other work values instruments, these three instruments served as the primary focus of the WPSQ construction for several reasons. These instruments were developed with the purpose of being used in career counseling, whereas other instruments that were examined were not. Therefore, these instruments have been field tested numerous times and they have well written published manuals that report their psychometrics and instructions for use. Moreover, these instruments have similar factor structures to most work values instruments in that they classify values into two main dimensions: intrinsic values, which

are those values that are derived from the work itself, and extrinsic values, which are recognized as the values that result from work.

The Values Scale (Nevill & Super, 1986) was designed to measure work values, with an emphasis on the importance of work as an expression of values. It consists of 21 values scales consisting of five items each, including work-specific and general statements. Responses are formatted as a questionnaire, and are based on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). Combinations of the 21 values are grouped into five dimensions: inner-oriented, group-oriented, material, physical prowess, and physical activity. The 105 items were developed by an international consortium of vocational psychologists who reviewed the values literature, and met to determine agreed upon definitions and items.

The norming data for the Values Scale included 3,000 high school students, 2,000 university students, and 2,000 adults from a variety of socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds. The authors report that the twenty-one scales possess reasonably good internal consistency, with alpha coefficients ranging from .67 to .87, and four-week test retest coefficients generally above .65 for all populations. The authors also make a reasonable case for the construct validity of the Values Scale, asserting that factor analysis reveals that the items from particular scales frequently load together onto particular factors. Correlations with alternative measures are cited as significant; however, the authors do not furnish the coefficients.

The Minnesota Importance Questionnaire (MIQ; Rounds et al., 1981) measures 20 vocational needs and six underlying values. The MIQ was produced as a result of

research carried out by the Work Adjustment Project, and is based on the theory of work adjustment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984). Within this theory, vocational needs are defined as preferences for certain kinds of rewards gained through work. The authors indicate content, discriminate, and convergent validity through studies that indicate low correlations with abilities as measured by the General Aptitude Test Battery, and high correlations with interests as measured by the Strong Vocational Interest Blank. The MIQ has 210 items that respond to individuals' desires for specific types of work. The internal consistencies of the scales are moderate; Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the twenty scales range from .77 to .81. Test-retest correlations range from .89 for immediate retesting to .53 for retesting after 10 months.

The Work Preference Scale (WPS; Amabile et al., 1994) was developed to measure individual differences in internal and external motivations. It is based on cognitive evaluation theory, which posits that self-determination and competence are the hallmarks of intrinsic motivation. The WPS consists of 30 items, which were derived from the cognitive evaluation literature. Fifteen intrinsic oriented items and 15 extrinsic oriented items are included in the original scale. The original psychometric study of the WPS was conducted with a sample of 1363 undergraduate students from a northeastern university and 1055 working adults from a variety of occupational levels. Through factor analysis, two underlying factors were identified which were labeled intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Validity studies of the WPS examined the correlation between the two factors and several motivational and psychological assessment instruments and largely support the validity of the WPS. Intrinsic motivation was positively correlated with

measures of autonomy, creativity, and problem-solving. Cronbach's alpha was reported as .82 for the internal motivation factor, indicating a moderately high internal consistency.

The researcher chose five dimensions that formed the basis to the types of intrinsic values measured. These are autonomy, ability utilization, achievement, creativity, and personal fulfillment. These dimensions were identified as common to all three of the aforementioned work values inventories. Ability Utilization refers to the valuation of work that allows for the implementation of self-perceived skills and talents. Achievement refers to the valuation of prideful accomplishment through productivity. Autonomy refers to the valuation of work or work environments that stimulates initiative and self-direction. Creativity refers to the valuation of work that is amenable to innovations independently conceived by the individual. Personal development refers to the valuation of work that is personally satisfying and offers a sense of personal meaning (Nevill & Super, 1986; Rounds, et al., 1981)

The researcher then created a minimum of seven items to measure each of these dimensions. The construction of the items was based on existing items from the values inventories, although the wording was changed, sometimes considerably, in order to match the construct of work possible selves. For example, items are considered work value items only if it elicits the individual's assessment of the importance of a goal in the present, with possible responses from "very important to very unimportant" (Elizur, 1984). Items designed to assess work possible selves ask for the individual's assessment of the self in the future. Thus, all items were transformed to sentence stems with the root

being “My hoped-for Work Self….” Moreover, each item changed semantically to elicit information about the self at work in the future. Responses to each item are based on a 7-point rating scale: 1 = not at all, 2 = slightly, 3 = somewhat, 4 = moderately, 5 = reasonably well, 6 = very much, 7 = exactly. The version of the WPSQ used in the pilot study included complete sentences for each item, and descriptors of only the two end anchors (1 and 7). Based on the results of the pilot study, descriptors were added for each of the seven possible responses, and sentences were changed to sentence stems. Scores on the WPSQ can range from 7 to 49 on each scale. Higher scores indicate higher levels of hope, or expectation, of obtaining work descriptive of each of the dimensions. The results of the pilot study also facilitated the addition of the rank order exercise as a means to gain greater variability in responses to the questionnaire items.

The reliability information for the WPSQ is discussed in the pilot study (see Appendix G), as well as in the results section of Chapter IV.

Educational-Occupational Status Questionnaire

The researcher created the Educational-Occupational Status Questionnaire to obtain relevant information about participants’ socioeconomic position. It was specifically designed to obtain information needed to determine socioeconomic position based on the occupational attainment of the participants, the participants’ families of origin, and the participants’ current household. This questionnaire also solicits information regarding the educational levels of participants, participants’ parents, and participants’ spouses. It also solicits information regarding participants’ age, gender, and ethnicity.

Educational level is divided into eight categories: less than seventh grade, junior high/middle school (completed 8th grade), partial high school (completed 9th, 10th or 11th grade), high school (completion), partial college (at least one year), college degree (2 year), college degree (4 year), graduate degree (MS, MA, PhD, or MD). Participants are asked to report their own educational levels, the educational levels of their parents, and the educational levels of their spouses or domestic partners. Occupational attainment is elicited by asking participants to report their current job title or position, the job title or position either of their parents had when they were sixteen, and the job title or position of anyone with whom they currently share financial responsibility, such as a spouse or domestic partner. Based on information gained through the pilot study, descriptive examples were added to each of the occupational questions in order to assure maximum participant response.

Classification of Participants by Socioeconomic Position

A reliable measure of socioeconomic position accounts for educational level and occupational status (Liu et al., 2004; Smith & Graham, 1995). In this study participants' socioeconomic positions were determined by using the Nakao and Treas Socioeconomic Index (SEI; 1992).

The Nakao and Treas SEI (1992) is based on occupational survey data collected in the 1989 National Opinion Research Center (NORC) General Social Survey. SEI scores are derived by regressing 1989 prestige scores, calculated from the NORC (1989) survey, on age-adjusted education and income levels of full-time survey respondents, obtained from 1980 United States Census data. The results of this regression yield

weights that would predict socioeconomic scores. Socioeconomic index scores are based on survey data, and do not represent actual data for the participants' occupation. The SEI scores treat occupation as an ordinal measure, which represents socioeconomic position as a hierarchy. SEI scores range from 17 (e.g., textile sewing machine operator) to 97 (e.g., physician). The Nakao and Treas (1992) occupational prestige scale, which the SEI scores are derived from, classifies occupations into six major dimensions: managerial and professional, service occupations, farming and fishing occupations, precision production and repair occupations, and operators and laborers.

Socioeconomic index scores are known to be extraordinarily reliable over time (Gilbert, 2003; Nakao & Treas, 1994; Rossides, 1997). The Nakao and Treas SEI (1992) scores were compared to Stevens and Featherman's (1981) SEI scores based on evaluations from the 1960s and the socioeconomic characteristics of the 1970 labor force, and Stevens and Cho's (1985) SEI scores based on evaluations from the 1960s and the socioeconomic characteristics of the 1980 labor force. The Nakao and Treas SEI (1992) correlated highly with both the Steven's and Featherman SEI ($r = .93$) and the Steven's and Cho SEI ($r = .97$).

Recognizing that socioeconomic mobility is a fact of life in the United States, and that individuals in early adulthood are forging socioeconomic identities of their own (Furstenberg, et al., 2005), both current and background socio-demographic information were gathered from participants. Based on this information, the researcher assigned participants an SEI score. If a participant considered him/herself as fully or partially financially dependent on his/her parents, then the highest SEI score of the participant's

parents was used. If the participant considered him/herself to be completely financially independent from his/her parents, and the participant was single, then the SEI score was derived from the participant's occupational job title. If the financially independent participant was married or coupled, then the highest SEI score of the either the participant or the participant's spouse was used.

Satisfaction with Life Scale

The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS; Diener et al., 1985) was used in this study to measure the life satisfaction component of psychological well-being. The SWLS is a 5-item instrument designed to measure an individual's cognitive judgment of overall satisfaction with life. The SWLS is a global measure of subjective well-being that takes approximately five minutes to complete. Responses are based on a 7-point rating scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = slightly agree, 4 = neither agree nor disagree, 5 = slightly agree, 6 = agree, 7 = strongly agree. Total SWLS scores are computed by summing the responses. Scores range from 5 to 35, with higher scores indicating higher levels of life satisfaction.

A psychometric evaluation of the SWLS was conducted with a sample of 176 undergraduate students (Diener et al., 1985). Diener et al. tested an initial 48 item scale. Through subsequent factor analyses, the researchers found support for a three-factor structure. One of these factors included ten items reflecting cognitive judgment. Further studies indicated that this cognitive factor was represented by 5 items. Diener et al. reported a moderate to high internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = .87$). Two-month test-

retest correlation coefficients were .82. Pavot and Diener (1993) reported internal consistency values of .80 or higher for the SWLS.

The SWLS has undergone numerous validity studies in which the instrument has been shown to be a valid measure of life satisfaction. Construct validity has been demonstrated through consistent differences in results when administered to populations that would be expected to have differing levels of life satisfaction. For instance, prisoners, psychiatric patients, and abused women consistently report low scores on the SWLS. Concurrent validity was determined in the original study by correlating the SWLS with ten other measures of subjective well-being. Each of these measures correlated with the SWLS at .50 or higher. Discriminate validity studies have shown low correlations between the SWLS and measures of positive and negative affectivity (Watson et al., 1988).

Depression - Happiness Scale

The Depression-Happiness Scale (DHS) was used to measure the affective balance component of psychological well-being. The DHS was constructed by McGreal and Joseph (1993) to assess individuals' subjectively rated affect as measured on a happiness-depression continuum. The DHS is a statistically bipolar self-report scale consisting of 25 items. Each item consists of a question that rates individuals' affective, cognitive, or sensory-motor experiences related to either happiness or depression. Twelve items focus on positive feelings, thoughts, or bodily experiences, and 13 items focus on negative feelings, thoughts, or bodily experiences. Respondents are asked to think about how they have felt within the last 7 days, and to rate the frequency of each

item on a 4-point Likert scale: 0 = never, 1 = rarely, 2 = sometimes, and 3 = often. Negative items are reverse scored so that respondents can score between 0 and 75. Higher scores indicate a greater frequency of feelings, thoughts, and bodily experiences related to happiness, and a lower frequency of negative feelings related to depression. Based on pilot study results and participant feedback regarding comprehension, one item was changed. Item number 17 on the Depression – Happiness scale was changed from, "I felt lethargic", to "I felt sluggish."

The DHS was developed through factor analytic techniques. Using 200 college students, 40 items, both positive and negative, were analyzed, yielding a one-factor model of 25 of the highest loading items. The initial analysis found the DHS to possess high internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = .93$). Subsequent studies also have yielded high reliability coefficients (Cronbach's $\alpha = .88$) confirming the internal consistency of the scale (Joseph & Lewis, 1998).

The DHS has been shown to demonstrate satisfactory convergent and discriminant validity. Convergent validity was determined by calculating the inter-correlations between several different measures of depression including the Beck Depression Inventory (Beck et al., 1979; $r = -.75$) and the Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale (Radloff, 1977; $r = -.85$). The internal reliability coefficient for the DHS was substantially higher than the correlation with the BDI, suggesting good discriminant validity. A validity study also examined the convergence of the DHS and the Oxford Happiness Index (OHI; Argyle, Martin, Crossland, 1989). High scores on the

DHS were associated with high scores on the OHI (r = .59), confirming the convergent validity of the DHS.

Procedures

Prior to data collection, the researcher completed UNCG's Institutional Research Board review process. For each data collection site, the researcher collaborated with a representative acting as liaison between the site and the researcher. Each site liaison contacted faculty members who teach CED 210 and CED 310 at UNCG, and English or college success courses at the designated community colleges. The site liaisons either contacted these faculty members directly to arrange specific dates for data collection or allowed the researcher to directly contact the faculty members to arrange for data collection.

Once the necessary contacts and arrangements were made, the researcher entered the specific UNCG and community college classrooms. The researcher presented the purpose and nature of the research to the classroom of students whose instructor gave permission. Prior to data collection, students were informed of the voluntary and anonymous nature of the research and were given an opportunity to decline to participate. To assure maximum, participation each participant was entered into a drawing for a $25.00 gift certificate. An entry form for the gift certificate was handed out when instrument packets were collected. Students who could not participate due to the age constraints of the study or who chose not to participate were excused from class without penalty. Participants were thanked for their involvement and asked to read and sign two

copies of a consent form (Appendix F). After the consent forms were signed, participants returned one copy of the signed consent form to the researcher.

Participants were read a set of instructions aloud by the researcher (Appendix F). The researcher then administered the aforementioned assessment instruments. The instruments were administered in the following order: the Depression-Happiness Scale (McGreal & Joseph, 1993), the Work Centrality Questionnaire (Paullay et al., 1994), the Satisfaction with Life Survey (Diener et al., 1985), the Work Possible Selves Questionnaire (Pisarik, 2005), and the Educational-Occupational Status Questionnaire (Pisarik, 2005). The instruments were arranged in this order to eliminate any potential interaction effects among the instruments. For example, the researcher surmised that the Work Possible Selves Questionnaire can elicit affective responses that could have a potential effect on participants' responses to the Depression – Happiness Scale, the Work Centrality Questionnaire, and the Satisfaction with Life Survey. Further, the sensitivity involved in eliciting participants' socioeconomic information could produce affective responses that might interact with all instruments that might follow it. To further attempt to eliminate any potential interaction effects, the instruments were organized and disseminated in two batches. The first batch included the DHS, WCQ, and SWLS. After participants completed the first batch of instruments, they placed them in the envelope in which they were received, and the researcher collected the envelopes. The researcher then disseminated the second batch, which included the WPSQ and the Educational-Occupational Questionnaire. The directions for the WPSQ were read aloud. Based on information gained through the pilot study, the hoped-for work selves and the expected

work selves sections of the WPSQ were presented to participants separately. After the participants complete the instruments, they were placed in the envelopes provided by the researcher, the envelopes were sealed, and returned to the researcher for analysis.

Data Analysis

The following statistical procedures were used to answer the research questions as stated in Chapter 1, and to address the research hypotheses stated earlier in this chapter. Data analyses included descriptive statistics, multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA), t- test, Pearson Product Moment Correlation, and canonical correlation analysis. Further, a factor analysis of the Work Possible Selves Questionnaire was conducted. These analyses were conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 13, 2005). Descriptive statistics of all demographics and all subscales scores were obtained, and an average profile of the participants is presented based on this analysis.

Methods for Statistical Analysis

Hypothesis 1, which states that there will be a statistically significant relationship between the five dimensions of hoped-for work selves and socioeconomic position, was explored through Pearson product moment correlations. Hypothesis 2, which states that the five dimensions of hoped-for work selves will be statistically different for females and males, was tested by a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) with the dependent variables being each of the five dimensions of hoped-for work selves. Hypothesis 3 which state that there will be a statistically significant relationship between the five dimensions of expected work selves and socioeconomic positions, and the five

dimensions of expected work selves and gender, was explored through Pearson product moment correlations. Hypothesis 4, which states that the five dimensions of expected work selves will be statistically different for females and males, was tested by a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) with the dependent variable being each of the five dimensions of expected work selves. Hypothesis 5, which states that there will be a statistically significant relationship between work role salience and socioeconomic position, was explored through Pearson product moment correlations. Hypothesis 6, which states that work role salience scores will be different for females and males, was tested using a t-test for independent samples.

Hypothesis 7a which states that there will be a statistically significant relationship between the variable set of each of the five dimensions of work possible selves discrepancies, socioeconomic position, gender, and work role salience, and the variable set of affective balance and life satisfaction was explored by canonical correlation analysis. In canonical correlation two linear combinations are formed. Set one comprises the predictor variables and set two comprises the criterion variables such that the correlation between the two sets is maximized. The data analytic strategy regarding this hypothesis was to determine if the full canonical model using all the variables was significant. The variables in the predictor set included the five dimensions of work possible selves discrepancies, socioeconomic position, gender, and work role salience, while the variables in the criterion set included affective balance and life satisfaction. The dichotomous variable of gender was entered into the correlation analysis as 1 = male, and 2 = female. Hypotheses 7b and 7c were evaluated by examining the structure

coefficients to discern the nature of the relationships between the variables in the predictor set and those variables in the criterion set.

Summary and Overview of Remaining Chapters

The purposes of this study were to examine the relationships among work possible selves, work role salience, socioeconomic positive and psychological well-being in early adulthood. Data was collected from students attending several community colleges in North Carolina and from students attending the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Hypotheses were tested using multiple analysis of variance, Pearson product-moment correlations, and canonical correlation analysis.

This chapter discussed the methodology of the study. Descriptions of participants, the data collection process, instrumentation, and data analyses were presented. The pilot study was also discussed. Chapter IV addresses the results of the dissertation study. Chapter V, the final chapter, presents the conclusions and discussion of the results of this study and implications for counselors, counselor educators and researchers. Concluding remarks related to data collection can also be found in Chapter V.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

In chapter 3 the methodology for a study exploring the relationship among work possible selves, work role salience, socioeconomic position, and psychological well-being of individuals in early adulthood was described. In this chapter, the results of the study are presented. First, demographic data describing the sample is provided. This is followed by an examination of the factor structure of the Work Possible Selves Questionnaire (Pisarik, 2005). Next, descriptive data and estimated reliabilities for the instrumentation used in this study are presented. Finally, the results of the analyses used to answer the research questions and address the hypotheses are presented.

Sample

The sampling procedures described in Chapter III resulted in 201 volunteer participants who met all the criteria for inclusion in this study. The researcher entered into 16 college classes: eight at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro (CED 310, Helping Skills and CED 210, Career and Life Planning), two at Rockingham Community College (Eng. 111, Expository Writing), four at Guilford Technical Community College (Eng. 111, Expository Writing), and two at Randolph Community College (Eng. 111, Expository Writing). Two hundred and twenty-two packets of instrumentation were distributed in these classes. Two individuals declined to participate

after receiving packets. Two hundred and twenty completed packets were returned resulting in a return rate of 99.0%. The 220 completed instrument packets were screened for study eligibility. The following exclusions were made: (a) 14 individuals were not within the age requirements; and (b) 5 individuals did not complete enough information to determine their socioeconomic position. After excluding ineligible individuals (19), the final *N* for data analysis in this study was 201 participants. This constituted an actual response rate of 90.5%. Approximately 48.7% of the participants were from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (*n* = 98), 13.9% were from Rockingham Community College (*n* = 28), 27.8% were from Guilford Technical Community College (*n* = 56), and 9.4% were from Randolph Community College (*n* = 19).

Description of the Sample

As shown in Table 1, participants in this study were a heterogeneous sample of individuals in terms of gender, age, ethnicity, marital status, and socioeconomic position. Ages of the respondents ranged from 20 to 35 with a mean of 23.3 years of age (*SD* = 4.43). The majority of respondents (63.2%) were in the 20 to 22 year-old age range (*n* = 127), and 76.1% (*n* = 163) were in the 20 to 25 year-old range. The gender breakdown of the sample was 27.9% male (*n* = 56) and 72.1% female (*n* = 145), and the respondents were primarily European American (64.2%; *n* = 129) and African American (25.9%; *n* = 52). A majority of the respondents were single (74.1%; *n* = 149), and claimed to be financially independent from their parents (52.2%; *n* = 105). All sixty-three respondents (31.3%) who claimed to be financially dependent on their parents were in the 20 to 23

year-old age range. Likewise, all thirty-three respondents (16.4%) who claimed to be somewhat financially dependent on their parents were in the 20 to 23 year-old age range.

Table 1.

Description of Participants by Age, Gender, Ethnicity, Marital Status, and Socioeconomic Position

Demographic Variable	N	%
AGE		
20 - 22	129	63.2
23 - 25	26	13.0
26 - 28	13	6.5
29 - 31	19	9.5
32 - 35	16	8.0
Total	201	100.0
GENDER		
Male	56	27.9
Female	145	72.1
Total	201	100.0
ETHNICITY		
African American	52	25.9
Asian American	7	3.5
European American	129	64.2
Hispanic	3	1.5
Native American	2	1.0
Pacific Islander	1	.5
Other	7	3.5
Total	201	100.0
MARITAL STATUS		
Single	149	74.1
Married/Partnered	52	25.9
SOCIOECONOMIC POSITION (Quartiles)		
SEP Quartile 1 (25 – 36)	49	24.4
SEP Quartile 2 (37 – 50)	52	25.8
SEP Quartile 3 (51 – 63)	41	20.4
SEP Quartile 4 (64 – 92)	59	29.4
Total	201	100.0

The participants in this study had a broad range of socioeconomic positions as indicated by the Nakao and Treas Socioeconomic Index Scores (Nakao & Treas, 1994) assigned to them. The SEI scores of participants ranged from 25 to 92. The mean SEI score was 51.45 (*SD* = 17.42), the median SEI score was 50, and the most frequent SEI score was 64. The participants in this study also had varied educational goals. Education was the most frequently reported college major. Ninety-eight (48.7%) of the participants were recruited through courses offered within the college of education. Only 21.8% of the study participants (n = 44), however, reported their college major as either being education, social work, or human development. Nursing was the next most frequently reported major (n = 19; 9.4%).

Factor Analysis of the Work Possible Selves Questionnaire

Two exploratory factor analyses based on the 35 items for the hoped-for work selves scale and 35 items for the expected work selves scale of the Work Possible Selves Questionnaire (Pisarik, 2005), were completed. This allowed the researcher to arrive at a parsimonious representation of the associations among measured variables (Fabrigar, Wegener, MacCallum, & Strahan, 1999).

An exploratory factor analysis of the hoped-for work selves scale was conducted using a maximum likelihood procedure and oblique rotation (i.e., direct oblimin), specifying five factors. The five factors were chosen because they accurately represented the original five sub-scales of this scale of the instrument. In addition, the scree plot examination and a criteria of eigenvalues greater than 1.0 supported using a five factor solution. Not all of the items from each subscale loaded onto their expected factor. Four

items had low communalities (from .214 to .349) and factor loadings below .40 on all five factors indicating that these items were factorially complex. A second factor analysis was conducted after eliminating these four items. The results of this Factor Analysis are presented in Table 2. The cumulative amount of variance explained by the five factors was 61.85%.

An exploratory factor analysis of the expected work selves scale was conducted in a similar fashion. The same pattern that emerged for the factor structure of the hoped-for work selves scale emerged for the factor structure of the expected work selves scale. All of the items, except for one, had communalities above .40 suggesting that they were accounting for a sizable amount of the variance that was due to their respective factors. Only one item had a loading coefficient below .40. A second factor analysis was conducted after eliminating this item. The cumulative amount of the variance accounted for by the five factors was 64.2%. The results of this factor analysis are presented in Table 3.

Reliability analyses were conducted on the original subscales and on the subscales (factors) that emerged from the exploratory factor analyses. The results indicated that the reliabilities of the two sets of subscales were similar, and in some cases the original subscales had higher reliability estimates. Therefore, rather than using the factors that resulted from the analyses, the original subscales were utilized in the data analysis for this study. The exploratory factor analyses that were generated in this study will be used to guide the future development of the Work Possible Selves Questionnaire.

Table 2.

Hoped-for Work Selves Scale Structure Matrix

	Factor				
Items	1	2	3	4	5
HWS:PD #3	.730			.406	
HWS: ACH #4	.722			.423	
HWS: ACH #7	.720				
HWS: PD #5	.715				
HWS: PD #2	.710				
HWS: ACH #5	.653			.434	
HWS: ACH: #2	.644				
HWS: PD #4	.634				
HWS: AbUt #6	.568			.405	
HWS: PD #1	.463				.404
HWS: CRT # 2		.847			
HWS:CRT #6		.798			
HWS: CRT #3		.760			
HWS: CRT #1		.754			
HWS: CRT #7		.577			
HWS: CRT #5		.540			
HWS: AUT #2		.409	.770		
HWS: AUT #7			.612		
HWS: AUT #4			.537		
HWS: AUT #6			.662		
HWS: AUT #5			.645		
HWS: AUT #3		.428	.603		
HWS: AUT #1			.480		
HWS: ACH #6				.641	.450
HWS: AbUt #4	.412			.589	.407
HWS: AbUt #5				.513	
HWS: CRT #4				.421	
HWS: ACH #3				.408	.816
HWS: AbUt #3				.431	.701
HWS: AbUt #2	.412				.637

Note. Extraction method: Maximum Likelihood. Rotation Method: Direct oblimin with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 4 iterations. All factors with values of less than .40 were suppressed. HWS = Hoped-for Work Selves, AbUt = Ability Utilization, ACH = Achievement, AUT = Autonomy, PD = Personal Development, CRT = Creativity.

Table 3.

Expected Work Selves Scale Structure Matrix

	Factors				
Items	1	2	3	4	5
EWS: PD #5	.862		-.510		
EWS: ACH #7	.825		-.493		.465
EWS: PD #7	.818				.404
EWS: ACH #4	.791		-.419		
EWS: AbUt #6	.784			.468	
EWS: PD #2	.783		-.468		.513
EWS: AbUt #7	.773		.440		
EWS: PD #4	.759		.439		.474
EWS: PD#3	.717				.404
EWS: PD #6	.523				
EWS: CR #2		.880			
EWS: CR #1		.872			
EWS: CR #6		.843			.470
EWS: CR #3		.764			
EWS: CR #5		.648	-.417		.433
EWS: CR #7		.628			
EWS: AbUt #4			.775		
EWS: ACH #6			.759	.520	
EWS: CR #4		.421	.710		
EWS: AbUt #5			.680		
EWS: ACH #2				.812	.430
EWS: ACH #1			.428	.759	.502
EWS: ACH #3			.521	.756	.435
EWS: ACH #5			.530	.746	.428
EWS: AbUt #2				.713	.450
EWS: AbUt #1			.437	.692	
EWS: PD #1	.543			.624	.433
EWS: AUT #2					.805
EWS: AUT #1					.787
EWS: AUT #4			.418		.687
EWS: AUT #6				.482	.634
EWS: AUT #7					.626
EWS: AUT #5			.558		.620
EWS: AUT #3	.456				.600

Note. Extraction method: Maximum Likelihood. Rotation Method: Direct oblimin with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 4 iterations. All factors with values of less than .40 were suppressed. EWS = Expected Work Selves, AbUt = Ability Utilization, ACH = Achievement, AUT = Autonomy, PD = Personal Development, CRT = Creativity.

Instrumentation Descriptive Data

In this section, the means, standard deviations, minimum values and maximum values for participants' scores on all of the instruments are presented (see Table 4). Those instruments include the Work Possible Selves Questionnaire (WPSQ; Pisarik, 2005), the Work Centrality Questionnaire (WCQ; Paullay et al., 1994), the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS; Diener et al., 1985), and the Depression-Happiness Scale (DHS; McGreal & Joseph, 1993).

The mean scores for the Work Possible Selves Questionnaire sub-scales (WPSQ) ranged from 39.12 (Hoped-for Work Selves: Personal Development; *SD* = 4.90) to 28.67 (Expected Work Selves: Creativity; *SD* = 8.52) on a possible range of 7 to 49. Although some of the WPSQ sub-scales had a full range, or close to a full range of scores, some of them did not. The high mean scores and the moderate variability of those sub-scales that did not have a full range of scores suggests that participants' scores were clustered in the upper range of the scales. Skewness coefficients for these sub-scale scores, however, were between -.626 and -.262. The kurtosis coefficients of the sub-scales were between .408 and .168. Skewness coefficients below 2 and kurtosis coefficients below 3 indicate that the scales were not severely skewed. Moreover, examination of the histograms for each of these subscales revealed slightly negatively skewed distributions. Examination of the box-plots, and the P-P plots for each of the sub-scales indicated that the distributions were not seriously violating assumptions of normality.

The Work Centrality Questionnaire (WCQ), the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS), and the Depression-Happiness Scale (DHS) all had a broad range of scores.

The mean score for the WCS was 33.89 (*SD* = 5.49), and scores ranged from 19 to 47 (scale minimum = 10; scale maximum = 60). The SWLS yielded a mean of 21.92 (*SD* = 7.08), and scores ranged from 5 to 34 (scale minimum = 5; scale maximum = 35). The mean score for the DHS was 50.67 (*SD* = 12.08), and scores ranged from 19 to 72 (scale minimum = 0; scale maximum = 75)

Table 4.

Instrument Descriptive Data – Main Study

Scale/Subscale	Mean	*SD*	Scale Min	Scale Max	Study Min	Study Max
WPSQ						
Hoped-for Work Self: Ability Utilization	37.81	4.77	7	49	23	49
Hoped-for Work Self: Achievement	38.59	5.09	7	49	23	49
Hoped-for Work Self: Autonomy	34.89	5.90	7	49	15	48
Hoped-for Work Self: Personal Development	39.12	4.88	7	49	23	49
Hoped-for Work Self: Creativity	33.10	6.94	7	49	15	49
Expected Work Self: Ability Utilization	33.73	7.14	7	49	14	47
Expected Work Self: Achievement	34.15	7.57	7	49	12	48
Expected Work Self: Autonomy	29.71	7.61	7	49	9	44
Expected Work Self: Personal Development	33.63	7.80	7	49	11	48
Expected Work Self: Creativity	28.65	8.42	7	49	8	46
WCQ	33.89	5.49	10	60	19	47
SWLS	21.92	7.08	5	35	5	34
DHS	50.67	12.08	0	75	19	72

As stated in chapter I, work possible selves discrepancies were calculated by taking the difference between hoped-for work selves scores and expected work selves scores for each of the five dimensions. Thus, there are five discrepancy scores relating to each of the five dimensions of work possible selves. The mean scores for the Work Possible Selves discrepancies ranged from 4.08 (Work Possible Selves Discrepancy: Ability Utilization; *SD* = 6.28) to 5.50 (Work Possible Selves Discrepancy: Personal Development; SD = 6.61) within a possible range of –42 to 42 (see Table 5). Skewness coefficients for the work possible selves discrepancy scores ranged from .976 to .535. These coefficients coupled with the P-P plots suggest positively skewed distributions. Skewness coefficients greater than 2 are considered severely skewed (Fabrigar, et al., 1999), thus these data were used in the final analyses conducted in this study.

Table 5.

Descriptive Statistics of Work Possible Selves Discrepancies

Work Possible Selves Discrepancy Scores	Mean	*SD*	Min	Max
Work Possible Selves Discrepancy: Ability Utilization	4.08	6.32	-10	25
Work Possible Selves Discrepancy: Achievement	4.46	6.07	-8	23
Work Possible Selves Discrepancy: Ability Utilization	5.17	6.85	-11	29
Work Possible Selves Discrepancy: Ability Utilization	5.50	6.61	-9	27
Work Possible Selves Discrepancy: Ability Utilization	4.51	7.38	-17	26

Instrumentation Reliability Estimates

To determine the reliability of the instruments used in this study, Cronbach alpha coefficients were computed for each of the scales and respective subscales. These internal consistency estimates were determined using 201 completed data sets and are presented in Table 6. For the sample used in this study, the reliability of the SWLS was .87, the DHS was .91, and the WCQ was .70. The reliability coefficients were considered adequate for the purposes of the study. The reliability coefficients for the WPSQ sub-scales ranged from .79 (Hoped-for work selves: Ability Utilization) to .91 (Expected work selves: Achievement).

Table 6.

Instrument and Subscale – Coefficient Alphas

Instruments	Number of Items	Alpha
Hoped-for Work Selves: Ability Utilization	7	.78
Hoped-for Work Selves: Achievement	7	.84
Hoped-for Work Selves: Autonomy	7	.82
Hoped-for Work Selves: Personal Development	7	.80
Hoped-for Work Selves: Creativity	7	.83
Expected Work Selves: Ability Utilization	7	.90
Expected Work Selves: Achievement	7	.91
Expected Work Selves: Autonomy	7	.86
Expected Work Selves: Personal Development	7	.90
Expected Work Selves: Creativity	7	.90
Work Centrality Questionnaire	10	.70
Satisfaction with Life Survey	5	.87
Depression-Happiness Scale	25	.91

An inter-rater reliability analysis was conducted to determine the reliability of the coding of the participants by Nakao and Treas (1992) SEI scores. Fifteen percent of the sample data (n = 30) were chosen at random. The researcher made a list of occupational titles given by these participants. This list was given to an independent rater. The rater coded these occupational titles using the Nakao and Treas (1992) SEI. These codes were matched with the codes the researcher assigned to each of the participants. The independent rater agreed with the researcher's coding decisions 26 times out of a possible 30. Stated otherwise, the rater agreed with the researcher 87% of the time.

Results of Hypothesis Testing

In this section, the results of the data analyses used to test the ten hypotheses are presented. Each of the hypotheses is restated, and the results of the hypothesis testing are presented.

Hypothesis 1 stated that there would be statistically significant correlations among each of the five dimensions of hoped-for work selves and socioeconomic position. Hypothesis 1 was tested by calculating Pearson product moment correlation coefficients. As shown in Table 7, none of the correlation coefficients calculated to test this hypothesis were statistically significant. Therefore, Hypothesis one was not supported.

Hypothesis 2 stated that the five dimensions of hoped-for work selves would be significantly different for females and males. Hypothesis 2 was tested by a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) with the dependent variables being each of the five dimensions of hoped-for work selves. There was no significant effect of gender on the

dependent variables ($F = 1.181$, $df = 194$, $p < .320$, Wilk's $\lambda = .970$). Therefore, Hypothesis two was not supported. Table 8 displays the univariate ANOVA's.

Hypotheses 3 stated that there would be statistically significant correlations among each of the five dimensions of expected work selves and socioeconomic position. Hypothesis 3 was tested by calculating Pearson product moment correlation coefficients. The results are presented in Table 7. There were statistically significant coefficients among each of the five dimensions of expected work selves and socioeconomic position. Socioeconomic position correlated significantly with Ability Utilization ($r = .26$, $p < .001$), Achievement ($r = .27$, $p < .001$), Autonomy ($r = .14$, $p = .04$), Personal Development ($r = .32$, $p < .001$) and Creativity ($r = .14$, $p = .03$). These results provide support for Hypothesis 3.

Hypothesis 4 stated that the five dimensions of expected work selves would be significantly different for females and males. Hypothesis 4 was tested by a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) with the dependent variables being each of the five dimensions of expected work selves. There was no significant effect of gender on the dependent variables ($F = .772$, $df = 195$, $p < .571$, Wilk's $\lambda = .981$). Therefore, Hypothesis 4 was not supported. Table 9 displays the univariate ANOVA's.

Hypothesis 5 stated that there would be a statistically significant correlation between work role salience and socioeconomic position. Hypothesis 5 was tested by calculating Pearson product moment correlation coefficients. As shown in Table 7, the correlation coefficient calculated to test this hypothesis was not significant. Therefore Hypothesis 5 was not supported.

Hypothesis 6 stated that work role salience would be significantly different for females and males. Hypothesis 6 was explored by a t-test (t = 1.695, df = 199, p = .092). There was no statistical difference in work role salience between females and males. Therefore, Hypothesis 6 was not supported.

Table 7.

Correlations Among Hoped-for and Expected Work Selves, and Socioeconomic Position (SEP)

Variable	SEP
Hoped-for work selves: Ability Utilization	.04
Hoped-for work selves: Achievement	.11
Hoped-for work selves: Autonomy	.08
Hoped-for work selves: Personal Development	.13
Hoped-for work selves: Creativity	.02
Expected work selves: Ability Utilization	.26**
Expected work selves: Achievement	.27**
Expected work selves: Autonomy	.14*
Expected work selves: Personal Development	.32**
Expected work selves: Creativity	.14*
Work Role Centrality	.06

**Significant at .01 level (2-tailed) *Significant at .05 level (2-tailed)

Table 8.

ANOVA on Hoped-for Work Selves by Gender

	Gender						
	Male		Female				
Variable	M	SD	M	SD	F	df	*p*
Hoped-for Work Self: Ability Ut.	37.33	4.91	38.00	4.73	.785	1	.377
Hoped-for Work Self: Achievement	37.73	4.44	38.92	5.31	.209	1	.139
Hoped-for Work Self: Autonomy	35.12	4.90	34.76	6.25	.150	1	.699
Hoped-for Work Self: Personal Dev.	38.12	4.82	39.50	4.88	3.218	1	.074
Hoped-for Work Self: Creativity	33.58	6.50	32.95	7.12	.331	1	.566

Table 9.

ANOVA on Expected Work Selves by Gender

	Gender						
	Male		Female				
Variable	M	SD	M	SD	F	df	*p*
Expected Work Self: Ability Ut.	32.82	8.05	34.08	6.85	1.251	1	.265
Expected Work Self: Achievement	33.21	7.43	34.51	7.61	1.198	1	.275
Expected Work Self: Autonomy	29.51	7.87	29.79	7.53	.053	1	.819
Expected Work Self: Personal Dev	32.28	9.17	34.15	7.17	2.325	1	.129
Expected Work Self: Creativity	28.17	9.92	28.65	8.42	.249	1	.618

Hypothesis 7a stated that there would be a statistically significant relationship between the variable set which includes each of the five dimensions of work possible selves discrepancies, socioeconomic position, gender, and work role salience, and the variable set which includes affective balance and satisfaction with life. A canonical

correlation analysis was conducted using the five discrepancy scores from the WPSQ, SEI scores, gender, and work role salience scores as predictors of satisfaction with life and affective balance to evaluate the multivariate shared relationship between the two variable sets. The analysis yielded two functions with canonical correlations (R_c) of .621 and .265 for each successive function (see Table 10). The full model across all functions was statistically significant using the Wilk's $\lambda = .571$, F (16, 380.00) = 7.66, $p < .001$ (see Table 11). Wilk's λ represents the variance unexplained by the model, thus, 1-λ yields the full model effect size. Therefore, for the set of two canonical functions, the r^2 type effect size was .429, which indicates that the full model explained a substantial portion, 42.9%, of the variance shared between the variable sets. The second function was also statistically significant Wilk's $\lambda = .929$, F (7, 191.00) = 2.06, $p < .049$, however, this function explained only 7% of the variance shared between the variable sets. These results provide support for Hypotheses 7a. Table 12 presents the standardized canonical functions coefficients, the structure coefficients, and the squared structure coefficients, across the two functions for each variable.

Table 10.

Canonical Correlations and Eigenvalues for Each Function Separately

Root No.	Eigenvalues	%	Cumulative %	Canonical Correlation	Squared Correlation
1	.627	89.124	89.124	.621	.385
2	.076	10.786	100.00	.265	.070

Table 11.

Dimension Reduction Analysis

Root No.	Wilk's λ	F	Hypothesis DF	Error DF	Significance of F
1	.571	7.66	16	380.00	.001
2	.929	2.06	7.00	191.00	.049

Table 12.

Canonical Solutions for Work Possible Selves Discrepancies, Gender, SEP, and Work Role Salience Predicting Psychological Well-being for Functions 1 and 2

	Function 1			Function2		
Variable	Coef	r_s	r^2 (%)	Coef	r_s	r^2 (%)
WPSDIS: AbUt	.471	.910	82.81	.731	-.069	.47
WPSDIS: ACH	.001	.851	72.42	-.618	-.397	15.76
WPSDIS: AUT	.036	.654	42.77	-.195	-.351	12.32
WPSDIS: PD	.600	.950	90.25	-.441	-.356	12.67
WPSDIS: CR	-.082	.589	34.69	.015	-.081	.65
GENDER	-.137	-.168	2.82	-.658	-.659	43.42
WCQ	-.084	-.098	.009	-.125	-.016	.02
SEP	-.355	-.574	32.94	-.411	-.355	12.60
SWLS	.-778	-.997	.9940	-.924	-.086	.73
DHS	-.219	-.749	56.10	1.302	.707	49.98

Note. Structure coefficients (r_s) greater than |.45| are underlined. Coef = standardized canonical function coefficient; r^2 = squared structure coefficient. WPSDIS = Work Possible Selves Discrepancy Score, AbUt = Ability Utilization, ACH = Achievement, AUT = Autonomy, PD = Personal Development, CRT = Creativity.

Looking at squared structure coefficients of Function 1, it is evident that each of the work possible selves discrepancy variables, and socioeconomic position, were relevant in their contributions to the synthetic predictor variable. Gender was a minor secondary contributor, and work role salience did not contribute, to the synthetic predictor variable.

Hypothesis 7b stated that there would be a statistically significant negative relationship between the five dimensions of WPSQ discrepancies and affective balance and life satisfaction. This conclusion was supported by the results presented as structure coefficients. Each of the WPSQ discrepancy variables' structure coefficients had positive signs, indicating that they were all inversely related to the criterion variables. These results provide evidence for the support of Hypothesis 7b.

Hypothesis 7c stated that there would be a negative relationship between the five dimensions of work possible selves discrepancies and work role salience. This conclusion was supported by the structure coefficients. Each of the work possible selves variables' structure coefficients had positive signs, indicating that they were all inversely related to work role salience. Therefore, evidence was provided which supported hypothesis 7c. However, work role salience was not a significant contributor to the synthetic predictor variable.

Post Hoc Analyses

Post hoc analyses were conducted to determine if there were significant differences in the mean levels of the five dimensions of hoped-for work selves, expected work selves and socioeconomic position between African-American and European-

American participants. Ethnicity was not initially addressed in the research questions. These post hoc analyses were based on the current literature, and the fact that African-Americans comprised nearly 26% of the sample. Further, a post hoc analysis was conducted to determine whether there were mean differences in SEI scores between participants from different colleges. Finally, the relationships between each of the dimensions of hoped-for and expected work selves and the variable set that includes satisfaction with life and affective balance were explored.

To determine if there were any significant differences in the mean levels of hoped-for work selves between African-Americans and European-Americans, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was computed. Dependent variables for this analysis included each of the five dimensions of hoped-for work selves. There was no significant effect of ethnicity on the dependent variables ($F = 1.688$, $df = 174$, $p < .140$, Wilk's $\lambda = .954$). Table 13 displays the univariate ANOVA's. To determine if there were any significant differences in the mean levels of expected work selves between African-Americans and European-Americans, another multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was calculated. Dependent variables for this analysis included each of the five dimensions of expected work selves. A significant effect of ethnicity on the dependent variables was found ($F = 2.320$, $df = 175$, $p < .045$, Wilk's $\lambda = .938$). As indicated in Table 14, there were no statistically significant differences between these groups, with the exception of one dimension (Achievement) of expected work selves.

Table 13.

ANOVA's on Hoped-for Work Selves by Ethnicity

	Ethnicity						
	African Americans		European Americans				
Variable	M	SD	M	SD	F	df	*p*
Hoped-for Work Self: Ability Ut	37.90	4.84	37.84	4.57	.006	5	.938
Hoped-for Work Self: Achievement	37.71	6.25	39.02	4.42	2.528	5	.114
Hoped-for Work Self: Autonomy	35.36	7.06	34.70	5.27	.475	5	.491
Hoped-for Work Self: Personal Dev	38.80	5.43	39.42	4.74	.582	5	.446
Hoped-for Work Self: Creativity	33.90	6.71	32.68	6.71	6.77	5	.275

* p < .05 **p < .01

Table 14.

ANOVA's on Expected Work Selves by Ethnicity

	Ethnicity						
	African Americans		European Americans				
Variable	M	SD	M	SD	F	df	*p*
Expected Work Self: Ability Ut	32.82	7.34	33.98	7.23	.941	5	.333
Expected Work Self: Achievement	32.11	8.23	34.95	7.07	5.412	5	.021*
Expected Work Self: Autonomy	29.01	7.61	29.93	7.64	.528	5	.469
Expected Work Self: Personal Dev	32.38	7.28	34.27	8.13	2.113	5	.148
Expected Work Self: Creativity	28.90	8.07	28.27	8.46	.212	5	.646

* p < .05 **p < .01

A t-test was used to assess whether there were significant differences between the mean SEI scores of African-American participants and European-American participants (t = -3.269, df = 114, p = .001). African-American participants had statistically significant lower mean SEI scores than European American participants. The mean SEI score for African Americans was 45.44 (SD =14.60), while the median score was 39. The mean score for the European American was 53.96 (SD = 17.96), while the median score was 52.

To determine if there were significant mean differences in socioeconomic position by the participants' college setting, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted. The mean levels of SEI scores for participants by the college they attended are presented in Table 15. The results of this analysis indicate that the college attended by participants was significantly related to SEI scores (F = 16.611, df = 3, p < .001). Results of a post hoc Tukey's HSD calculation showed that there were statistically significant differences between the mean levels of SEI scores of the participants who attended the community colleges and those who attended UNCG. There were no significant mean differences in SEI scores between those participants attending one of the three community colleges.

Table 15.

Means and Standard Deviations of Participants' SEI Scores by type of College Attended

College Attended	Mean	*SD*
University of North Carolina at Greensboro	58.74	16.42
Rockingham Community College	39.46	10.55
Guilford Technical Community College	48.66	17.65
Randolph Community College	39.78	10.91

To examine whether there were relationships between each of the hoped-for work selves and each of the expected work selves dimensions and the variable set that includes satisfaction with life and affective balance, the five dimensions of hoped-for work selves and expected work selves were included as multivariate variables in a canonical analysis. The results of the canonical analysis were statistically significant Wilk's $\lambda = .613$ criterion, F (20, 376) = 5.197, $p < .001$. The model explained about 36% of the shared variance between the variable sets. As indicated by table 16, each of the expected work selves dimensions added significantly to the synthetic predictor variable, while none of the hoped-for work selves dimensions added significantly the predictor variable. Moreover, each of the expected work selves was positively related to satisfaction with life and affective balance.

Table 16.

Canonical Solutions for Hoped-for Work Selves and Expected Work Selves Predicting Psychological Well-being for Functions 1

	Function 1		
Variable	Coef	r_s	r^2 (%)
Hoped-for Work Selves: AbUt	.192	-.132	1.74
Hoped-for Work Selves: ACH	.093	-.144	2.00
Hoped-for Work Selves AUT	.046	-.165	2.72
Hoped-for Work Selves: PD	.254	-.171	2.92
Hoped-for Work Selves: CR	-.088	-.154	2.37
Expected Work Selves: AbUt	-.522	-.861	74.13
Expected Work Selves: ACH	.051	-.775	60.06
Expected Work Selves: AUT	-.124	-.732	53.58
Expected Work Selves: PD	-.698	-.893	79.74
Expected Work Selves: CR	.078	-.636	40.44
SWLS	-.800	-.978	95.64
DHS	-.276	-.791	62.56

Note. Structure coefficients (r_s) greater than |.45| are underlined. Coef = standardized canonical function coefficient; r^2 = squared structure coefficient.

Summary

In this chapter, a description of study participants, including relevant demographics, was provided. The results of the factor analyses of the Work Possible Selves Questionnaire were presented. Descriptive information on each of the scales and subscales was presented. Reliability estimates for each instrument were presented.

The research hypotheses were tested and the results were presented. Hypotheses one and two were not supported. Hypothesis three was supported, indicating that each of the dimensions of expected-work selves was significantly related to socioeconomic position. Hypothesis four was not supported. The results did not support Hypothesis five

or Hypothesis six. Hypotheses 7a, 7b, and 7c were supported, indicating that the variable set which included each of the five work possible selves discrepancy scores, socioeconomic position, gender, and work centrality predicted the variable set that included satisfaction with life and affective balance. Moreover, the work possible selves discrepancy scores were negatively related to the psychological well-being variables, while work role salience was inversely related to the five work possible selves discrepancies. In Chapter V, a discussion of the results, limitations, implications for counseling practice, counselor education, and recommendations for future research are presented.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

In Chapter IV, the results of a study exploring the relationship among work possible selves, work role salience, socioeconomic position, and psychological well-being of individuals in early adulthood were presented. In this final chapter, a brief overview of the study is provided, potential limitations are considered, and the results presented in Chapter IV are discussed. In addition, implications for counseling practice, counselor education, and future research are presented in light of the current findings.

Overview of the Study

Early adulthood is a period within the life-span when individuals are engaged in the vocational choice process. Few researchers have examined this process in relation to socioeconomic position or as it relates to psychological well-being. Examining such relationships is essential if counselors are to make informed decisions regarding the facilitation of vocational choice for individuals in early adulthood across socioeconomic positions. This study was designed to examine individuals' work possible selves, including their hopes and expectations for the self in work. This study also was designed to examine the relationships among work possible selves, socioeconomic position, work role salience, and psychological well-being. There has been limited examination of individuals' work possible selves in early adulthood, and no study of differences in work

possible selves across socioeconomic position. Additionally, no study has examined the relationship between work possible selves and psychological well-being.

To test the research hypotheses, 201 individuals in early adulthood (20 to 35 years of age) were recruited as volunteers to complete four assessments and an educational-occupational status questionnaire. The research hypotheses were addressed by statistical analysis of the data from the assessments and questionnaires. Pearson Product Moment correlations were computed to explore the relationships among hoped-for work selves, expected work selves, work role salience, and socioeconomic position. MANOVA and a t-test were used to examine differences between males and females in hoped-for work selves, in expected work selves, and in work role salience. A canonical correlation analysis was conducted to examine a full canonical model. This model included a predictor variable set consisting of the five dimensions of work possible selves discrepancy scores, socioeconomic position, gender, and work role salience, and a criterion variable set consisting of affective balance and life satisfaction, aspects of psychological well-being.

Summary of the Results

Results from the data analyses revealed that there were no statistically significant relationships between the five dimensions of hoped-for work selves and socioeconomic position, nor were their differences between males and females on the five dimensions of hoped-for work selves. In addition, there was no difference between males and females on the five dimensions of expected work selves. There were, however, statistically significant relationships between each of the five dimensions of expected work selves and

socioeconomic position. The data analysis revealed no statistically significant relationship between work role salience and socioeconomic position, and no statistically significant difference between males and females on work role salience.

The results of the canonical analysis revealed that there was an association between the predictor variable set that included each of the five work possible selves discrepancy scores, socioeconomic position, gender, and work role salience, and the criterion variable set that included the psychological well-being variables of satisfaction in life and affective balance. Close examination of the structure coefficients of the first canonical function revealed that the five work possible selves discrepancy scores were negatively related to satisfaction with life and affective balance. Moreover, socioeconomic position was negatively related to the work possible selves discrepancy scores, and both satisfaction with life and affective balance. Gender was a minimal contributor to the synthetic predictor variable, and work role salience did not contribute to the synthetic predictor variable, thus not contributing to the association between the variable sets.

Limitations of the Study

A number of potential limitations should be considered in interpreting the results of this study. These limitations may affect the internal and external validity of the findings. First, the sample used in this study limits the ability to generalize the findings beyond the specific demographics of the research participants. Participants in this study were college students. Although an effort was made to select college students from different types of institutions (e.g., state university, community colleges), and a wide

variety of majors was represented, it can be assumed that the sample consisted of individuals who had the economic means, academic ability, motivation, and aspiration to enroll in and attend college for at least one semester.

The generalizability of this study also is limited by geographic factors associated with the participants. The colleges in which the participants in this study were enrolled were located in the central piedmont region of North Carolina, and were all within sixty miles of each other. A large majority of students who attend the three community colleges are residents of the counties in which these colleges are located. The piedmont region is characterized by a recent and dramatic shift from an economy based on the textile industry and manufacturing to an economy centered on distribution and service. Consequently, the region has experienced many plant closings and employee layoffs. Although sampling from rural community colleges helped create a sample that was more representative of the local populations in terms of socioeconomic position, it is important to note that college students often have more long-term economic potential than individuals without college educations. Therefore, the college participants do not represent the variability of the local populations in terms of socioeconomic position, and may not be representative of these populations in terms of vocational aspiration.

The possibility of measurement error is also a limitation of this study. The Satisfaction with Life Survey (SWLS; Diener, 1985), Depression-Happiness Survey (DHS; McGreal & Joseph, 1993), and the Work Centrality Questionnaire (WCQ; Paulley, 1993) have each been used repeatedly, and have been reported to have high reliability and validity. There is, however, an inherent limitation in the use of self-report measures

due to the influence of social desirability, response biases, and lack of corroboration from other sources (Heppner, Kivlinghan, & Wampold, 1992). These limitations may be particularly salient in terms of the Work Possible Selves Questionnaire (WPSQ). Although the WPSQ sub-scales were found to possess high internal consistencies, the instrument was designed for this study, and so there is limited information on its validity. Moreover, the use of items for the WPSQ was based solely on intrinsic work values and may have increased the likelihood that individuals responded in socially desirable ways. For example, the question stem, "allows me to reach a high standard in my work," might lead individuals to respond with a high level of agreement, because this would be the socially desirable response. Moreover, all the items had a response set constructed in the same direction. This can lead to a preponderance of similar responses (Nardi, 2003).

The use of discrepancy scores in data analysis is controversial (Hattie, 1992). The primary criticisms of the use of discrepancy scores relate to reliability and to the metric of discrepancy scores (Hattie). Typically, the reliability of the discrepancy scores is inversely related to the correlation between the two original measures (hoped-for work selves and expected work selves). Reliabilities for the WPSQ discrepancy scores for this particular sample, however, were moderate to high (.78 to .82), and were only slightly lower than the original two subscales used to determine the discrepancy scores.

The discrepancy scores used in this study are meaningful constructs in their own right. Therefore, issues related to the metric of the discrepancy scores are not relevant in this study. In other words, an individual is assumed to experience a discrepancy between their hoped-for image of self and their expected image of self. Moreover, the scales are

assumed to be, at minimum, interval scale level. This means that a discrepancy score of 1 measures the same experience for each individual. Some authors (Hattie, 1992; Wylie, 1974) question these assumptions for measures of self-concept, noting that discrepancy scores may suggest different concepts depending on participants' true level of self-concept (Wylie). For example, an individual might have a score of 7 on the Creativity subscale of hoped-for work self scale and a score of 5 on the Creativity subscale of the expected work self scale. Therefore, the individual would have a work possible selves discrepancy score of 2 for Creativity. Another individual might have a score of 4 on the Creativity subscale of the hoped-for work self scale and a score of 2 on the Creativity subscale of the expected work self scale. This individual would also have a work possible selves discrepancy score of 2 on Creativity. Although these individuals had different scores on both subscales, the assumption is that both of these individuals would have the same experience of discrepancy.

The potential for imperfect administration of the instrumentation for this study is also a potential limitation. Negative or disrupting situations such as participant questions about items, excessive noise and disruptions, or confusion regarding any of the procedures can potentially limit the generalizability of the results (Heppner et al., 1992). The researcher made every attempt, however, to minimize the effect of these potential limitations by being the sole administrator of the instruments, by testing and refining the procedures during a pilot study before collecting data for the main study, and by collaborating with classroom instructors before test administration in order to prevent or minimize distractions during administration. In spite of these limitations, the results of

this study furthered the literature in this area in several important ways, as discussed in the following sections.

Factor Analyses of the Work Possible Selves Questionnaire

Following a review of the literature, the researcher determined that there was no existing instrument to quantitatively assess possible selves in the domain of work. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, the researcher designed the Work Possible Selves Questionnaire (WPSQ; Pisarik, 2005). The initial development of the WPSQ was based on an extensive literature review of the Possible Selves construct (e.g., Bybee & Wells, 2002; Cross & Markus, 1991; Hooker, 1999; Markus & Nurius, 1986; Robinson, Davis, & Meara, 2003), the assessment of work values (e.g., Amabile et al., 1994; Brief & Nord, 1990; Nevill & Super, 1986; Pryor, 1987; Rounds et al., 1981), and vocational aspirations (e.g., Jacobs et al., 1991, Rojewski & Yang, 1997; Sewell & Hauser, 1975). The WPSQ was further developed and revised through feedback and data analyses from a pilot study (see Appendix F). The next steps in the development of the WPSQ were the exploratory factor analyses conducted in this study and presented in Chapter IV. These results revealed important information regarding the content, structure, validity, and reliability of the current instrument, as well as information regarding the future development of the WPSQ.

Exploratory factor analyses of the hoped-for work selves scale and the expected work selves scale revealed that five factors constituted the underlying structures of both the hoped-for work selves scale and the expected work selves scale. Each of these factors and the items loading on them will be discussed below.

The first factor that emerged for both the hoped-for work selves and expected work selves scales contained similar items. Many of those items were those originally hypothesized to be part of the Personal Development subscale for both scales. Five of the original Personal Development items loaded primarily onto this factor. Several items that were originally hypothesized as fitting more with the Achievement and the Ability Utilization subscales also loaded highly on this first factor for both the hoped-for and expected scales of the WPSQ.

Upon closer examination, these Ability Utilization and Achievement items that loaded on this factor have conceptual similarities with the Personal Development items. All of these items seem to have in common some internal or subjective feeling toward work. In other words, they tap the dimension of work centered on the salience of work that is personally satisfying and offers a sense of personal meaning. For example, Achievement item #4 states, "…will give me the feeling I have really achieved something." Achievement item #7 states, "…offers me a sense of accomplishment in the type of work I do." These results seem to suggest that this first factor of both the hoped-for and expected work selves, although it included items not originally hypothesized to fit with the Personal Development items, still maintains its underlying structure as defined for this subscale.

The second factor to emerge for both the hoped-for and expected work selves scales was similar to the original Creativity subscale. In fact, for both scales, six of the original seven Creativity items loaded onto this second factor. The only Creativity item that did not load was Creativity item # 4, which states, "…will require me to find answers

to complex problems." This item may be conceptually closer to the definition of the Ability Utilization dimension, the implementation of self-perceived skills, than it is to the definition of the Creativity dimension, innovations independently conceived by the individual. This result suggests that this item should not be used as part of the Creativity subscale in future revisions of the WPSQ.

The hoped-for and expected work selves scales both had a clear factor that included the items of the original Autonomy subscale. This was the third factor in both of the factor analyses. In fact, each of the original seven items loaded onto these factors. Similar to the findings regarding the Creativity factor, this would suggest that this is a valid factor, and should be kept intact during future development and analysis. Within the expected work selves scale, there were a few items, other than Autonomy items, that loaded onto the third factor. Each of these items also loaded heavily on the first factor suggesting that they were primarily associated with the Personal Development dimension. None of these items captured the concept of autonomy used for this instrument. They did correspond to the definition of the Personal Development dimension.

Two final factors emerged from the factor analyses of both the hoped-for and expected work selves scales. These two factors were correlated with each other and were more difficult to interpret than the first three factors. For both scales, these factors were comprised of items from the original Ability Utilization and Achievement subscales. For the hoped-for work selves scale, these two factors included the following seven common items: Achievement item #3, Achievement item #6, Ability Utilization item # 2, Ability

Utilization item #3, Ability Utilization item # 4, Ability Utilization item #5, and Creativity item #4. When using the argument made above to include Creativity item # 4 as an Ability Utilization item, five of these seven items are Ability Utilization items. The remaining two items were originally hypothesized to be Achievement items. Achievement item #6 states, "…doing work that will be challenging." Conceptually, this item is similar to the other Ability Utilization items, referring to doing or using inherent qualities of the self rather than receiving a subjective feeling regarding work. This case can also be made for Achievement item # 3, which states, "…allows me to reach a high standard in my work." These seven items appear to be related, statistically and conceptually, and so may constitute a single unique factor, Ability Utilization, rather than two factors.

For the expected work selves scale, these last two factors also consisted of a combination of seven items. However, four of the items (Ability Utilization item #1, Achievement item # 1, Achievement item # 3, and Achievement item #5) were different than the items loading on the last two factors of the hoped-for work selves scale. Three of these four items (Achievement item # 1, Achievement item # 3, and Achievement item #5) cross-loaded onto three factors. Unlike the Achievement items that loaded heavily on the first factor and seemed to be conceptually closer to the definition of Personal Development, these three items are more characteristic of the original definition of the Achievement dimension.

Given these findings, there is initial support for the validity of either a four-factor or five-factor structure for the WPSQ. Given the high correlation between the last two

factors, however, and the large number of the items that loaded onto both factors, a four-factor solution might be closer to the underlying structure of the WPSQ and should be explored with another sample of research participants. Examination of the specific relevant items further supports a four-factor structure as the next step in development of this instrument. Two clear factors emerged, for both the hoped-for work selves and the expected work selves scales, that were congruent with the original Creativity and Autonomy dimensions. A third ten-item factor emerged, for both the hoped-for work selves and expected work selves scales that could be labeled a Personal Development factor. Finally, it appears that there may be differences between the scales in the construct underlying a fourth factor.

Study Results

The results of the data analyses did not provide support for Hypotheses One, Two, Four, Five or Six. The results did support Hypotheses Three and Seven. In this section the results of the hypotheses are discussed.

Hypothesis One

Hypothesis one predicted that there would be statistically significant correlations between the five dimensions of hoped-for work selves and socioeconomic position. Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficients were calculated, and Hypothesis One was not supported by the results. In other words, there was no statistically significant relationship between hoped-for work selves and socioeconomic position.

This finding would seem to contradict research findings on constructs related to work possible selves such as vocational aspirations. For example, some of the existing

literature on work values and vocational aspirations (Bogie, 1976; Cook et al., 1996; Jacobs et al., 1991; Mottaz, 1985; Rowjewski, 2005; Rojewski & Yang, 1997) indicates that socioeconomic status is related to vocational aspirations. It should be noted, however, that many of these researchers conceptualize and measure vocational aspirations as expectations for the future (Johnson, 2005). Hoped-for work selves, in contrast, are hopes and dreams of the self in work, or possible future selves in the work realm. Therefore, they are different from vocational aspirations. The work possible selves questionnaire was designed to elicit individuals' hopes, unrelated to any likelihood of entering a specific occupation. This is distinct from the use of the construct of vocational aspirations (Johnson). Given the distinction between hoped-for work selves and expectations, some authors suggest that there would be no relationship between hoped-for work selves and socioeconomic position (Mickelson, 1990), as supported in this study.

Hypothesis Two

Hypothesis Two predicted that there would be statistically significant differences between males and females on each of the five dimensions of hoped-for work selves. A MANOVA was calculated to test this hypothesis. Results did not support Hypothesis Two. In other words, there were no statistically significant differences between males and females on any of the five dimensions of hoped-for work selves. This finding is not similar to the existing research on work values and vocational aspirations (Johnson-Kirkpatrick, 2001; Marini, et al., 1996; Rojewski & Yang, 1997). For example, Rojewski and Yang (1997) found that female high school students reported significantly higher

occupational aspirations than male high school students across three grades, with increasing differences with grade level. Marini et al., (1996) found that women attached more importance than men to intrinsic rewards. Other researchers (Jacobs et al., 1991; Kirkpatrick-Johnson, 2002) have noted, however, that gender differences in intrinsic work values are smaller now than they were in past years as women find more opportunities to enter into occupations that offer more extrinsic rewards such as money, benefits, and prestige. Similar to the discussion above of Hypothesis One, the hoped-for work selves scale of the Work Possible Selves Questionnaire was designed to measure hopes, ideals, and dreams for the self in work. This is unlike many of the instruments used to measure vocational aspirations. These measures tend to be closer conceptually to measures of expectations.

Hypotheses Three

Hypothesis three predicted that there would be statistically significant correlations among the five dimensions of expected work selves and socioeconomic position. Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficients were calculated to test this hypothesis. There were statistically significant positive correlations among each of the five dimensions of expected work selves and socioeconomic position. This finding is consistent with the existing literature that suggests individuals from low socioeconomic positions have lower vocational expectations than individuals from middle and high socioeconomic positions (Bogie, 1976; Cook et al., 1996; Hellenga, et al., 2002; Loscocco, 1989).

This finding, in combination with the results related to Hypothesis One, is critical for future research that examines work possible selves. It illuminates the conceptual distinctions between hoped-for work selves and expected work selves. Hoped-for work selves consist primarily of wishes and fantasies related to work values, and depict "ideal selves," whereas expected work selves contain more specific and concrete knowledge, and depict "realistic selves." These concepts parallel the work of Mickelson (1990) who argued that measuring hopes typically assesses internalized ideological beliefs regarding the "American dream," while expectations represent those images grounded in concrete experiences and personal understanding of an existing opportunity structure. Thus, as Merton (1968) suggests, hopes will remain high and reflect a socialized idealization, while expectations remain realistic and relate to perceived opportunity.

The results presented here also support the few research studies that have examined aspiration-expectation gaps or discrepancies (Bogie, 1976; Cook et al., 1996; Hellenga et al., 2002). These studies suggest that aspirations, even though not the "ideal," generally remain high across socioeconomic positions. Expectations, on the other hand, generally are lower for individuals from lower socioeconomic positions. Thus, discrepancies are negatively related to socioeconomic position, and result from lower expectations.

Hypothesis Four

Hypothesis Four predicted that there would be statistically significant differences between males and females on each of the five dimensions of expected work selves. MANOVA results did not support Hypothesis Four. In other words, there were no

statistically significant differences between men and women on any of the five dimensions of expected work selves.

Similar to Hypothesis Two, this finding is not typical of the research results regarding gender and work expectations. Early status-attainment research suggests that women have different occupational expectations than men, and that these expectations are sex typed and socialized (Jacobs et al., 1991; Rindfuss, Cooksey, & Sutterlin, 1999; Sewell & Hauser, 1975). Through the socialization process individuals begin to see certain occupations as appropriate for a specific gender. Individuals therefore, respond to questions about occupational expectations in stereotypical ways. For example, young males verbalize choice in terms of financial and status factors, while young females verbalize talk about personal fulfillment and altruistic concerns. Human capital researchers also suggest that women place greater value on intrinsic work rewards than men when speaking about expectations (Rindfuss et al., 1999. Such differences are thought to result from expectations females hold regarding occupational attainment. Specifically, females expect to attain work that offers more intrinsic rewards than extrinsic rewards. These expectations stem from significant effects of changes in marital and parental status, which in turn, involve the probability of intermittent work force re-entry and status-inconsistency (Marini et al., 1996).

One possible reason that no gender differences in expected work selves were found may be the unique demographics of the sample. Males and females within the study were, on average, slightly older (23.3 years old) than traditional college age students and most of them had work experience. Much of the status-attainment research

focusing on expectations, however, has examined grade school and high school aged individuals. Researchers and theorists note that the developmental process of vocational choice in early adulthood includes adjustments in expectations as individuals gain knowledge and experience in the world of work (Gottfredson, 1996; Super et al., 1996). This adjustment often includes a downward adjustment in the trajectory of males vocational expectations (Jacobs et al., 1991; Rindfuss et al., 1999). The lack of gender differences in expected work selves may reflect this developmental process as individuals move through early adulthood.

Hypothesis Five

Hypothesis Five predicted that there would be a statistically significant correlation between work role salience and socioeconomic position. Hypothesis Five was not supported by the results of a Pearson Product Moment correlation. Prior qualitative and quantitative research results suggest that work role salience is a function of demographic and social status variables such as occupational status (Blustein et al., 2002; Mannheim, 1975; 1993; Mannheim & Dubin, 1986). For example Mannheim (1993) found work role salience to be significantly higher for individuals in middle and upper middle socioeconomic categories compared to individuals in low middle and lower socioeconomic categories.

One possible explanation for the lack of support for Hypothesis Five may be the homogeneity of the sample used in this study in terms of educational status. The participants in this study were attending different types of colleges (i.e., university or community college) and were at different levels of educational progress. All participants,

however, were college students and many (68%) held three-quarter to full time student status. This suggests that these particular students are striving toward occupations or work settings that offer them greater psychological identification. One previous researcher (Mannheim, 1975; 1993) compared levels of work role salience for individuals currently in the work place, with various categories of occupational status. Other researchers (Blustein et al., 2002) noted that increased educational opportunities contribute to a view of work as part of an individual's self-definition. The participants in this study are transitioning into new occupations through their educational endeavors. Therefore, for individuals in this sample, socioeconomic position may not be a critical factor related to work role salience. For example, if an individual currently works in a mill as a machine operator, his or her SEI score (socioeconomic position) could be low. This same individual, however, could be enrolled in a high technology certificate program that offers promise of a high status job upon completion. Therefore, the promise of a high future occupational status may be more influential than current occupational status.

Hypothesis Six

Hypothesis Six predicted that there would be a statistically significant difference between males and females in work role salience. Results of a T-test did not support Hypothesis Six. In other words, there was not a statistically significant difference in work role salience between males and females. Previous research suggests that differences in work role salience between males and females occur for individuals in upper and lower socioeconomic positions (Mannheim, 1993). Moreover, research

suggests that status inconsistency, or holding an occupational position below one's educational level, is negatively related to work role salience for females and males. Females tend, however, to have lower work role salience than men (Mannheim, 1993). The lack of support for this hypothesis may be due to the fact that all participants were college students, and thus they were striving toward a state of status consistency through their current education. A small number of participants (5.4%) were returning to college with prior degrees. This suggests that participants in this sample had been or currently were in occupational positions that matched their educational training, or were status consistent, and are currently attempting to increase their occupational status.

Hypotheses Seven, a, b, c

Hypotheses Seven (a) proposed that there would be a statistically significant relationship between the variable set comprised of each of the five dimensions of work possible selves discrepancies, socioeconomic position, gender, and work role salience, and the variable set comprised of satisfaction with life and affective balance. Hypothesis Seven (b) predicted that there would be a negative relationship between the five dimensions of work possible discrepancies and affective balance and life satisfaction. Hypothesis Seven (c) predicted that there would be a negative relationship between work role salience and the five dimensions of work possible selves discrepancies. The canonical correlation analysis supported all three of these hypotheses.

In canonical analysis, two linear combinations are formed. The first linear combination, or set, is formed from the predictor variables, and second from the criterion variables. In the analysis, the correlation between these two sets of variables is

maximized. The linear combinations of variables are called synthetic variables (Sherry & Henson, 2005). Canonical analysis produces a canonical correlation coefficient between the synthetic predictor variable and the synthetic criterion variable, much like a Pearson Product Moment correlation. In effect, canonical analysis allows a researcher to explore the relationship between multiple dependent and multiple independent variables at the same time. A canonical correlation analysis also produces a set of standardized canonical function coefficients called a variate or a function. There are as many functions as there are variables in the smaller variable set, and each function is orthogonal to every other function.

The canonical correlation analysis conducted for this study produced two functions, and as reported in Chapter IV, both were significant. According to the results of the first function, both criterion variables (satisfaction with life, and affective balance) were relevant contributors to the synthetic criterion variable. This result was supported by the squared structure coefficients, which represent the correlations between the canonical variates, or synthetic variables, and the original variables. Interestingly, the canonical function coefficient for the measured affective balance was low, suggesting possible high multicollinearity with satisfaction with life. In fact, affective balance and satisfaction with life had a correlation of r =.64.

Each of the variables in the predictor variable set in Function 1, with the exception of gender and work role salience, contributed significantly to the synthetic predictor variable. Several of these canonical function coefficients were small, while the structure coefficients for these variables were large. This suggests multicollinearity

between the work possible selves discrepancy variables. The correlations between these variables ranged from .53 to .81. Socioeconomic position, gender, and work role salience each had the same mathematical sign; all were negative. Further, these signs were opposite from the signs of the work possible selves discrepancy variables, which were all positive. This suggests that socioeconomic position, gender, and work role salience were all inversely related to the work possible selves discrepancy variables.

The results of this analysis suggest that individuals who report greater discrepancies between their hoped-for images of themselves in work and their expected images of themselves in work, and who occupy lower socioeconomic positions, based on the indices used in this study, were more likely to report lower levels of satisfaction with life and greater feelings of depression. These results support self-concept discrepancy theories of psychological well-being which state that psychological well-being reflects discrepancies between what individuals desire and hope for, and what they perceive themselves as having or as capable of getting (Higgins, 1987; Micholas, 1985).

The notion that people who hold conflicting or incompatible beliefs are likely to experience discomfort has long been suggested in the social science literature (Beck et al., 1979; Festinger, 1957; James, 1890; Rodgers, 1961). These theories all posit that specific types of discrepancies in self-cognitions reflect specific types of negative psychological situations. For example, Festinger (1957), in his social comparison theory, explains that individuals evaluate their ideal and actual self-concepts in relation to others and form mental images of a socially desirable self (Lise, Mathieu, & Sylvia, 1998). Higgin's (1987) refers to this type of discrepancy as the ideal/ought discrepancy, and

postulates that it is uniquely associated with emotions related to tension, agitation, and anxiety. The ideal/actual discrepancy, however, represents a distance between how an individual would hope to conceptualize their self, and how the individual actually conceptualizes their self. Higgins postulates that this type of discrepancy leads to affect related to depression, hopelessness, and dejection. Within this perspective, the hoped-for/expected work self discrepancy most resembles the ideal/actual discrepancy. Hoped-for work selves represent the "ideal self," while expected work selves represent the "realistic self" in work that an individual believes will become reality.

The results were also supportive of Brown's (1996) value-based model of career and occupational choice in which he hypothesized that depression is likely when individuals believe they cannot act on their work values. Brown based this hypothesis on the work of Beck et al. (1979) who posited that a cognitive triad of negative thoughts about one's self, negative thoughts about the world, and negative thoughts about one's future expectations characterize depressed individuals. Brown's hypothesis is of specific relevance to this study given that the literature on work values was one of the two primary sources for operationalizing work possible selves and developing the work possible selves questionnaire (WPSQ).

The results also provide evidence that socioeconomic position is inversely related to work possible selves discrepancies. This finding bolsters the results related to Hypothesis Three, while adding insight into the nature of the relationship between hoped-for and expected work selves. The work possible selves discrepancies experienced by individuals from lower socioeconomic positions seem to be a function of lower

expectations as the literature suggests (Bogie, 1976; Cook et al., 1996; Hellenga et al., 2002). This discrepancy may indicate an individual's view of his or her current and future opportunities in relation to hoped-for dreams and expected realities.

In the second canonical function that emerged in this analysis, the coefficients suggest that affective balance was the only relevant criterion variable, while gender emerged as the relevant predictor variable. Work possible selves discrepancies along the dimensions of Achievement, Autonomy, and Personal Development also provided secondary contributions. Similar to the results from the first function, the work possible selves discrepancies were inversely related to affective balance. These results suggest that females who report larger discrepancy scores also report lower scores on the depression-happiness continuum. This finding is interesting in light of the fact that women are at least twice as likely as men to experience a depressive episode in a lifetime, regardless of ethnicity or socioeconomic position (Kessler et al., 1994). These results should be interpreted with caution, however, due to a low canonical coefficient for this function.

Work role salience did not emerge as a significant contributor to the synthetic predictor variable, and therefore, did not emerge as a significant variable in relation to the full model. As stated earlier in this chapter, this result could be partially due to the particular sample used in this study. All participants were currently engaged in academic pursuits. A more diverse sample, in terms of educational goals, status, and attainment, might produce different results.

Gender contributed negligibly to the predictor variable and to the full model, as indicated by the results of the first canonical function. This suggests that individuals with large work possible selves discrepancies from low socioeconomic position experience lower psychological well-being regardless of gender. As stated earlier, researchers have suggested that vocational aspirations and work values are becoming more similar for men and women as more women enter higher prestige positions and perceive more opportunity within the world of work (Kirkpatrick-Johnson, 2002). This provides a possible explanation for this result.

Post Hoc Analyses

Post hoc analyses were conducted to determine if there were significant differences between African-Americans and European-Americans on the five dimensions of hoped-for work selves, the five dimensions of expected work selves, and socioeconomic position. Differences between these two groups on both hoped-for and expected work selves are suggested by current literature (Cook et al., 1996; Mickelson, 1990). MANOVA results indicated that there were no significant differences in any of the five dimensions of hoped-for work selves between African-Americans and European-Americans. Results also indicated that Achievement was an expected work self dimension that was significantly different for African-Americans and European-Americans. This indicates that European-Americans in this study report higher expectations for the self in work that provides accomplishment and a sense of pride through productivity. Given the fact that a large majority of the African-American participants were female (n = 46), as compared to male (n =6), this result may reflect

factors unique to black women. Such factors might include orientations toward work, and disadvantage in the labor market due to both sex and race discrimination. African-American women have been concentrated disproportionately as service workers and a limited number of other occupations (Kirkpatrick-Johnson, 2002), and therefore may not perceive opportunities to obtain employment reflective of an achievement orientation.

T-test results indicate that European-Americans had significantly higher SEI scores (used to operationalize socioeconomic position) than African-Americans. This is not a surprising result, as the strong relationship between socioeconomic position and racial minority status is well documented in the career literature (Brown, 2004). This finding may, however, partially explain the results of the prior analysis indicating differences in the Achievement subscale of expected work selves. African-Americans in this sample, given their lower SEI scores, may perceive fewer opportunities to engage in work in the future that is achievement oriented. The Achievement dimension, more than the other dimensions, reflects the nature of work rather than the subjective feelings produced by work. Thus, this result may reflect an expectation for doing work in the future that is indicative individuals in lower socioeconomic positions.

A post hoc ANOVA was conducted to determine whether there were differences in SEI scores for participants from different colleges. Results indicated that individuals who attended each of the three community colleges had significantly lower SEI scores than those individuals who attended the state university. This result is not surprising given the increasing enrollments of ethnic minorities and individuals from low socioeconomic positions at community colleges around the country (Calhoun, 1999).

The above findings offer important information for future studies. First, the relationship between socioeconomic position and ethnicity suggested by the vocational development literature should be taken into consideration when conducting research that examines socioeconomic position as a primary variable. Second, the results offer further support to research showing that students attending community colleges are much different than those attending universities in terms of socioeconomic position. Future research might explore differences in work possible selves by type of college, while focusing more specifically on the psychological implications of career issues among community college students.

Relationships between the variable set that includes each of the five dimensions of hoped-for work selves and each of the five dimensions of expected work selves, and the variable set that includes satisfaction with life and affective balance were explored. This analysis was based on some of the literature on self-concept that suggests examining each self-concept score (in this case each of the two work possible selves scales) as separate multivariate variables rather than calculating and using discrepancy scores (Hattie, 1992). In addition, much of the research related to the work-related discrepancies has examined differences in vocational aspirations and expectations. This has been termed the "aspiration-expectation gap" (Hellenga et al., 2002). This research, although scant, suggests that the discrepancy, or gap, between aspirations and expectations results from lowered expectations, with aspirations remaining relatively constant. Participants in this study reported higher hoped-for work selves scores than expected work selves scores, and the results for Hypothesis Three suggest that expected work selves are related to

socioeconomic position. However, this information does not directly translate into findings regarding discrepancies. Identifying which variable (hoped for work selves or expected work selves) is most responsible for work possible selves discrepancy, and identifying which of these two most predict psychological well-being would lead to a more parsimonious understanding of how discrepancies are related to psychological well-being in this study.

Each of the five dimensions of hoped-for work selves and the five dimensions of expected work selves were included as multivariate variables in the predictor set of a canonical analysis, while satisfaction with life and affective balance were included as the criterion variable set. The results were significant and explained 36% of the variance between the two variables. Moreover, each of the five dimensions of expected work selves contributed significantly to the model, while none of the five dimensions of hoped-for work selves contributed to the model. This finding is valuable, especially in relation to the results of the first four research questions in this study. Work possible selves discrepancies seem to be a result of lower expected work selves. The relationships between work possible selves discrepancy scores and psychological well-being seem to be primarily due to these lower expected work selves. This can inform future research, and the future development of the Work Possible Selves Questionnaire.

Summary of Discussion

The results of this study suggest that socioeconomic position is negatively related to work possible selves discrepancies, which in turn are negatively related to the two components of psychological well-being. Moreover, the results suggest that work

possible selves discrepancies of individuals in lower socioeconomic positions result from lower expected work selves. Work role salience did not emerge as a contributor to these relationships. Gender, however, was associated with affective balance. Many of these findings support the findings of previous research. Some of the findings, however, are the first of their kind and so, further study is recommended.

Implications

The results of this study suggest that individuals experience discrepancies between their hoped-for image of themselves in work, and their expected image of themselves in work, and that these discrepancies are negatively related to individuals' socioeconomic position. Moreover, results of this study suggest that work possible selves discrepancies are related to satisfaction with life and affective balance. The results of this study have important implications for counseling practice, counselor education, and future research.

Counseling Practice

The results of this study have many implications for counselors who work with individuals in early adulthood who present with career issues or issues related to psychological well-being. Many vocational development theorists have suggested that early adulthood is a period in life when individuals are in the latter stage of the initial vocational exploration process. These theorists state that an important aspect of this stage is the completion of the process of compromising between initial hopes for the self in the future, and realistic expectations for the self in the future (Gottfredson, 1981, 1996; Super et al., 1996). Results from this study illuminate this process. Participants in this study

reported two distinct future images of themselves in work. One reflected their hopes, wishes and desires, and the other reflected their realistic expectations. Moreover, a large majority of the participants reported discrepancies between those images that reflected their hopes, and those that reflected their expectations.

These results require counselors to assess clients' stated interests and values carefully, and interpret results of interest and values inventories carefully. Results of interest and values assessments may be conveying information regarding clients' hopes, or perhaps their expectations. For example, an individual may report very high vocational aspirations, even though they have no expectation of achieving these aspirations. The results of this study also suggest that socioeconomic position is related to expected work selves and work possible selves discrepancies. Similar to the research of Loscocco (1989), the results of this study suggest that individuals stated hopes, expectations, or values may ultimately be functions of their perceived opportunities. For example, clients may convey hopes or values only within the context of what they expect. Understanding that clients can have many images of themselves, and that these images may convey very different meanings should motivate counselors to explore and clarify the content of these different images to obtain a more valid understanding of the meaning of work for individuals from different socioeconomic positions.

A holistic approach to career counseling results from recognizing the interactive nature of all aspects of a person's life (Super et al., 1996). Counseling that is focused on career related issues, however, often is dislocated from counseling related to mental health or psychological well-being. Within the counseling profession, career counseling

is often viewed as less sophisticated, less important, and less rigorous than personal counseling. One result of this dislocation is the advent and acceptance of paraprofessionals within career counseling venues. The results of this study support researchers implications that discrepancies between hopes and expectations are related to clients' psychological well-being. Counselors who work primarily with career related client issues should be aware that vocational development and psychological well-being have the potential to affect each other reciprocally. Counselors must be trained and willing to address clients holistically by addressing career and mental health issues as if they are inherently related. Likewise, mental health counselors could better serve their clients by doing the same.

Counselor Education

The Association for Counselor Education and Supervision and the National Career Development Association put forth a position paper in 2000 outlining recommendations for preparing counselors for career development. The results of this research study re-enforce many of those recommendations. First, counselor educators should teach the connection between career development and the meaning of work. Second, career counseling with special populations such as individuals from low socioeconomic positions should be a major focus in counselor training programs. Third, counselor educators should help trainees to understand links among and between career and personal counseling, and career and mental health issues. Finally, counselor educators should teach new or non-traditional models that may explain the career choice

and development process from new perspectives. Work possible selves may provide such a model.

The participants in this study consisted of college students and, therefore, the results should be considered especially applicable to counseling trainees in college counseling and college student development programs. The work possible selves construct lends itself to both theoretical and technique based instruction for student development topics such as identity development and self-concept development of college students. Student development courses should prepare informed professionals to assess the factors that may influence college students' work possible selves, and how these possible selves contribute to the holistic development of college students.

Future Research

This study provided a preliminary examination of work possible selves experienced by individuals in early adulthood from varied socioeconomic positions. Additional research is needed to develop the Work Possible Selves Questionnaire, to further understand the factors that influence individuals' work possible selves, and to gain a broader understanding of work possible selves in early adulthood.

The operationalization of the work possible selves construct and the development of the Work Possible Selves Questionnaire (WPSQ) were significant components of this study. The WPSQ can be an effective, innovative and useful instrument in examining work possible selves in the future. In order for it have maximum utility as a measurement instrument, however, it needs continued modifications and analyses. Moreover, these modifications should be based on the results of the exploratory factor

analysis discussed earlier in this chapter. Further, the addition of items, such as reverse scored items, and items reflecting external work values, which could help to reduce potential response bias, might produce more statistical differences between the five dimensions. The WPSQ will also need to be administered to groups of individuals that are more diverse than college students to evaluate its usefulness across populations. The specific items that were reported to have had low loading should be eliminated as well. Finally, producing one scale with one score that reflects work possible selves discrepancies between hoped-for and expected work selves would make the WPSQ much more parsimonious and useful.

The results of previous research suggest that many factors have the potential to influence work possible selves. Two such factors are age and level of education. Replicating this study with a more diverse group of participants in terms of post-secondary education, and including an exploration of the role of age, will add further to our understanding of this construct. It might also explain the lack of relationship between work possible selves and work role salience. Finally, future studies could explore the relationship between additional variables that are related to psychological well-being such as purpose in life and goal directedness.

Summary of Study Implications

The results of the study provide important information about the vocational choice process and its relationship socioeconomic position and psychological well-being. These results can inform the practice of counseling practitioners and the curriculum of counselor educators. Moreover, it can guide researchers interested in measuring work

possible selves, and examining work possible selves for individuals in early adulthood, and the relationships between work possible selves and psychological well-being.

Conclusions

Individuals in early adulthood (N = 201), age 20 to 35, participated in a study of the relationships among work possible selves, work role salience, socioeconomic position, and psychological well-being. Results from Pearson Product Moment correlations indicated that socioeconomic position was not related to hoped-for work selves. ANOVA calculations among hoped-for work selves and gender showed no statistically significant differences between males and females. Pearson Product Moment correlation calculations did indicate statistically significant correlations among expected work selves and socioeconomic position. However, ANOVA calculations showed no statistical differences in expected work selves between males and females. No statistically significant relationships were found between work role salience socioeconomic position, and a t-test indicated no statistical differences in work role salience between males and females. Finally, the results of a canonical correlation analysis suggest that each of the five dimensions of work possible selves discrepancies (the differences between hoped for work selves and expected work selves on the five dimensions of Ability Utilization, Achievement, Autonomy, Personal Development, and Creativity) were inversely related to satisfaction with life and affective balance. Moreover, this analysis suggested that socioeconomic position was negatively related to work possible selves discrepancies, suggesting that lower socioeconomic position is associated with a higher difference between hoped for and expected work selves.

This study is notable for several reasons. First, the researcher designed a reasonably valid and reliable instrument (WPSQ: Pisarik, 2005) that operationalized and quantified the construct of work possible selves. Second, this study provided empirical evidence that contributes to our understanding of Possible Selves (Markus & Nurius, 1986) in the specific and major life-role of work. Third, the results indicated a relationship between work possible selves and psychological well-being, providing support that vocational development is related to mental health.

The results of this study have important implications for counseling practice, counselor education, and future empirical counseling research. Counselors now have empirical evidence of the relationships among career development, psychological well-being, and socioeconomic position. These results can guide their career assessment processes and their career counseling interventions. Counselor educators now have new and important empirical information to guide the training and education of counselors. Specifically, counselor educators can focus training on possible effects the vocational choice process may have on psychological well-being. Further research is needed to improve the Work Possible Selves Questionnaire, and to explore additional factors that contribute to the relationship between work possible selves and psychological well-being.

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APPENDIX A

EDUCATIONAL – OCCUPATIONAL STATUS QUESTIONNAIRE

Educational-Occupational Status Questionnaire

DIRECTIONS: Please answer all of the following questions to the best of your ability. The first page asks for detailed information about your age, ethnicity, education and employment. The second page asks about the education and occupation of your mother, father and spouse. References to "*mother*" and "*father*"mean any adult or adults who provided financial support for your family when you were young. For instance, for you it may mean a legal guardian, grandparent or stepparent.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. How old are you? _____

2. What is your gender? male female

3. What is your ethnicity?
   - ❑ African American
   - ❑ Asian-American
   - ❑ Caucasian
   - ❑ Hispanic-American
   - ❑ Native-American
   - ❑ Pacific Islander
   - ❑ Multi-racial (a descendent of more than one of the above)
   - ❑ other (please specify) _____

4. How much schooling have you completed? (Check one)
   - ❑ Less than 8th Grade
   - ❑ Junior High/Middle School (9th grade)
   - ❑ Partial High School (10th or 11th grade)
   - ❑ High School Graduate
   - ❑ Partial College (at least one year)
   - ❑ College Degree (2 year or 4 year)
   - ❑ Graduate Degree (MS, MA, PhD or MD)
   - ❑ Graduate Degree (MS, MA, PhD or MD)

5. How many credit hours are you taking this semester? _____

6. Are you working toward a
   - ❑ bachelors degree
   - ❑ associates degree, or
   - ❑ certificate

7. Specifically, what is your educational goal? _____

   _____

8. Are you currently employed? YES NO
   (If NO: use your most recent position to answer the following questions.)

9. What is your job title or position? Please be as specific as possible. (**For example: if you work in a grocery store, name your job, such as, cashier, shift manager, or baker**)

   _____

10. How long have you worked in this position? _____

11. Approximately, how many hours per week do you spend working at your job? _____

12. Do you think of yourself as being financially independent from your *parent(*s)? YES NO

FAMILY INFORMATION

13. How much schooling has your ***mother*** achieved? (Check one)

- ❑ Less than 7th Grade
- ❑ Junior High/Middle School (9th grade)
- ❑ Partial High School (10th or 11th grade)
- ❑ High School Graduate
- ❑ Partial College (at least one year)
- ❑ 2 Year College Degree
- ❑ 4 Year College Degree
- ❑ Graduate Degree (MS, MA, PhD or MD)

14. When you were sixteen years old, what occupation did your ***mother*** have, if any? Please be as specific as possible. (**For example if she worked in a mill, name her job, such as, mill worker, machine operator, or supervisor**)

Mother's job title: _____

15. How much schooling has your ***father*** achieved? (Check one)

- ❑ Less than 7th Grade
- ❑ Junior High/Middle School (9th grade)
- ❑ Partial High School (10th or 11th grade)
- ❑ High School Graduate
- ❑ Partial College (at least one year)
- ❑ 2 Year College Degree
- ❑ 4 Year College Degree
- ❑ Graduate Degree (MS, MA, PhD or MD)

16. When you were 16 years old, what occupation did your ***father*** have, if any? Please give specific as possible. (**For example, if he worked for the City of Greensboro, name his job, such as mayor, civil engineer, heavy equipment operator**)

Father's job title: _____

17. Do you have a spouse or domestic partner? YES NO (If NO, you are finished!)

18. How much schooling has your spouse achieved? (Check one)

- ❑ Less than 7th Grade
- ❑ Junior High/Middle School (9th grade)
- ❑ Partial High School (10th or 11th grade)
- ❑ High School Graduate
- ❑ Partial College (at least one year)
- ❑ 2 Year College Degree
- ❑ 4 Year College Degree
- ❑ Graduate Degree (MS, MA, PhD or MD)

19. What is your spouse's occupation or job title, if any? Please be as specific as possible. **(For example, certified nursing assistant, or registered nurse)**

Spouses Job title: _____

20. Do you share financial responsibility with your spouse? YES NO

APPENDIX B

WORK POSSIBLE SELVES QUESTIONNAIRE

DIRECTIONS:

Work Possible Selves Questionnaire

This questionnaire addresses how you see yourself in the future in terms of work. Many people imagine themselves in the future. When doing so, they imagine the kinds of experiences that they might have, and the kinds of people they might possibly become. When we imagine the type of work we hope to do, we are imagining our **"hoped-for work selves."** This image is more than just a job. It includes many things such as the environment we hope to be in, the activities we hope to be doing, and the meaning we hope the work will hold for us. Our hoped-for work selves can be an image of ourselves in the **"ideal job", or perhaps doing the work we would most want to do, if there was nothing in our way**. For example, some people may hope to be a doctor some day, and thus imagine doing the work of a doctor.

PART I:

Please take a moment to imagine your **Hoped-for Work Self**.

Describe your **Hoped-for Work Self**.

Work Possible Selves Questionnaire

Below are five statements about hoped-for work selves.

- Read each statement carefully
- Rank each statement in terms of the extent to which they reflect your hoped-for self.
- Use the number 1 for the statement which most reflects your hoped-for self.
- Use the number 5 for the statement that least reflects your hoped-for self.

For example a ranking of your hoped-for family selves might look like this

I hope to do be interacting with my family in a way that…	
4	allows me to teach my family new things
3	allows me to feel connected to my family members
2	allows me to get involved in my community
5	allows me to be physically active
1	offers me a sense of personal meaning

Now rank the following statements about your **hoped-for work self**

You will find some of the rankings more difficult to make than others, but it is important that you rank every statement.

I hope to do be doing work that…	
	allows me to use my abilities, skills, or talents
	allows me to take pride in my accomplishments
	allows me to work independently
	allows me to be creative
	offers me a sense of personal meaning

Work Possible Selves Questionnaire

Part I: Hopes

On the following pages are some questions about your **hoped-for work selves**. Think about how well the following statements describe the image you have of what your hopes are in terms of work, and circle one of the numbers from 1 to 7 for each statement: It is important that you complete each item.

As an example, think about the statement:

	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Reasonable well	Very much	Exactly
I hope to be doing work that will make me proud.	1	2	3	4	5	(6)	7

Circling the 7 means the statement describes the hoped-for work self very much.

Now, choose how much each statement reflects your hoped for work self.

Begin Here:

My Hoped-for Work Self…	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Reasonable well	Very much	Exactly
1. requires the use of my skills.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. provides me with results that show I have done well.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. offers me opportunities to make my own decisions at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. allows me to develop as a person.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. will be developing or designing new things.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. will be doing work that will take full advantage of my unique abilities.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. will be doing work in which my efforts will show.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. allows me to be free to perform my work in my own way.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. provides an opportunity to find personal satisfaction in my work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. allows me to be creating something new in my work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. offers me opportunities to develop my abilities.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. allows me to reach a high standard in my work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. allows me to figure things out for myself at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. provides me opportunities to gain new experiences from work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Work Possible Selves Questionnaire

	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Reasonable well	Very much	Exactly
15. gives me a chance to try out new ideas at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. will require me to think.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. will give me the feeling I have really achieved something at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. allows me to set my own goals at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. will give me a chance to do things I enjoy every day.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. will require me to find answers to complex problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. will require me to tackle problems that are completely new to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22. provides an opportunity to find out how good I can be in my work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23. allows me to be responsible for deciding how to get my work done.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24. will be a self-rewarding experience.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25. will allow me to have an outlet for self-expression.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26. includes work activities that will give me a chance to learn new things.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27. includes doing work that will be challenging.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28. provides opportunities to exercise my own judgment at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29. includes work activities will not go against my conscience.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30. provides opportunities for creativity.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
31. provides opportunities at work to do the things I do best.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
32. offers me a sense of accomplishment in the type of work I do.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33. allows me to be free to set my own schedule at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
34. provides me an opportunity to do meaningful work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
35. includes opportunities to participate in brainstorming sessions at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

PART II: Expectations

We may realize that we will not be able to become any of our hoped-for work self, thus we may picture ourselves in the work we **expect** to be doing in the future, given our current life situation. These images are our **"expected work selves."** For example, many people recognize that they will not become a doctor even though it is their ideal. Therefore, they may envision themselves working in the medical field, but in a job other than a doctor, perhaps as an emergency medical technician (EMT).

When we imagine the type of work we **expect** to do given our current life situation, we are imagining our "**Expected-Work Selves"**. Our expected-work selves reflect what we think is most likely to happen in our work future. This image is more than just a job. It includes many things such as the environment we expect be in, the activities we expect to be doing, and the meaning we expect the work will hold for us.

Please take a moment to imagine one or more of your **Expected-Work Selves**.

Describe these **Expected-Work Selves**.

Work Possible Selves Questionnaire

Below are five statements about expected-work selves.

- Read each statement carefully
- Rank each statement in terms of the extent to which they reflect your expected-work self.
- Use the number 1 for the statement which most reflects your expected-work self.
- Use the number 5 for the statement that least reflects your expected-work self.

For example a ranking of your expected family selves might look like this

I expect to do be interacting with my family in a way that…	
4	allows me to teach my family new things
3	allows me to feel connected to my family members
2	allows me to get involved in my community
5	allows me to be physically active
1	offers me a sense of personal meaning

Now rank the following statements about your **expected-work self**

You will find some of the rankings more difficult to make than others, but it is important that you rank every statement.

I Expect to do be doing work that…	
	allows me to use my abilities, skills, or talents
	allows me to take pride in my accomplishments
	allows me to work independently
	allows me to be creative
	offers me a sense of personal meaning

Work Possible Selves Questionnaire

Part II: Expectations

On the following pages are some questions about your Expected **work selves**. Think about how well the following statements describe the image you have of what your expectations are in terms of work, and circle one of the numbers from 1 to 7 for each statement: It is important that you complete each item.

As an example, think about the statement:

	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Reasonable well	Very much	Exactly
I expect to be doing work that will make me proud.	1	2	3	4	5	(6)	7

Circling the 7 means the statement describes the expected work self very much.

Now, choose how much each statement reflects your Expected work self.

Begin Here:

My Expected Work Self…	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Reasonable well	Very much	Exactly
1. requires the use of my skills.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. provides me with results that show I have done well.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. offers me opportunities to make my own decisions at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. allows me to develop as a person.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. will be developing or designing new things.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. will be doing work that will take full advantage of my unique abilities.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. will be doing work in which my efforts will show.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. allows me to be free to perform my work in my own way.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. provides an opportunity to find personal satisfaction in my work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. allows me to be creating something new in my work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. offers me opportunities to develop my abilities.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. allows me to reach a high standard in my work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. allows me to figure things out for myself at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. provides me opportunities to gain new experiences from work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Work Possible Selves Questionnaire

	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Reasonable well	Very much	Exactly
50. gives me a chance to try out new ideas at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
51. will require me to think.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
52. will give me the feeling I have really achieved something at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
53. allows me to set my own goals at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
54. will give me a chance to do things I enjoy every day.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
55. will require me to find answers to complex problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
56. will require me to tackle problems that are completely new to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
57. provides an opportunity to find out how good I can be in my work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
58. allows me to be responsible for deciding how to get my work done.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
59. will be a self-rewarding experience.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
60. will allow me to have an outlet for self-expression.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
61. includes work activities that will give me a chance to learn new things.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
62. includes doing work that will be challenging.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
63. provides opportunities to exercise my own judgment at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
64. includes work activities will not go against my conscience.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
65. provides opportunities for creativity.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
66. provides opportunities at work to do the things I do best.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
67. offers me a sense of accomplishment in the type of work I do.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
68. allows me to be free to set my own schedule at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
69. provides me an opportunity to do meaningful work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
70. includes opportunities to participate in brainstorming sessions at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

APPENDIX C

WORK CENTRALITY QUESTIONNAIRE

Work Centrality Questionnaire

(Paullay, Alliger, & Stone-Romero, 1994)

DIRECTIONS:
Below are a number of statements each of which you may agree or disagree with depending on **your own personal evaluation of work in general, without reference to your present job.** Please indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with each statement by circling one of the numbers representing the following responses.

RESPONSES ARE AS FOLLOWS:
1 = STRONGLY AGREE
2 = AGREE
3 = MILDLY AGREE
4 = MILDLY DISAGREE
5 = DISAGREE
6 = STRONGLY DISAGREE

		STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	MILDLY AGREE	MILDLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1.	Only a small part of one's life should be focused on work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2.	In my view, an individual's personal life goals should be oriented towards work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3.	Life is worth living only when people get absorbed in work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4.	The major satisfaction in my life comes from my work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5.	The most important things that happen to me involve my work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6.	I have other activities in life that are more important than work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7.	Work should be considered central to life.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8.	To me, work is only a small part of who I am.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9.	Most things in life are more important than work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10.	Overall, I consider work to be very central to my existence.	1	2	3	4	5	6

APPENDIX D

SATISFACTION WITH LIFE SCALE

Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS)

(Diener, E., Emmons, R., Larsen, J., & Griffin, S., 1985)

DIRECTIONS: Below are five statements that you may agree or disagree with. Using the 1 - 7 sca le below indicate your agreement with each item by circling the appropriate number on the line preceding that item. Please be open and honest in your responding.

RESPONSES ARE AS FOLLOWS:
1 = STRONGLY DISAGREE
2 = DISAGREE
3 = SLIGHTLY DISAGREE
4 = NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE
5 = SLIGHTLY AGREE
6 = AGREE
7 = STRONGLY AGREE

		STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	SLIGHTLY DIS AGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	SLIGHTLY AGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
1.	In most ways my life is close to my ideal.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	The conditions of my life are excellent.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	I am satisfied with my life.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.	So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.	If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

APPENDIX E

DEPRESSION – HAPPINESS SCALE

The Depression-Happiness Scale (DHS)

(McGreal & Joseph, 1993)

DIRECTIONS: Below are twenty-five statements that you may agree or disagree with. T hink about how you have felt during the last seven days. Using the 0 - 3 scale below indi cate your agreement with each item by circling the appropriate number on the line precedi ng that item. Please be open and honest in your responding.

RESPONSES ARE AS FOLLOWS:
0 = NEVER
1 = RARELY
2 = SOMETIMES
3 = OFTEN

		NEVER	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN
1.	I felt sad.	0	1	2	3
2.	I felt I had failed as a person.	0	1	2	3
3.	I felt dissatisfied with my life.	0	1	2	3
4.	I felt mentally alert.	0	1	2	3
5.	I felt disappointed with myself.	0	1	2	3
6.	I felt cheerful	0	1	2	3
7.	I felt life wasn't worth living.	0	1	2	3
8.	I felt satisfied with my life.	0	1	2	3
9.	I felt healthy	0	1	2	3
10.	I felt like crying.	0	1	2	3
11.	I felt I had been successful.	0	1	2	3
12.	I felt happy.	0	1	2	3
13.	I felt I couldn't make a decision.	0	1	2	3

		NEVER	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN
14.	I felt unattractive.	0	1	2	3
15.	I felt optimistic about the future.	0	1	2	3
16.	I felt life was rewarding.	0	1	2	3
17.	I felt sluggish.	0	1	2	3
18.	I felt cheerless.	0	1	2	3
19.	I felt life had a purpose.	0	1	2	3
20.	I felt too tired to do anything.	0	1	2	3
21.	I felt pleased with the way I am.	0	1	2	3
22.	I found it easy to make decisions.	0	1	2	3
23.	I felt life was enjoyable.	0	1	2	3
24.	I felt life was meaningless.	0	1	2	3
25.	I felt run down.	0	1	2	3

APPENDIX F

PILOT STUDY AND MAIN STUDY INFORMED CONSENT AND ENCLOSED INSTRUCTIONS

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
GREENSBORO

Consent Form

Project Title: The Relationship among Work Possible Selves, Work Role Salience, Socioeconomic Position, and Psychological Well-being of Individuals in Early Adulthood.
Project Director: Chris Pisarik
Your Name: _____
Today's Date: _____/_____/_____

DESCRIPTION AND EXPLANATION OF PROCEEDURES:
I am a doctoral student at UNCG, and you have been invited to take part in my dissertation study. You will be asked to reflect on the hopes and expectations you may have for yourself in relation to work. The purpose of this study is to determine the relationship among individuals' hopes and expectations for work, the importance individuals place on work, and psychological well-being. You are being included in this study because you are a student at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and you are between the ages of 20-35.

As a participant in this research study you will be asked to sign and date two copies of this informed consent form (one copy of which you will keep). You will also be asked to complete a demographic questionnaire, and four paper-and-pencil instruments. After you complete the instrument packet, you will place the instruments in envelopes provided by the researcher, seal the envelopes, and return them to the researcher. I expect it will take approximately 40 minutes to read and complete the informed consent forms and the instrument packet. You are free at any time to ask the researcher questions regarding these procedures. You are also free to withdraw from this study at any time.

RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS:
There are no risks or discomforts associated with your participation in this study.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS:
There are no direct benefits to you. However, information from this study will help counselors, and others who work with young adults, understand how to provide more effective career services.

CONSENT:
By signing this form, you agree that you understand the procedures, risks, and benefits of the study. You are free to refuse to participate or to withdraw your consent to participate in this study at any time without penalty or prejudice. Your participation is entirely voluntary. Your privacy will be protected because you will not be identified by name as a participant in this project. Nor will your college be identified by name in any publication regarding this study. No names or other identifying information will be used in any publication or presentation of the results. Your responses will be kept confidential, and the instruments, data, and consent form will be destroyed by shredding three years after this project is completed.

The research and this consent form have been approved by the University of North Carolina at Greensboro Institutional Review Board, which insures that research involving people follows federal regulations. Questions regarding your rights as a participant can be answered by calling Dr. Eric Allen at (336) 256-1482. Questions regarding the research itself can be answered by calling me, Chris Pisarik, at (336) 272-2114, or e-mailing me at cpisarik@aol.com If new information develops during the project, it will be provided to you if the information might affect your willingness to continue your participation in the study. By signing this form, you are agreeing to participate in the project described to you by me, Chris Pisarik.

_____ _____
Signature of Participant Date

Enclosed Instructions

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study! In this envelope you should find:

- Three surveys
- A sharpened pencil

All responses should be made directly on the surveys. It is very important that you carefully read the directions on each survey. Try not to spend too much time thinking about each item, instead respond with your first reaction.

If you have any questions about any items, please note them by making comments directly on the surveys. Mr. Pisarik can help you if you are confused by the instructions or need help filling in your responses on the surveys. However, he will not be able to answer any questions about the survey.

When you have completed three surveys, place all the completed materials back into the envelope and return it to Mr. Pisarik.

When you are ready to proceed, you will be given a second envelope in which you will find:

- The Work Possible Selves Questionnaire
- Educational-Occupational Questionnaire

I will read the instructions for the Work Possible Selves Questionnaire aloud while you read it to yourself. Again all responses should be made directly on the surveys. If you have any questions about any items, please note them by making comments directly on the surveys. It is extremely important that you answer all of the questions on the educational-occupational questionnaire as specifically as possible, so please take extra care when completing this questionnaire.

When you have completed the two questionnaires, place them back into the envelope and return it to Mr. Pisarik. Than, enjoy a snack!!

Thank you for your time!!!

APPENDIX G

PILOT STUDY

Pilot Study

During the last decade, career development researchers have been called upon to examine the vocational development process of individuals from low socioeconomic positions, and to examine the role of work in relation to mental health and well-being (Blustein, 2001; Herr, 1989; Richardson, 1993; Savickas, 1993). Few researchers within the career development field have responded to these calls (Blustein; Brown et al., 1996). Consequently, there is little knowledge about the meaning and significance of the role of work in the lives of individuals from low socioeconomic positions. This lack of knowledge leads to counseling practice and counselor training entrenched in a middle class perspective, to the detriment of individuals from low socioeconomic positions. It also leads to counselor training, practice, and research that do not consider the connection between career and the mental health issues of clients.

Literature Review

In early adulthood, individuals create future-based images of themselves in work that reflect their hopes. They assess and adjust these hoped-for images of the self as they face current realities and opportunities. This ultimately leads to the formation of images of the self that reflect realistic expectations (Ginzberg, 1984; Gottfredson, 1981; Holland, 1997; Super, 1990). Through this process individuals attempt to choose and commit to work which approximates their ideal images as closely as possible. By doing so, individuals implement a self-concept through work (Super, 1954; 1961; 1990). This process is thought to be relatively benign when vocational opportunities are abundant and individuals' hopes are closely aligned to their expectations. There is some speculation,

however, that it can have potential negative effects on individuals' psychological well-being when few acceptable vocational options exist (Gottfredson, 1996).

Vocational development theorists have been aware of the effect individuals' socioeconomic positions have on vocational development in early adulthood (Gottfredson, 1981; Hogan & Astone, 1986; Holland, 1997; Super, 1990). The large body of research generated by the status-attainment model (see Hotchkiss & Borow, 1996 for a review of the research) has consistently supported the theory that the socioeconomic status of individuals' parents shapes vocational aspirations, which in turn influences eventual vocational attainment. Essentially, vocational attainment is influenced by a socializing process in which individuals' aspirations and expectation are passed down (Mortimer, 1996).

Some researchers suggest that examining vocational hopes and expectations as distinct concepts can provide insights into the influence of socioeconomic variables on individuals' views of their circumstances and future opportunities (Baly, 1989; Hellenga et al., 2002; Mickelson, 1990). Markus and Nurius (1986) presented the concept of "possible selves" as a way of conceptualizing hopes and expectations regarding the self. Recently, researchers have begun using the concept of "possible selves" (Markus & Nurius, 1986) to measure individuals' vocational hopes and expectations as distinct constructs (Robinson, Davis, & Meara, 2003; Yowell, 2002), thus implicitly supporting the notion of work possible selves. For the purposes of this study, work possible selves are future images that represent hopes and expectations for the expression and implementation of the self in work as depicted by personally held intrinsic work values.

In addition to its influence on vocational hopes and dreams, socioeconomic position has been shown to influence work role salience (Blustein et al., 2002; Chaves, et al., 2004; Kanter, 1977). People who perceive few opportunities for psychological fulfillment at work tend to view work as less salient, and seek fulfillment in other roles (Blustein et al.; Chaves et al; Kanter).

Researchers also have found that work role salience has direct effects on psychological well-being (Martire et al., 2000), and can serve to moderate the relationship between factors such as socioeconomic position, and psychological well-being (Gecas & Seff, 1990; Martire et al.). The more salient a role is, the more meaning, purpose, and behavioral guidance will be derived from the role (Markus & Wurf, 1987; Thoits, 1992), and the more influence it will have on psychological well-being (Kanungo, 1982; Markus & Nurius, 1986; Martire et al.; Super, 1990; Thoits, 1992).

Individuals' appraisals of psychological well-being reflect discrepancies in self-conceptions (Higgins, 1987; Markus & Nurius, 1986; Michalos, 1985), and that affect is associated with future-based cognitions regarding the self (Beck, Rush, Shaw, & Emery, 1979). Michalos (1985) posits that psychological well-being is determined by discrepancies between what individuals believe they currently have, and a set of aspirations (e.g., what they want, what they expect to have in the future, what they believe they need). Michalos found that multiple discrepancy theory could account for about 50 percent of the variance in ratings of happiness and life satisfaction. Similarly, Higgins proposed that discrepancies between ideal and current self-conceptions are related to negative affective states. Psychological well-being is commonly

conceptualized as having two primary components: individuals' subjective judgments about their level of satisfaction with life (life satisfaction), and the extent to which their positive affect outweighs negative affect in their lives (affective balance; Diener, 1984). Research has supported the relationship between distinct patterns of self-concept discrepancies and one or both of these aspects of psychological well-being (Allen, Woolfolk, Gara, & Apter, 1996; Ogilvie, 1987; Penland et al., 2000; Scott & O'Hara, 1993).

Knowledge regarding the relationships among hopes and expectations of self in work, work role salience, socioeconomic position, and psychological well-being assume vital importance when we consider the number of individuals in the U.S. who live near or below poverty. There were close to 47 million individuals below 125% of the official poverty threshold in the United States in 2004, or 16.5 percent of the U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005). Many of these individuals encounter some form of career guidance and counseling during high school or during participation in programs designed to upgrade employment skills, retrain workers, or augment academic skills (Katsinas, Grace, & Short, 1999). Yet career development researchers have given little effort to examining the psychological consequences these individuals may experience as they engage in the vocational choice process (Brown et al., 1996; Chaves et al., 2004). This study is a preliminary investigation, as part of a larger study of the relationships among work possible selves, work role salience, socioeconomic positive, and psychological well-being.

The following research questions form the basis for the larger study: 1) Are there significant differences in the five dimensions of hoped-for work selves based on socioeconomic position and gender?; 2) Are there significant differences in the five dimensions of expected work selves based on socioeconomic position and gender?; 3) Is there a significant difference in work role salience based on socioeconomic position and gender?; 4) Are there significant differences in the five dimensions of work possible selves discrepancies between individuals from low socioeconomic positions and individuals from middle socioeconomic positions?; 5) Are there relationships between each of the five dimensions of work possible selves discrepancies and life satisfaction?; 6) Are there relationships between each of the work possible selves discrepancies and affective balance?; 7) What proportion of the variance in life satisfaction is accounted for by the following: the five dimensions of work possible selves discrepancies, work role salience, and socioeconomic position?: 8) What proportion of the variance in affective balance is accounted for by the following: the five dimensions of work possible selves discrepancies, work role salience, and socioeconomic position? To inform the larger study, a pilot study was designed with the following four purposes: 1) to test the procedures for the larger study, including the time required for completing the instrumentation, and the ease and clarity of the testing procedures, 2) to obtain reliability statistics on the WPSQ (Pisarik, 2005), WCQ (Paullay et al., 1994), DHS (McGreal & Joseph, 1993), and the SWLS Diener et al., 1985); 3) to assess the feasibility of differentiating a sample using the Educational – Occupational Status Questionnaire and the criteria for low and middle socioeconomic positions; and, 4) to determine if there are

differences in the five dimensions of hoped-for work selves and expected work selves by socioeconomic position. Included in this section is a description of the pilot study participants, the procedures used in data collection, the results of the analyses, and a discussion of the pilot study results, including implications for the larger study.

Method

Participants

Participants for the pilot study included young adults between the ages of 19-35, recruited from developmental English courses at Guilford Technical Community College, (GTCC), and career and personal development courses at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG). The one student who reported being 19 years old stated that her birthday was one month from the date the data was collected. Forty-six individuals completed instrument packets, however eight of the participants were excluded from analysis. Four participants were excluded due to their failure to provide information regarding their parent's occupations or their own occupations on the Educational – Occupational Status Questionnaire. Therefore, the researcher could not determine their socioeconomic position based on the study. Four other participants were excluded because their educational and occupational information placed them between the low socioeconomic category and the middle socioeconomic category delineated by the criteria put forth by the researcher in Chapter 3 of the larger study. The criteria for categorizing the participants by socioeconomic position was developed to allow for a clear categorization into one of two socioeconomic positions, thus, the elimination of 10% of the participants was anticipated by the researcher. After eliminating these

individuals, 38 participants were included in the analyses (82.6% of the total respondents). A summary of the demographic data by socioeconomic position is presented in Table C1.

Table C1.

Selected Demographics of Pilot Study Participants by Socioeconomic Position

Low Socioeconomic Position	N	%	Middle Socioeconomic Position	N	%
GENDER			GENDER		
Female	14	73.6	Female	12	63.2
Male	5	26.4	Male	7	36.8
Total	19	100.0	Total	19	100.0
AGE			AGE		
>20	1	5.3	>20	1	5.3
20-24	7	36.8	20-24	11	57.9
25-29	4	21.1	25-29	5	26.4
30-35	7	36.9	30-35	2	10.6
Total	19	100.0	Total	19	100.0
ETHNICITY			ETHNICITY		
African American	12	63.2	African American	6	31.6
Asian American	1	5.3	Asian American	0	0
Caucasian	1	5.3	Caucasian	12	63.2
Hispanic	1	5.3	Hispanic	0	0
Native American	1	5.3	Native American	0	0
Other	3	15.8	Other	1	5.3
Total	19	100.0	Total	19	100.0

The pilot study sample consisted of 38 participants, of whom twenty-six were female (68%), and 12 were male (32%). The ages of the participants ranged from 19 to 35 (mean = 25.53, *SD* = 5.4). The participants varied in terms of ethnic background: African American, n = 18; Caucasian, n = 13; Hispanic, n = 1; Asian American, n = 1; Native American, n = 1; Other, n = 4. Of the 38 participants included in analyses, 19

were classified by the researcher as low socioeconomic position (LSEP; 50%), and 19 were classified by the researcher as middle socioeconomic position (MSEP; 50%).

Instrumentation

Pilot study participants completed the Educational - Occupational Status Questionnaire which elicited information needed to determine socioeconomic position, the Work Possible Selves Questionnaire (WPSQ; Pisarik, 2005), the Work Centrality Questionnaire (WCQ; Paulley et al., 1994), the Satisfaction with Life Survey (SWLS; Diener et al., 1985), and the Depression/Happiness Scale (DHS; Joseph & Lewis, 1993). The Educational - Occupational Status Questionnaire elicits relevant information about participants' socioeconomic position. It is specifically designed to obtain information needed to determine socioeconomic position based on the educational attainment and occupational attainment of the participants, the participants' families of origin, and the participants' current household. The Work Possible Selves Questionnaire (Pisarik, 2005) that will be used in this study was designed to assess individuals' hopes and individuals' expectations for the expression and implementation of the self in work. Five dimensions depict individuals' hopes and expectations: ability utilization, achievement, autonomy, personal development, and creativity. Each dimension includes seven items, formatted on a 7-point Likert type scale. The WCQ (Paullay, 1994) is a uni-dimensional measure of individuals' cognitive involvement in the role of work. The WCQ is a 10-item scale with responses formatted on a 6-point Likert type scale. The internal consistency of the Work Centrality Questionnaire is reported as moderately high (Cronbach's $\alpha = .80$). The SWLS (Diener et al., 1985) is a one factor, 5-item instrument designed to measure an

individual's cognitive judgment of overall satisfaction with life. Responses are formatted on a 7-point Likert type scale. Diener et al. reported a moderate to high internal consistency (Cronbach's α = .87) for the SWLS. The DHS was constructed by McGreal & Joseph (1993) to assess individuals' subjectively rated affect as measured on a happiness-depression continuum. The DHS is a statistically bipolar self-report scale consisting of 25 items, with responses formatted on a 4-point scale. The initial analysis found the DHS to possess moderately high internal consistency (Cronbach's α = .93). Subsequent studies have also yielded moderately high reliability coefficients (Cronbach's α = .88)

Procedures

Prior to the collection of data, the researcher completed the Institutional Research Board review process for the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. To obtain participants at UNCG, the researcher contacted an instructor teaching CED 210 (Life and Career Planning) to explain the purpose of the research and the nature of the procedures. Permission to survey class members was granted and a date for administration was scheduled. To obtain participants at GTCC the researcher contacted the Director of Institutional Research and Planning, who in turn, contacted several faculty members who teach the aforementioned courses to obtain their approval to conduct research within their class. The Director of Institutional Research and Planning gave the faculty contact information to the researcher. The researcher then contacted the faculty members to arrange to come to their classes on a specific day for data collection.

On the day of data collection, the researcher presented the purpose and nature of the research to each participating class of students. Before administering the instruments, students were informed of the voluntary and anonymous nature of the research and were given an opportunity to decline to participate. Students who could not participate due to the age constraints of the study, or who chose not to participate, were excused from class without penalty. Participants were thanked for their involvement and asked to read and sign two copies of a consent form (Appendix F). After the consent forms were signed, participants returned one copy of the signed consent form to the researcher.

The researcher then read a set of instructions to the participants (Appendix F). Participants were asked to provide written feedback directly on the instruments regarding any ambiguity or confusion related to directions and procedures. The researcher then administered the assessment instruments. The instruments were administered in the following order: the Depressions-Happiness Scale (DHS; Joseph & Lewis, 1993), the Work Centrality Questionnaire (WCQ; Paulley et al., 1994), the Satisfaction with Life Survey (SWLS; Diener et al., 1985, the Work Possible Selves Questionnaire (WPSQ; Pisarik, 2005), and the Educational - Occupational Status Questionnaire. The instruments were arranged in this order to eliminate any potential interaction effects among the instruments. For example, the researcher surmised that the WPSQ would elicit affective responses that could have a potential effect on participants' responses to the DHS, the WCQ, and the SWLS. Further, the sensitivity involved in eliciting participants' socioeconomic information could produce affective responses that might interact with all instruments that might follow it. To further the attempt to eliminate any potential

interaction effects, the instruments were organized and disseminated in two batches. The first batch included the DHS, WCQ, and SWLS.

After participants completed the first batch of instruments, they placed them in the envelope in which they were received, and the researcher collected the envelopes. The researcher then disseminated the second batch, which included the WPSQ and the Educational – Occupational Status Questionnaire. The directions for the WPSQ were read aloud. After the participants completed the instruments, they placed them in the envelopes provided by the researcher, sealed the envelopes, and returned them to the researcher for analysis.

Data Analysis

The completed instruments were collected and the data was entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 13, 2005). Frequency distributions were generated to summarize the study data. The first goal of the pilot study, to determine the time span, ease, and clarity of the testing procedures was addressed through participant feedback and researcher observation. The second goal of the pilot study, to obtain reliability statistics for the assessment instruments used in this study, was evaluated through item analysis. The third goal of the pilot study, to assess the feasibility of categorizing a sample based on the previously presented criteria for socioeconomic position was evaluated by the researcher, who divided the sample of 38 participants into two groups representing low and middle socioeconomic positions as described in Chapter 3. The fourth and final goal of the pilot study, to determine if there are differences between individuals from low socioeconomic positions and middle economic positions

on the five dimensions and two subscales of the WPSQ, was evaluated using a series of t-tests, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) and Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficients.

Results

Results Related to Procedures

In general, it took most participants approximately 20 to 30 minutes to complete all the surveys administered in the pilot study. The data collection procedure in its entirety, including informed consent and instructions, took 30 to 45 minutes. Researcher observations suggested that the participants found the instrumentation procedures and administration straightforward and uncomplicated. This was noted by the timely and organized manner in which participants completed the instruments. Most participants completed the instruments in approximately the same amount of time, within at most 10 minutes of each other. Moreover, during the administration, participants did not show signs of frustration, fatigue, or confusion such as yawning or constant body repositioning.

Results from Participant Feedback

Six participants indicated verbally and through written feedback that they were confused about item number 17 on the Depression – Happiness Scale. Specifically, participants stated that they were not sure about the meaning of the word “lethargic.” In regards to the Educational – Occupational Status Questionnaire, two students commented in writing that they were not certain of their parents’ specific job title, but could describe what their parents did on the job. The four participants that returned incomplete Educational – Occupational Status Questionnaires each responded to the educational

level questions. However they left the occupational questions blank. No feedback was given as to why they did not finish the questionnaire.

The open-ended written sections of the WPSQ provided qualitative data indicating differences in participants' perceptions of the distinction between the hoped-for work selves and expected work selves. Many of the participants' written descriptions indicate that they understood the differences between hoped-for work selves and expected work selves. For example participant #1 stated her hoped-for work self as, "I hope to become a dentist and own my own practice." This same participant stated her expected work self as, "I expect to have a job that is not very meaningful." Participant #4 stated her hoped-for work self as, "I hope to be working in a doctors office as a medical secretary." This participant stated her expected work self as, "I expect to be working in another factory." However, six participants expressed their expected work self in terms of hopes. For example, participant #20 expressed her expected self as, "I 'hope' to be working in a hospital in critical care." Six participants expressed their hoped-for work selves and expected work selves as being congruent. Participant #15 expressed her hoped-for work self as, "My hoped-for work self is to be a nurse." This participant expressed her expected work self as, "I expect to be a nurse and make my own schedule." Participant # 16 his hoped-for work self as, "My hoped-for work self is to be a doctor." This participants' expected work self was expressed as, "I believe that nothing is impossible if you work for it. If you have a dream, just work hard for it."

Results Using Quantitative Data

Descriptive Statistics

Clear delineations existed between the pilot study participants in the low socioeconomic position group LSEP and those in the middle socioeconomic position group MSEP on age and financial independence. The participants in the LSEP group had a mean age of 26.7 years (SD = 5.9), were mostly single (68.4%), and a large majority considered themselves financially independent (73.7%). The participants in the MSEP group were slightly younger with a mean age of 24.2 years (SD = 4.6), and were also mostly single (73.7%). However, a majority considered themselves financially dependent on their parents (63.3%).

Participants were homogenous with respect to their educational standing, in that none of the participants had earned a college degree, and all participants had at least a semester of college. However, the parental educational and occupational backgrounds are quite distinct between the participants in the LSEP group and the MSEP group, as would be expected given the categorization criteria. A summary of educational level of participants' parents is presented in Table C2.

Six participants in the LSEP group reported being married. All of these participants also reported being financially independent from their parents. Among these individuals one reported their spouse's level of educational attainment as partial high school, and five reported their spouses' level of educational attainment as high school. Five participants in the MSEP group reported being married. Four of these individuals reported being financially independent from their parents. Among these individuals two

reported their spouses' level of educational attainment as two or four-year college degree, and two reported their spouses' level of educational attainment as graduate or professional degree. The one individual who reported being married and financially dependent on their parents reported their spouse's level of educational attainment as partial high school.

Table C2.

Participants' Parental Educational Attainment by Socioeconomic Position – Pilot Study

Low Socioeconomic Position	N	%	Middle Socioeconomic Position	N	%
HIGHEST PARENTAL EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT			HIGHEST PARENTAL EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT		
Less than 7th Grade	3	15.7	Less than 7th Grade	0	0.0
Junior High/Middle School (9th Grade)	1	5.0	Junior High/Middle School (9th Grade)	0	0.0
Partial High School (10th or 11th Grade	3	15.7	Partial High School (10th or 11th Grade	0	0.0
High School	9	47.3	High School	2	10.5
Partial College (at least 1 year)	3	15.7	Partial College (at least 1 year)	0	0.0
College Degree (2 yr. Or 4 yr.)	0	0.0	College Degree (2 yr. Or 4 yr.)	11	57.9
Graduate or Professional Degree (MA, PhD, JD, MD)	0	0.0	Graduate or Professional Degree (MA, PhD, JD, MD)	6	31.6
Total	19	100.0	Total	19	100.0

Among the participants in the LSEP group, the SEI scores ranged from 26 to 39 (mean = 34.4; *SD* = 3.9). Three participants reported being unemployed. The highest SEI scores reported for the parents of participants in the LSEP group ranged from 20

(mill worker) to 39 (truck driver; mean = 31.4; *SD* = 5.2). Among the participants in the MSEP group, the SEI scores ranged from 29 (home health aid) to 65 (certified pharmacy technician; mean = 39; *SD* = 9.1). Six individuals in the MSEP group reported that they did not work. The highest SEI scores reported for the parents of participants in the MSEP group ranged from 49 (dye house supervisor) to 92 (lawyer; mean = 71.3; *SD* = 12.2)

Instrument Psychometric Data

Means, medians, and standard deviations were calculated for all scales and subscales administered in the pilot study. All values, including possible minimum and maximum scores of the scales, and the actual minimum and maximum scores from the pilot study participants are presented in Table C3. The descriptive data shows negatively skewed distributions of scores for each of the WPSQ subscales as well as the scale totals. Moreover, the mode for each of the WPSQ scales and subscales is 49, which is the maximum scale.

Based on pilot study data, reliability analysis of the five dimensions of the WPSQ subscales produced coefficient alphas ranging from .83 to .94, with an alpha of .95 for total Hoped-for selves, and .96 for total Expected selves. All instrument and subscale alphas are reported in Table C4. The inter-correlation coefficients among the five dimensions of both the hoped-for work selves and the expected work selves were calculated. The hoped-for work selves and expected work selves inter-scale correlations are reported in Table C5.

Table C3.

Instrument Descriptives – Pilot Study

Scale/Subscale	Mean	Median	*SD*	Scale Min	Scale Max	Pilot Min	Pilot Max
Hoped-for Work Selves: Ability-Utilization	45.12	46.00	3.90	7	49	34	49
Hoped-for Work Selves: Achievement	45.68	48.00	4.14	7	49	33	49
Hoped-for Work Selves: Autonomy	44.55	45.50	5.10	7	49	29	49
Hoped-for Work Selves: Personal Development	45.74	48.00	4.52	7	49	32	49
Hoped-for Work Selves: Creativity	42.76	43.50	4.97	7	49	32	49
Hoped-for Work Selves: Total	223.95	230.50	20.69	35	245	170	245
Expected Work Selves: Ability Utilization	41.74	43.50	7.41	7	49	19	49
Expected Work Selves: Achievement	43.18	45.00	7.04	7	49	19	49
Expected Work Selves: Autonomy	39.26	40.50	9.10	7	49	18	49
Expected Work Selves: Personal Development	42.08	45.00	7.80	7	49	18	49
Expected Work Selves: Creativity	38.73	39.50	9.11	7	49	19	49
Expected Work Selves: Total	204.52	212.00	38.8	35	245	94	245
Work Centrality Questionnaire	27.73	27.00	6.12	10	60	14	41
Satisfaction with Life Survey	22.39	23.00	6.76	5	35	5	34
Depression – Happiness Survey	48.63	49.50	12.37	0	75	18	72

Table C4.

Instrument and Subscale – Coefficient Alphas

Instruments and Subscales	Number of Items	Alpha
Hoped-for Work Selves: Ability Utilization	7	.85
Hoped-for Work Selves: Achievement	7	.90
Hoped-for Work Selves: Autonomy	7	.90
Hoped-for Work Selves: Personal Development	7	.89
Hoped-for Work Selves: Creativity	7	.83
Hoped-for Work Selves: Total	35	.95
Expected Work Selves: Ability Utilization	7	.93
Expected Work Selves: Achievement	7	.94
Expected Work Selves: Autonomy	7	.94
Expected Work Selves: Personal Development	7	.94
Expected Work Selves: Creativity	7	.94
Expected Work Selves: Total	35	.96
Work Centrality Questionnaire	10	.71
Satisfaction with Life Survey	5	.82
Depression – Happiness Survey	25	.93

Results of Statistical Analyses

The researcher computed a series of t-tests to examine whether the five dimensions of hoped-for work selves were significantly different than the five dimensions of expected work selves. Results indicate significant differences for each of the dimensions between hoped-for work selves and expected work selves. Results of the t-tests are reported in Table C6.

Table C5.

Correlations and Disattenuated Correlations Among Hoped-for Work Selves and Expected Work Selves Subscales – Pilot Study

	Ability Utilization	Achievement	Autonomy	Personal Development	Creativity
			Hoped-for Work Selves		
Ability Utilization	**.85**	.95**	.97**	1.00**	.98**
Achievement	.83**	**.90**	.77**	1.00**	.81**
Autonomy	.84**	.69**	**.90**	.86**	.90**
Personal Development	.88**	.91**	.78**	**.89**	.83**
Creativity	.83**	.70**	.78**	.71**	**.83**
			Expected Work Selves		
Ability Utilization	**.93**	1.00**	.94**	1.00**	.99**
Achievement	.94**	**.94**	.88**	.99**	.91**
Autonomy	.88**	.83**	**.94**	.94**	.98**
Personal Development	.95**	.93**	.89**	**.94**	.97**
Creativity	.91**	.81**	.91**	.90**	**.90**

**Significant at .01 level (2-tailed)

Note. The lower triangle contains Pearson Product Moment correlations among Hoped-for Work Selves subscales; the upper triangle contains disattenuated correlation coefficients; the diagonal is comprised of the alpha coefficients for the respective scale or subscale.

The researcher computed a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) to test whether there were significant mean differences on the five dimensions of hoped-for work selves and expected work selves by gender and socioeconomic position. No

significant differences were found. However, due to the small sample size (n = 36), these results are inconclusive.

Table C6.

Differences Among Hoped-for and Expected Work Selves Dimension Scores – Pilot Study

	Hoped-for		Expected				
Dimensions	Mean	*SD*	Mean	*SD*	df	t-value	P<t
Ability Utilization	45.21	3.90	41.73	7.41	37	3.61	.001*
Achievement	45.68	4.14	43.18	7.03	37	2.56	.014*
Autonomy	44.55	5.10	39.26	9.10	37	3.79	.001*
Personal Development	45.73	4.52	42.07	7.79	37	3.10	.004*
Creativity	42.76	4.97	38.73	9.11	37	3.42	.002*

* Significant at .05 level (2-tailed)

Discussion

The larger study, of which this pilot is a part, is designed to examine the relationship among work possible selves, work role salience, socioeconomic position and psychological well-being for individuals in early adulthood. The four goals of this pilot study were to test administration procedures, to obtain instrument internal consistency values for the pilot sample, to test the procedures to be used for differentiating the sample into two socioeconomic positions, and to examine differences in work possible selves by socioeconomic position for the pilot study.

The first goal of the pilot study was to test the data collection procedures for the main study, including the time span for completing the instrumentation, and the ease and

clarity of the testing procedures. The findings indicate that the data collection procedures were straightforward and uncomplicated, rendering the data collection process as a relatively easy process for the researcher and the participants. Although the researcher was able to obtain the targeted sample size, to assure maximum participation and participant enthusiasm for the main study, the researcher will make one modification the procedures. Each participant will be entered into a drawing for a $50.00 gift certificate. An entry form for the gift certificate will be included in the instrument packet. This decision was derived from feedback that was given by various community college instructors who granted the researcher permission to enter into their classrooms to collect data.

The qualitative and quantitative data suggest that several revisions needed to be made to the instruments used in the pilot study. The Depression–Happiness scale was found to contain one word which participants indicated confusion interpreting. Thus, item number 17 on the Depression – Happiness scale was changed from, “I felt lethargic”, to “I felt sluggish.”

Several revisions to the WPSQ resulted from the pilot study results, and procedural adjustments will be made for the main study. First, the hoped-for work selves and expected work selves sections will be distributed separately to offer participants a physical and mental cue that they are two separate concepts. Second, the following directions to the WPSQ have been changed slightly to delineate the differences between the concepts of hoped-for work selves and expected work selves more clearly: “We may realize that we will not be able to become our hoped-for work self, thus we may picture

ourselves in the job we **expect** to be doing in the future, **given our current life situation**." "Our hoped-for work selves can be an image of ourselves in the **"ideal job",** or perhaps doing the work we really want to do **if we faced no obstacles."** The original wording did not contain the phrase "given our current life situation," or the phrase "if we faced no obstacles." Third, in an attempt to increase the variability of responses to the WPSQ, each possible response will be given the following descriptors: 1 = not at all; 2 = slightly; 3 = somewhat; 4 = moderately; 5 = reasonably well; 6 = very much; 7 = completely.

The second goal of the pilot study was to obtain instrument internal consistency values for the pilot sample. Moderately high to high alpha coefficients were reported for each of the four instruments and for each of the five dimensions of the Work Possible selves Questionnaire subscales. Further, inter-correlations coefficients were calculated for each of the five dimensions of the Work Possible Selves subscales. The correlations were relatively high and all were significant. This pattern suggests that each scale may not be measuring an independent component of the work possible selves construct. However, any interpretation should be made with caution given the small size of the pilot study sample.

The descriptive data shows negatively skewed distributions of scores for each of the WPSQ subscales as well as the scale totals. The research regarding work values and vocational aspirations suggests one possible explanation for these results. As reported in chapter two of this study, research indicates that intrinsic work values tend to be reported by individuals as very important. Moreover, they tend to remain relatively high in

importance for individuals as they enter into early adulthood, where as extrinsic and social work values tend to become less important. Further, when interpreted in conjunction with the qualitative data reported by pilot study participants, the preponderance of high scores on the five dimensions of the hoped-for work selves seems to confirm Merton's (1968) and Michelson's (1990) assertion that hopes are reflective of the "American Dream."

The skewed distributions may also be a result of the test construction, specifically the lack of response descriptors for each number value on the instruments numeric scale, and the socially desirable nature of most of the items within the Work Possible Selves Questionnaire. As mentioned, descriptors will be added to the WPSQ to attempt to produce a larger distribution of scores. Moreover, the sample for the main study will include individuals from a more diverse spectrum of college courses, therefore including individuals with more diverse academic interests, and work values.

The third goal for conducting the pilot study was to assess the feasibility of categorizing the sample into two socioeconomic groups based on the criteria put forth by the researcher. The results suggest that two distinct socioeconomic categories were effectively created. It was determined that the socioeconomic information reported by four participants (9.5%) of the 42 participants that completed the Educational – Occupational Status Questionnaire placed them in the middle of the two socioeconomic categories delineated by the researcher, and thus, they were eliminated from analysis.

In general, participants provided clear and specific job titles, thus, the researcher was able to locate the job titles on the Nakao and Treas SEI (1992), and determine a

specific SEI score. However, four participants (8.6%) of the original 46 participants did not complete the Educational – Occupational Status Questionnaire adequately enough for the researcher to determine their socioeconomic position. Therefore, several changes were made to the questionnaire and to the procedures. The researcher added the following phrase to the procedural instructions, "It is extremely important that you answer all of the questions on the Educational - Occupation Status Questionnaire as specifically as possible, so please take extra care when completing this questionnaire." Question numbers 9, 16, and 19, which were designed to elicit the job titles of participants, participants' parents, and participants' spouses were reworded for clarification, and to strengthen their effectiveness in prompting a response. The following phrase was added and formatted. "Please be as specific as possible. (**For example if she worked in a mill, name her job, such as, mill worker, machine operator, or supervisor**)."

The final goal of the pilot study was to determine if there were differences on hoped-for work selves and expected work selves by socioeconomic position. As previously stated, no significant differences were found, however, given the small sample size of the pilot study, no additional modifications were made to account for this.

Summary

In summary, the purposes of the pilot study were to test the data collection procedures for the larger study, to assess the psychometric properties of the instruments for the pilot sample, to assess the feasibility of categorizing the sample into socioeconomic positions based on the criteria put forth by the researcher, and to

determine if preliminary differences could be found on the five dimensions of work possible selves based on socioeconomic position. Results of the pilot study indicated that the testing procedures were effective. The psychometric properties of the instruments were adequate, although several changes that will improve the effectiveness of the instruments will be included in the larger study. The scheme for categorizing the sample into two distinct socioeconomic positions was effective. Moreover, information was obtained to make the Educational – Occupational Status Questionnaire more effective in gathering the required data for categorization.