THE IMPACT OF PARENTAL INFLUENCES ON COLLEGE STUDENTS' OCCUPATIONAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE OF SINGAPOREAN COLLEGE STUDENTS IN THE U.S.

BY

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DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

Background

Although a better understanding of parental influences on college students' occupational identity development (OID) and ultimate career choice(s) can help HRD personnel (including college counselors) provide more relevant and effective career-choice information when advising students, parental influence itself varies by many factors, including culture of origin. Accordingly, this study moves beyond conventional stereotypes depicting overbearing Asian parent-student career-decision dynamics to qualitatively explore junior- and senior-year Singaporean college students' perceptions of parental influence on their career choice (s)..

Methods

Specifically, this study employs in-depth interviews to explore how Singaporean college students studying in the US viewed the career development activities of their youth, and to what extent those experiences and their parents had influenced their current career decisions and development path. Additionally, the study also offers a novel methodological approach that combines the occupational identity development (OID) and social cognitive career theory (SCCT) frameworks. This was necessary both to afford sufficient explanatory power during data analysis and to explore how parental influence interacts through OID and SCCT around career decision-making among Singaporean college students studying in the United States.

Findings

Along with the specific findings (below), the hybrid framework used in this study represents a significant contribution to and for HRD research. With respect to early career decision-making, the study found that only 3 of 15 participants reported career development

activities in their youth, with 12 of 15 reporting virtually no data (even after prompting). This contradicts research that locates the arc of career development in early life. Instead, parental influences arose more often in contexts closer to college and for specific college plans for majors or careers. For the interaction between OID and SCCT, the three main findings include (1) an identifiable inverse relationship between agentic proxy and collaborative agency in parental involvement in the career decision-making process, (2) considerable strength of individual interests for honing the career decisions of participants (often in direct conflict with parental expectations), and (3) significant occupational customization (or dual career interests) in families with collaborative/hybrid parenting styles. Finding (1) is intuitive and predictable, i.e., where *proxy agency* (those influences exercised over the individual by others) is less present, there is an increased presence of *collaborative agency* (those influences generated by the mutual work and agenda of the individual and those around him towards a particular goal or desired outcome) between students and parents. Parenting style may play a role in this. Findings (2) and (3) more directly contradict stereotypical "Asian" parent-student career choice dynamics. Ultimately, it is the student who executes the choice of career, not simply because they must actually *do* the work of a career or because if parents excessively harp on what their children *should* do, this will likely end finally in complete disassociation. Rather, parental voices for "good careers" (in contrast to the student's desires toward what they want to do) are, in some ways, simply the voices of the social world itself (which students will hear from many quarters, not just parents). This can result in *compromise careers*, whereby students identify work that might not pay as well as "good jobs" but is still fulfilling.

Conclusion

Future studies would benefit from combining "cross-sectional" and "longitudinal" HRD research and frameworks, especially around motivations (or perceptions of motivations) among students *and* parents. Redoing parenting style frameworks starting with "collectivist" culture parenting assumptions would also be beneficial. Better understanding these factors, especially when career advising students from collectivist cultures who navigate parental influences differently than students from non-collectivist cultures, will lead to better outcomes. This is because career advocacy can adopt and adapt those navigational differences when trying to show an open career pathway for students, when attempting to steer students towards emerging tech sectors, or for HRD practice generally, especially in work-sectors where large numbers of graduated students from collectivist cultures are already present.

Keywords*:* Career development, human resource development, occupational identity development, parental influences, social cognitive career theory, sociocultural influences, collectivist cultures, individualist cultures.

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CHAPTER 1:

INTRODUCTION

This study uses a combined framework of social cognitive career theory (SCCT) and occupational identity development (OID) to examine parental influence effects on career choice and development among international students from Singapore studying in the United States. The study is further informed by parenting style theories and sociocultural studies contrasting individualist and collectivist cultures to examine student SCCT/OID processes. Findings from this study potentially inform HRD theory and practice, while also providing insight for career guidance and other occupational counselors when seeking to advise international students on choices around academic concentration, future occupational identity, and fulfillment of satisfying life goals.

Study Background

While the effects of healthy identities serve to guide individuals throughout their lives, examination of what factors quantify a "healthy" identity are often debated, both in concept and in metrics (Bronk 2011). The many conversations regarding the nature of a person's identity show that it is a complex, dynamic construct with profound effects both on how the individual views themselves and how the surrounding society interacts with them. One area of particular interest to human resources development (HRD) is the development of an occupational identity and the sociocultural factors that contribute to its development (Christiansen, 1999).

In modern economies, occupational identity and career choice can define the primary characteristics of both a person's sense of identity and their role in society (Christiansen, 1999). As adolescents grow, they pass through many virtual checkpoints and milestones in their development. One of the most significant milestones is the establishment of their own

occupational identity and career path (Tracey, 2001). Attending college or developing an independent career outside of formal education is part of the period of transition from childhood and into adulthood, generally recognized for ages 16-21, although Super (1990) makes a strong case for this transition occurring at a much younger age range.

The Development Process

As HRD professionals exploring the topic of career development, we must ask ourselves why occupational identity is so important. While career and knowledge exploration are merely one slice of the person's life, the career research and planning that has happened since childhood is a chimera of life experiences and intellectual development (Matthews, 2017). The fact that identity development, including occupational identity, can begin in childhood is important for human resources and career development professionals (Super, 1990). A person's occupation becomes a part of their sense of who they are and of what the future could (or should) hold in store for them (Shuck et al 2018).

The value of higher education is assumed by many to be the training and experience received either through employment or college-level education (Suleman, 2016), particularly in future skillsets development (Bakhshi et al, 2017). Yet the stage for all of this is set into motion earlier in life by the college student's occupational interests and pre-collegiate identity development as influenced by their childhood and adolescence (Super, 1990). The skillset with which the student enters adulthood has been shaped by their earlier education and sociocultural influences (Syed & McLean, 2018). What is missing from the prior literature is an understanding of how the person's parents, family, and culture have prepared them for their future, particularly when it comes to international students from the Asian collectivist cultures (Triandis, 2001).

Parental Influences

The path of each person's career development is said to begin in early adolescence and progresses through stages to its adult manifestation (Super, 1990). In the process of transition, parents play a critical role in preparing their daughter or son for the future (Lindstrom et al, 2007). As a child matures, parents shape the personality, hopes, and dreams of the child in dozens of ways. Some of these influences are overt, such as encouraging the child to participate in sports or extracurricular clubs. Others are more covert, such as initiating discussions about future career plans during family dinners. Even the choices of entertainment, leisure, or recreational activities can play a role in the process (McDaniels, 1984). Positive advice and exposure to various fields can assist a child in determining their interests and, with luck, discover occupations they have an interest, knack, or identifiable talent for (Lowe & Dotterer, 2018). Parents can create a supportive career choice environment if they approach the topic with a sense of positivity and flexibility (Ginevra et al, 2015). Sometimes, parents can serve as negative examples as well.

As such, the strength of parenting and the subsequent strength of the influences parents have on their children varies greatly, depending on the positive or negative alignment with the adolescent's interests (Lloyd et al, 2018), the form of the intervention (Heddy & Sinatra, 2017), and the style or intensity of parenting involved (Mahadi et al, 2016). The parenting process influences the college student's interests, academic performance, and ultimately the success (or failure) of their navigation through the maze between childhood and adulthood (Porfeli & Lee, 2012).

The Transition to Adulthood

The educational and career skill development pursuit marks an integral milestone in a person's life and identity development. It is a time of transition from childhood to adulthood that can be challenging for college students as it marks a profound change in their personal identity concept (Stringer & Kerpelman, 2010). The occupation and career establishment process has significant implications for one's role in society and culture as well as one's identity perception and individuality (De Broucker & Lavallée, 1997). In today's society, however, college students will often find themselves at a loss for, or are conflicted about, defining who they are and where they want to go with their lives.

While the above insights have some clear validity, they clash with Lucas (1997), who argued that the process of identity development is invalid if it does not result in a separation of the college student's personal identity from that of their parents. For many college students, however, this is not the case, particularly among international students from collectivist cultures (Hofstede, 1991; Triandis, 2005)—in particular, Asian nations such as Japan, China, and Singapore (Sawitri et al, 2014). Within collectivist cultures, authority figures continue to hold great influence, including various regulatory effects over people's career choices (Gust, 2015) and in the tighter relationship between the person's identity and the imposed identity factors from collectivist family or culture (Sawitri et al, 2014). Such patterns are by no means negative and have supported collectivist cultures for millennia.

Available theoretical models and historic research provide support for people's career and life narratives (Maree, 2020). This developing narrative subsequently affects the choices an individual makes in life (Sankey 1989). For example, while a college student may choose or choose not to pursue a particular career and explore their career options—the forces and

experiences the college students have been exposed to during their life influence those choices (Super, 1990). College students write the narrative but with input from the society around them. Understanding the effects of those inputs will shape the future of career development research (Syed & McLean, 2018).

The present study offers how we can see the SCCT/OID relationship illuminating what is perhaps the most important decision of a young, emerging adult's life—their sense of occupational or career identity (Bronk, 2001). Better characterizing the importance of parental and sociocultural influences in career development contributes to enlightening our understanding around how parental and sociocultural influences fit into the equation (Kuwabara et al 2007).

Sociocultural Influences

In prior eras, the sociocultural role each new generation fulfilled often depended explicitly on either their parent's sociocultural roles or upon apprenticeship training opportunities that their parents were able to arrange for them (Unwin, 1996). While occupational opportunities available today is no longer so explicitly limited, parents can still have a pivotal effect on their child's occupational identity and career development (Super, 1990). According to Super (1990), the age span from age 4–14 represents a shift in the thinking and understandings that adolescents have about the world around them, ranging from their fashion sense, to how they view and interpret the future. The experiences and observations of individuals interacting with the world around them thus molds the mental image each person has around both their worldview and their role within it (Perlman, 2018). This suggests that the first influences on a college student's identities are what they observe from their parents long before they even reach college, including the student's occupational identity (Al Diyar & Salem, 2015; Super 1990).

When most people think about the career decision-making process, however, they believe the student makes the choice alone. While the assumption is true to an extent (ultimately, the individual does *choose* a career path), the reality behind the decision-making process is more complicated than just one person's choice. Other factors can weigh heavily on the process. As the developing young adults enter either the workforce or higher education, the students reflect the developmental assets attained throughout their childhood, usually without realizing the skillset was being constructed (Rothen et al, 2013; Shanks & St. John, 1994). The developmental assets acquired from the person's parents or sociocultural environment can support or constrain the academic or career decision-making process, aiding or hindering the student's career exploration and commitment, affecting the student's OID status. This implies that, while the career decision-making process is agentic in nature (Lent & Brown, 1996), the college student is not the sole agent involved.

College students form identity decisions based on social conditioning (Côté, 1996) and sociocultural pressures (Triandis & Suh, 2002). Society exposes college students to a vast number of sociocultural signals regarding the operations of the society around them and their role within its activities. It is particularly true that such signals can affect the student's perceptions of their future career. Historic perspectives on adolescent development focused on the young student's need to have significance within their society (Yeager & Dweck, 2012). Indeed, the role one plays within society can reflect considerable significance for the concept of identity (Sokol, 2009).

While seldom overt, influences from this on the process of role identification continue as the college student chooses his or her career path. While sociocultural influences shape the college student's worldview and motivations, the earliest influences affecting the student's

occupational interests typically come from their family and social group (Cohen-Scali, 2003). Particular interest in this study focuses on the question of parental influences and how sociocultural differences affect the social cognitive career theory (SCCT) application and its influence on the occupational identity development (OID) process of students, comparing individualist cultures against collectivist cultures.

Individualist and Collectivist Cultures

While raising and parenting adolescents is a common part of the human experience, the specifics of that experience vary from one society or culture to another (Sawitri et al, 2014). International students, particularly those of Asian origin, often have a distinctly differentiated sociocultural identity that must be taken into account (Noordin et al, 2002). For many cross-cultural studies, the literature attempts to capture this distinction by defining two major parenting style archetypes or philosophies: Eastern (also known as collectivist) and Western (also known as individualistic) (Guichard & Lenz, 2005).[1]

However, it is critical to remember here the well-established tendency of in-groups to define themselves in terms more favorably than out-groups (Turner, Brown, & Tajfel, 1979; Weeks, Weeks, & Long, 2017), given that these biases will affect both what is meant by individualistic and collectivist but also any interpretations of collected data.

This point is not raised to start (much less to end) any "racial" cross-cultural debate but simply to outline where in-group biases may enter into the picture. In cross-cultural psychological contexts, in fact, these biases may come more under scrutiny. For example, Al-Zahrani and Kaplowitz (1993) report how Western-originating research on individualism and

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[1] It is perhaps important to stress that not all collectivist cultures are Asian; they are found in many places around the world (Green et al, 2005) and were also characteristic of "Western" cultures in previous centuries.

collectivism asserts, "Individualistic cultures view the self as autonomous and *independent*. Collectivistic cultures, in contrast, see the self as *interdependent*" (p. 223, italics in original). Here, we can note that autonomy, a very highly valorized if not essential attribute for individualism (Reindal, 1999), is not included in the sense of collectivist, despite the fact that being *interdependent* can often be the main goal of personality development after moving past being dependent and independent (Reindal, 1999). As Reindal (1999) reports, in a discussion of disability studies, "Independence is associated with being able to do things for oneself, to be self-supporting and self-reliant" (p. 353). Consequently, does this emphasis on interdependence in collectivist cultures imply its greater socio-psychological development or instead a non-autonomy, a non-independence, and thus an incapacity to do things for oneself or to be self-supporting and self-reliant? Although the latter might be called controversial, such a conclusion is not incompatible with trends in Western colonial history that denigrated the social and cognitive capacities of non-Westerners (Radhakrishnan, 2000).

Similarly, Al-Zahrani and Kaplowitz (1993) report that "Triandis and his associates (Triandis 1989; Triandis et al 1988) argue that Western cultures assign priority to the identity and goals of the individual, whereas non-Western cultures place a higher value on loyalty to the extended family and the ethnic or tribal group" (p. 223). Again, simply to note the discourse being reported here, it is evident that "non-Westerners" are defined solely in negative relation to "Westerners," which again raises the risk of in-group favoritism bias already noted. Moreover, the individualistic wing of the contrast speaks of identity and goals for Westerners, as if "non-Westerners" might not have identities and goals; rather, non-Westerners are (selflessly?) loyal to extended families and ethnic or tribal groups, which further implies that Westerners are (selfishly?) disloyal. However, even this potentially favorable emphasis on loyalty readily shades

off into the "individuality versus conformist" binary often invoked in comparisons of individualistic and collectivist cultures (Torelli, 2006). Naim (2011), however, demonstrates how personal expression (individuality) can co-exist with "non-Western" collectivist emphases on similarity (conformism), while Thomson (1992) contrasts the varying norms of conformity that constrained the practices of individuality in a Western context from the 1950s to the 1980s.

Accordingly, at some point the individualistic/collectivist contrasts reach a point of diminishing utility and begin to seem more polemic and prescriptive than heuristic. While the evidence of this dissertation (and even its premises) belies the imputed loyalty to or consideration of extended families (especially the parents) in "non-Western" offspring, it hardly seems credible to assert—even at the height of "narcissistic individualism" of the 1970s (Thomson, 1992)—that Western offspring always betrayed their extended families and ethnic groups and gave no attention whatsoever to cues about their future careers from parents, friends, and communities.

When qualitative research narrows down to the concrete specificity of participant lives, the generalities about individualistic and collectivist cultures begin to mislead more than serve as guides, but the point of this is to highlight that, even when applicable, the terms inherited from "Western" constructions of individualistic and collectivist likely betray an in-group bias. For people from "non-Western" or "collectivist" cultures, one can feel grateful for a greater sense of freedom while being shocked (even disgusted) by the disrespect shown to parents and the egotistical selfishness and disregard for others exhibited by "Western" individualists. Indeed, future research might re-work the individualist/collectivist binary from the standpoint of a "non-Western" in-group bias. For now, it is important both in the literature review that follows and the

interpretation of data later in the dissertation to at least remain mindful of possible effects from in-group bias when applying the terms individualistic or collectivist.

According to Guichard and Lenz (2005), within individualist cultures, the principal unit is viewed as the person, with parenting serving more or less as an ecosystem service by which the person is nurtured toward adulthood. While this act of parenting is viewed within an individualist framework as a responsibility owed to the child and society, this obligation to "society" could more properly be understood as "collectivist"; one can also wonder where the "individual" in each parent has disappeared to. Conversely, for collectivist culture parenting, the person is seen as an ordinary component of the (collectivist) family and society in which they are raised. Within the collectivist family unit, the person is viewed essentially as owing the parents and society loyalty and deference for the gift of life bestowed upon them; here again, it becomes not entirely clear how the "individual" of the child in a collectivist culture relates to "collectivism" generally. In this way, it becomes clear that the sharp binary distinction between individualistic and collectivist can become blurry, such that something of a community (or collective) element arises even within individualistic cultures, while an element of individualism (between parents and offspring) arises even within collectivist cultures. Data from this study certainly bears out the latter.

When viewed through the lens of individualist versus collectivist cultures, Guichard & Lenz's (2005) findings seem to split into two distinct forms. Under individualist cultures, emphasis falls on the personal expectations and interests of the person's future social and occupational position regardless of sociocultural (or parental) expectations; under collectivist

cultures, the emphasis falls on parental and sociocultural expectations as playing an obligatory role (if not actually overriding the interests and desires of the person).[2]

Despite the fact that across all cultures the previously lived-experiences of elders and older generations (including parents) can often serve as a source of wisdom or insight for younger generations' decision-making and finding their own way through life (Goldman, 2005), it appears that individualistic cultures tend to place less emphasis, if any, on such lived experiences and wisdom, while collectivistic cultures tend to place more emphasis, sometimes too much, on it (Guichard & Lenz, 2005). For this dissertation, the question involves the "weight" assigned by Singaporean college students to such wisdom, specially within the context of their autonomy, independence, interdependence, identity-formation, goal setting, being able to do things for themselves—to be self-supporting and self-reliant—and also loyalty to their family or ethnic group, not dissimilarly to their "Western" counterparts.

The participants in this study have been sampled as coming from a generally collectivist culture (, i.e., a culture that can generate a conflict when its prioritization of the interests of the family or community does not match with needs or interests of individual person) or from a

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[2] Like any binary dichotomy, exceptions and counterexamples abound. Certainly, within Euromerican societies from the eighteenth century (with the rise of a new "middle" class by way of the Industrial Revolution), an emphasis on filial obedience and obeying the dictates of the parents (especially the father) for children very much bears the traces of a "collectivist" parenting style despite being embedded within a novel and spreading doctrine of Individualism (at least for men) (Ellis, 1989; Tompkins, 1932). Similarly, while parental impositions in collectivist and individualistic cultures alike can override "the interests and desires of the person," this conflict tends to become most acute when those interests or desires already differ from family desires and interests generally. That is, many "collectivist"-oriented children, whatever their culture of origin, might understand their interests and desires explicitly in terms of their family itself (i.e., perceiving and honoring an obligation to do well enough in the world occupationally to be able to support their parents in their elderly years). In the tendency to favor individualistic cultures (in research originating in individualistic cultures), we should not lose sight of the advantages and rationales (along with the disadvantages and challenges) that collectivist-orientations to parental influences on occupational choice afford. Equally, we should not lose sight of the same for individualist cultures, where the freedom to choose one's path often comes at the expense of severing relations with one's parents and family. Each choice comes with costs and benefits, and these can be borne in mind when contrasting individualistic and collectivist cultures in a dichotomous binary.

hybrid culture in which the needs of the person are considered equal to the needs of the family or community, and thus, ostensibly, should include a pronounced parental influence and collaborative focus on OID and career choice.

Statement of Problem and Purpose

The aim of the research is to give insight into the applicability of prior research findings on the international student population from Asian and Southeast Asian nations generally (Gust, 2015). International students from the Asian nations are raised primarily under Eastern parenting and social customs and have historically reported issues of culture shock and disparities when attending institutes of higher learning in the United States (Noordin et al, 2002) The issues are further complicated by the already challenging tasks involved in occupational identity and career development (Guichard & Lenz, 2005).

What is largely missing in the research to date is empirical support for how sociocultural factors inform occupational identity—or, in terms of frameworks, how the socio-cognitive (SCCT) inputs inform the occupational identity (OID) and how the SCCT and OID models define the career decision-making processes of college students. This especially concerns research addressing the applicability and mechanisms of the SCCT and OID models in collective cultures. One set of prior research has examined the components of the occupational identity and career decision-making process in detail. Another set has considered the socio-cognitive inputs into the career decision-making process. While each set has research dedicated to its perspective (either SCCT or OID), research is lacking around how the two might (or do) inform one another. This study contributes significantly to the body of knowledge by addressing this aspect of our understanding and expanding our abilities to address the globalization of human resources development in higher education and beyond.

In its examination into how social cognitive career theory informs occupational identity development, this proposed study also seeks to determine whether the assumed sociocultural differences are valid and have an identifiable effects on career parenting and choice or if they are a sociocultural stereotypes that may inhibit culturally competent career development, particularly among international college students in the US.

This study's focus on Singaporean international students within the United States will contribute to our understanding regarding the individualist and collectivist sociocultural roles in the mechanics and interactions between SCCT and OID. Understanding how the sociocultural influences support or hinder occupational identity development further will address concerns about organizational workforce development needs and contribute significantly to human resource development knowledge and practices. By examining the interaction between the SCCT influence channels and the OID status of the individual, we can gain significant improvements in understanding the role and effectiveness of HRD in the career development of the individual (Torraco & Lundgren, 2020).

Theoretical Framework

The primary theoretical framework for this study is constructed upon the scaffolding of two models:

1. Lent & Brown's (1996) social cognitive career theory (SCCT), as a refinement of agentic influence from social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1989; 1999)

2. Kroger and Marcia's (2011) theory of identity status in occupational identity development (OID), derived from and extending Erikson (1968)'s identity development theory.

It is within the constraints of this combined framework that the effects of parental expectations, interventions, and styles on the process shall be examined within the sociocultural environments to show that parenting can have profound effects on the occupational identity and career decision-making processes of college students.

Erikson's identity development theory (Erikson, 1968) and Bandura's social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1981) create a conceptual model through which the process of career development and decision-making can be examined along with the influencing factors of the student's experiences. The development, for example, of a well-defined occupational identity will have profound influence on the choice of academic interests, educational courses, and ultimately of the student's career path.

The student's past experiences and inputs from social and cultural sources, having significant influences on the student's mindset, thinking processes, and vocational interests expand upon the student's sense of identity, contributing to the student's career decision-making efforts (Lent et al, 1994). Said influences would include contributions of academic advisors and future guidance from human resources professionals, as well as the mentioned social and cultural sources. The combined OID/SCCT model establishes a structured format through which the understanding of social and cultural influences affecting occupational identity is developed. Chapter 2 provides further discussion on OID and SCCT.

Research Questions

This study explores two core research questions:

1. How do Singaporean college students, studying in the US, view the career development activities of their youth, and to what extent do they feel those

experiences have influenced their current career decisions and development path

(RQ1)?

    a. To what extent were their parents involved in those activities (RQ1a)?

2. How does parental influence in the context of SCCT inform the process of OID over

    the career decision of Singaporean college students in the US (RQ2)?

    a. To what extent do the two theories' processes influence one another, or are they

       exclusive in their relational effects (RQ2a)?

    b. How does the evidence gathered reflect this structure and inform the career

       development process (RQ2b)?

Definition of Terms

OID – Occupational Identity Development (Kroger & Marcia, 2011) is a reiterative

model of the activities of career exploration and behavioral standards of career commitment,

identified by occupational identity statuses defined by the person's exploration and commitment:

i.e., diffusion (low exploration, low commitment), foreclosure (low exploration, high

commitment), moratorium (high exploration, low commitment), and achievement (high

exploration, high commitment).

SCCT – Social Cognitive Career Theory (Lent et al, 1994) is a functional model

describing the three abstract channels that social influences contribute to the definition of a

person's career choices. The channels are defined as individual agency (those influences from

within the individual), proxy agency (those influences exercised over the individual by others),

and collaborative agency (those influences generated by the mutual work and agenda of the

individual and those around him towards a particular goal or desired outcome).

HRD – Human Resource Development (Rao, 1966) are activities within an organization dedicated to the recruitment, training, and supervision of personnel and talent necessary for the accomplishment of the organization's purpose and mission.

OD – Organizational Development (Jardak & Matoussi, 2020) are activities within HRD focused on the support and improvement of overall organizational performance and effectiveness.

WD – Workforce Development (Swanson, 1995) are activities within HRD to support the recruitment, training, and maintenance of operational personnel within the organization.

CD – Career Development (van Tuijl & van der Molen, 2016) are activities within HRD to support the self-improvement and skills development of individuals within the organization. These aim to improve the person's usefulness to the organization by expanding their abilities and progress towards personal goals.

TD – Talent Development (Hedayati Mehdiabadi & Li, 2016) is focused on development of talented individuals in specific talents, management knowledge, and leadership skills within the organization to ensure specific skillset requirements are met for the ongoing activities and growth of the organization.

CDM – Career Decision-Making (Harren, 1979) is the process by which a student or other individual explores and selects what career they shall pursue next as CDM may be revisited multiple times in the work life of the individual.

Individualist cultures (Green et al, 2005) are roughly defined as societies within which a person's rights, interests, and choices give little weight, if any, to social claims by parents, communities, or the society at large.

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Collectivist cultures (Green et al, 2005) are roughly defined societies within which a person's rights, interests, and choices give significant weight, if not priority, to sociocultural claims by parents, communities, or the society at large.

Hybrid cultures (Rocha, 2011; Loh, 2018) are intermixes of individualist and collectivist cultures, having varying levels of rights, interests, and choices of the individual reflecting a mix of two or more definable parent cultures, creating a definable independent sociocultural environment.

Cultural hybridization (Rocha, 2011; Loh, 2018) is the process by which a mixed culture or multicultural society fuses into a definable, independent sociocultural environment, taking elements from each of the preexisting parent cultures to generate a hybrid culture.

OID States (Kroger & Marcia, 2011)

Diffusion is the state of OID in which an individual has neither explored nor committed themselves to an identifiable and distinct occupational venture or career. Such individuals are difficult to manage, either as a student or as an employee, as they lack direction in their occupational identity and pursuits.

Deferral is the state of OID in which one has committed to a particular occupation, either by arbitrary choice or by yielding to the influences of others, such as their parents or peers, in the choice. The state can be considered positive if the choice is consciously made by the individual, or negative if the choice is imposed and out of alignment with the person's interests.

Moratorium is the state of OID in which one has engaged in significant exploration of their occupational choices but has not as yet committed to a particular occupation or career. As a positive, moratorium indicates intentional career exploration, but can also indicate a negative

state in which the individual is experiencing career indecision, having difficulties choosing between multiple interests or options in establishing their future goal.

Achievement is the desired state of OID in which one has examined their occupational options and made commitment to a particular career, either pursuing the academic or occupational training or, in entrepreneurial ventures, having started a business or organization in line with their occupational identity or interests.

SCCT Agency (Lent et al, 1996)

Individual agency is the abstract channel of influence within the SCCT framework that the affected individual has control over, such as personal interests and self-invoked opportunities for education and personal development towards their desired occupational goals and career development.

Proxy agency is the abstract channel of influence within the SCCT framework that are usually outside the person's control. Parents who seek to micromanage or manipulate their child's developmental choices by insisting on activities the child shows little interest in would be an example of a parent exercising proxy agency against the wishes of the child.

Collaborative agency is the abstract channel of influence within the SCCT framework that requires negotiated control towards a mutually beneficial path or plan, defining the person's career goals and academic desires. Historically uncommon, collaboration between students and parents has seen increasing influence in both individualist and collectivist cultures.

Parenting styles (Salim & Preston, 2019) are roughly defined approaches to parenting consisting of specific behaviors, interventions, and strategies for the raising of a child that affect the development of the child's sense of self, including approaches to pre-collegiate identity and career development.

Career positive parenting are activities through which the skills and interests of a child are honed and supported in their career development preparations. The manifestations of career positive parenting differ sharply between individualistic and collectivistic cultures, though the driving purpose remains the same. This phrase is one not previously used by others, to the best of my research queries, but which effectively describes a particular parental mindset and behavior.

Assumptions and Limitations

Assumptions noted under this study can be considered universal to qualitative research efforts: honest and candid responses from the participants, homogeneity of the population sample, and unbiased participation in the research study by the participants (i.e. no external incentives, etc.).

Limitations to the study include the issue that the interview questions asked participants to recall parental interactions that may have taken place during or prior to their middle adolescence (ages 13-17). Recollection of the sought interactions may have been incomplete or skewed in their accuracy but, where supplied by participants, were assumed to be useful in identifying the parental interventions and practices.

Differences in Singaporean sociocultural practices created by its sociocultural hybridization may also limit the applicability of findings to and from other Asian cultures, due to the heightened influences from Western, individualistic cultures, such as via the Internet (Kim et al, 2009). Additionally, unknown or unexpected conditions may have existed that biased the participant responses, such as stresses from the pandemic protocols in place at the time of this research project. In particular, the conditions present due to the COVID-19 crisis required an indirect contact protocol. Invitation to participate in the study was channeled through an

intermediary representative who had access to potential participants' email, online, or telephone

contact information. This limited follow-up on responses of interest or ones that were vague.

CHAPTER 2:

LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review begins with a general overview of the target population, international students learning in the United States, specifically Singaporean students. In general, students (international and not) are subject to forces, external and internal, that affect their career development process. Higher education institutions factor in as one of those forces, in part through their academic offerings and student support services. In this chapter, Tang et al (2018), Chern et al (2017), and Corey (2015) are examined, noting parental influences and expectations as major external forces holding particular importance in the career development process. The overview concludes with an examination of the cultural conditions that affect international students and the effects those conditions have on the identity development of those students.

For any study, the context in which it is examined is as important as the research questions themselves; for this study, the context is human resources development. For the second part of the literature review, an overview of human resources development, workforce development, and career development is conducted, linking them to globalization and capacity building. This section closes by examining the concepts of childhood and pre-collegiate career development and a minor acknowledgement of other external sociocultural influences.

The final section of the literature review focuses on the theoretical frameworks for the occupational identity development (OID) and social cognitive career theory (SCCT). The literature review explores both the structure and importance of the individual's sense of occupational identity. It continues with an examination of Bandura's social cognitive theory and Lent et al's expansion of it into the social cognitive career theory. Weaknesses of Lent et al's original work are noted while its subsequent applications redeem it from such weaknesses.

Application of the theory is examined by discussing the effects of the three agentic channels and the interactive feedback between the occupational identity of the individual and the agentic forces by which they are affected.

Lastly, discussion of how the prior literature affects and, in part, poses a possible understanding and answers to the research questions, and how it contributes to the design of the research instrument and selection of the target population, are addressed. It is notable that much of the available literature focuses on western, individualist populations and focuses on the individual as a sociocultural agent within that sociocultural origin. The state of the current body of knowledge is heavily biased in favor of individualist culture. As such, while marginal in direct application, the available research may yetserve as a starting point, particularly for identifying differences in sociocultural effects and between individualist and collectivist populations when applying the theoretical framework. In examining prior literature, we have an extensive foundation of knowledge, but the lack of exploration into the agentic proxy and collaborative agency of social cognitive career theory in the context of collectivist societies significantly weakens the reliability and generalizability of prior literature.

International Students

The label *international student* is applied to any student not studying in their nation of origin, including U.S. citizens studying abroad. In the context of this study, the term applies to any student from another country pursuing education at U.S. institutions of higher learning. International students from Asia, having often grown up in a collectivist culture, can face a significant level of culture shock in the United States and often have difficulty adjusting to the sociocultural differences (Chalmers & Volet, 1997). This is an important aspect to consider when

examining parental influences on the college student's career development and decisions in a culturally appropriate way (Maree, 2020).

Career development is a collaborative endeavor between the individuals and their trainers, parents, and educators in which all parties work together in developing the person's skillset, based upon the agentic goals and agenda of each (Lent et al, 1994). Within the collaborative environment, each party exercises their agentic power to either enhance or constrain the development activities (Lent et al, 2000). In addition, other socioeconomic forces, real or perceived, add their support or resistance to the career development efforts (Albert & Luzzo, 1999), including parental expectations, the socioeconomic status of the family (Wang et al, 2016), and other sociocultural factors. Asian students, for example, suffer both external expectations and internalized sociocultural stereotypes that influence the person's self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and perceptions of acceptable occupations and academic interests (Kantamneni et al, 2018).

Reasons for international students to come to the U.S. vary but can be framed not only in terms of sociocultural economics and influences within their own nation that "push" students to study abroad but also specific programs and amenities available abroad that "pull" students to particular schools as well (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002). Many international students choose to study in the United States due to financial aid availability and opportunities to build cosmopolitan or social capital (Ma & Garcia-Murillo, 2018). According to Shanka et al (2006), influencing factors critical to the destination decisions of international students include the academic reputation of the institution, the variety of courses at the institution, and the reported quality of educational services.

Studies by Tang et al (2018) and Chern et al (2017) define some of the critical dynamics involved with international students. Tang et al (2018) found that parental expectations heavily influence the decision of Chinese international students to study in the United States, although the selection of occupational pursuit seemed unaffected by the parental expectations. With similar pressures expected from other Asian collectivist cultures, parental expectations may be common among Asian international students. In addition, Chern et al (2017) found that international students seem to relate financial support or burden as factors in parental influence that, when mixed with the sociocultural and familial focus of collectivist cultures, may explain why parental and sociocultural expectations weigh heavily in the students' decision-making processes.

Corey (2015) sought to explore the question of "career development and exploration experiences, through the lens of parental pressure experiences and perceptions of control" (p. ii). Corey explored a wider range of academic levels and found that college students in upper grade levels did not perceive parental pressures as significantly as college students in lower grade levels or pre-collegian high school students. Participants in the latter categories expressed significant perceptions of parental influence and pressure over their career decisions. Corey perceived the difference between underclass students' and upper-class students' perceptions of parental influence and control as a discrepancy worthy of future research exploration but lacked the context of international students versus domestic students.

Between eastern, collectivist cultures and western, individualistic cultures there are fundamental differences. Collectivist societies focus on social systems as the focus of individual identities, generally as subsets of the familial or sociocultural membership. Individualist societies focus on identities built from the singularity of the individual with society focused on the

independent development of the person's empowerment, a perspective argued by Gambrel and Cianci (2003). In their argument, Gambrel and Cianci claimed that the need for self-esteem defined under Maslow's pyramid of human needs did not exist in collectivist cultures. However, Rose et al (2002) had already demonstrated that self-esteem does exist in collectivist cultures and is based on the honor earned within the context of belonging to the collectivist environment. While Rudy & Grusec (2006) can align this as consistent with and supportive of authoritarian parenting, it also is socioculturally fundamental to the intergenerational transmission of values (Miu, 2018).

Implications of Culture for International Student Identity

The differences in collectivist and individualist cultures cause many misconceptions about international students, including assumptions about Asian students as rote, passive learners, isolationist, and lacking in analytical and critical thinking skills (Chalmers & Volet, 1997). Not only are the misconceptions inaccurate, the reasons international students make the choices of educational institution they do reflect the opposite (Shanka et al, 2006), i.e., that they are creative, active learners with analytical and critical thinking skills as well as a generally cosmopolitan orientation.

As to familial and parental influences, Gust (2015) examined the effects of family and sociocultural influences on career decision-making among 77 domestic and international students,. While no relational effects were found during the study, significant career choice trend differences were identified between domestic and international categories. In both student groupings interviewed by Gust, the students felt a high level of freedom in choosing their own paths, but a small percentage of both groupings revealed identifiable career expectations from their families. Citing Hofstede (1991), an argument was presented that this finding was

consistent with the level of sociocultural collectivism from which each demographic grouping originated and might indicate a third sociocultural state between individualism and collectivism: sociocultural hybridization. Recommendations from Gust suggest that more research is needed in the area of family and sociocultural influences on career decision-making.

This study answers that suggestion. That is, it is anticipated that similar perspectives will be found in Singaporean students, due to the proximity and close, continuing sociocultural and political interactions with Malaya and Singapore's other peer nations (Rocha, 2011). Singapore, however, holds potential differences due to its history as a colonial holding of the British Empire and its continuing trade with western, individualist cultures that are exposing Singapore to increased levels of individualism—as evidenced by the use of English in the classrooms of a city-state in the middle of Asia (Loh, 2018). This may alter the sociocultural perspective of international students from Singapore studying in individualist societies, such as the US and Australia, again possibly creating a third sociocultural state, i.e., a sociocultural hybridization that mixes elements of collectivist and individualist culture (Kopnina, 2004).

Human Resource Development

Dewey (1916) recognized that the three aspects of learning, work, and leisure are inseparable from a person's education. Within this framework, education—and the subsequent career choices that are made—are course corrections in the midst of an on-going journey. The career development narrative built integrates the person's life experiences, formal education, and work history to define their chosen career path, occupational identity, and functional skillset established from childhood (Super, 1990).

Those having prior influence over the person's development have, at this point, included parents, extended family, teachers, peers, social acquaintances, and academic career coaches,

each having contributed to the person's sense of identity and, ultimately, their sense of occupational identity and subsequent career decisions (Yoon, 2019). While companies once kept this process within its ambit, abdicating that responsibility for training to educational institutions has left companies struggling to find employees customized specifically to their needs and having often to settle for an at least a workable fit (Chimuka, 2016). Given this situation, it seems that prior career and personal development comes into the orbit of, and must be taken into account by, HRD processes. Moreover, with the effects of multiple cultural climates on these HRD processes, differences in culture must also be accounted for.

Human resources development (HRD) is defined as the operations within organizations that prepare, select, and train individuals in the activities of human civilization (Rao, 1966). Past use of the term has been referred in business environments to denote the selection, training, and supervision of employees in pursuit of the business or mission (Swanson et al, 2001). The concept of human resource development historically has encompassed several business functions related to ensuring the organization has personnel equipped with the skillsets necessary for its operations and organizational development (OD; Maha, 2020).

HRD has held a critical position in OD through its role in developing the policies and practices critical to developing the organization's workforce, supporting both the career development efforts of its workforce and the organization's development in achieving its goals. In the past, HRD has included guiding individuals through a process of skill development known as career development (CD). Development of such skills is integral to OD itself by ensuring trained personnel integral to successful and profitable operations are available (Jardak & Matoussi, 2020), a process known as workforce development (WD; Swanson, 1995). During the mid-twentieth century, organizations shifted much of the skills and knowledge development

requirements onto the individual and academic institutions. The shift from organizationally based HRD to academically based HRD required academic advisors and career coaches to take up the responsibilities for helping college students with their personal CD activities (Kumar, 2009).

Organizational development requires the organization's workforce to be innovative. As such, encouragement and guidance of HR must be sensitive to the needs, goals, and skills of the available workforce and of the organization (Uddin et al, 2016). HR's primary concern is the welfare and training of employees such that both the employees' and the organization's needs can be met, and both can benefit; the role of HR is, therefore, to plan and negotiate the relationship between the organization and its workforce (Jardak & Matoussi, 2020).

Workforce Development

Workforce development (WD) is also an integral part of globalization. As a term, WD has been growing in use, where human resources become an integral part of corporate and economic globalization but without a unified definition or an understanding of its implications (Jacobs & Hawley, 2009). While some authors use WD to mean the recruitment and retention of skilled workers and talented staff (Holland, Sheehan, & De Cieri, 2007), others go further, implying that WD is an inseparable part of HRD (Noe et al., 2003).

As globalization pressures increase, global workforce supervision has undergone a profound transformation. Trained workforce insufficiency inhibits organizational development, mandating HRD inclusion in the globalization process (McLean, 2002). Essentially, strong talent-base development within an organization gives the organization a competitive advantage in the global marketplace (Baartvedt, 2013)

The application of HRD principles in the global workforce market has brought about a new paradigm for understanding of the importance of HRD, workforce development, and higher

education in the process of nation building (Jacobs & Hawley, 2009; Alagaraja & Githen, 2016), especially in emerging and developing nations that have spent decades in poverty and conflict (Benson & Zhu, 2002). Capacity building in underdeveloped regions requires development of the local workforce. Development of the workforce, in turn, requires capacity building in communities (Nye & Glickman, 2000). The interdependence of capacity building and workforce development forms a feedback loop of cause and effect. As such, an integral part of the capacity building process includes improvements in the education of students in these regions. It is therefore important to recognize parents and students as critical stakeholders in the process of workforce and career development (Harris, 2011).[3]

Defining Career Development

Career development has long been recognized as a focal point function within human resource development (McDonald & Hite, 2005). As workforce development ensures a stable body of skilled and unskilled workers, career development focuses on the practices that serve to build capacity in individual employees for better meeting the organization's operational needs (Raidén et al, 2006). When effective, career development contributes to both the improvement of the individual and the organization by strengthening the skillsets available to the organization for its development (van Dijk, 2004). This study recognizes Super's (1990) argument that the process starts much earlier than organizational employment, stretching back to adolescence and early childhood.

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[3] A correct emphasis on the importance of education for capacity building, especially in underdeveloped regions, must of course also take account of gender inequalities that specifically limit women's access to education (Baliamoune-Lutz & McGillivray, 2009; Deere, Alvarado, & Twyman, 2012; Hertz, De la O Campos, Zezza et al., 2008; Kelsey, 2015).

The definition of career development implies a long-term commitment to a particular occupation for particular individuals and organizational operations (Torraco & Lundgren, 2020). Such a mindset, within a supportive organizational culture, would be beneficial to both the individual and organization. An understanding of the organization's development and internal mechanisms is therefore advantageous for finding the right candidates for positions with the organization (Hirudayaraj & Baker, 2018). The understanding gained has significant implications for the organization, particularly if the individual has been chosen for a management or leadership role within the organization (Thorpe, 2016).

Similar to human resource development, the recognition of sociocultural differences in career development in the field of research is relatively in its infancy. As such, the majority of available literature on the topic of career development is not only primarily sourced from Western, individualist societies but may exhibit bias towards individualist cultures and sociocultural values (Peterson & Stewart, 2020). Due to the potential sociocultural hybridization, consideration of alternative sociocultural models within the scope of exploratory research may be called for.

This opens the field in favor of the research questions for this study. Lent et al (2016) have found that experience with career exploration makes subsequent career exploration more effective. This implies that the individual's past experiences allow them to engage in individual agency at a higher efficacy level, pursuing career exploration more efficiently during subsequent reiterations of the decision-making process. Fouad et al (2009) argued that young college students have limited experience in career exploration and development and may benefit from coursework that addresses this lack of experience.

It is at this point, according to Bridgstock et al (2019), that proxy and collaborative

agencies play a critical role, either in the form of career and academic advisement for the student,

or career development activities within and prior to HRD, the distinction being either mandated

(proxy) or voluntary (collaborative). This study has significant implications to the field of HRD

in that it lays a foundation for understanding the needs and past development of the individual

with regards to their career development. As noted previously, the development of a person's

career and occupational identity begins in early childhood by bringing the sum of their lifetime

experience into the work environment (Super, 1990). This prior experience affects a person's

perceptions and responses within the work environment, particularly their response to authority

figures (Bradley-Geist & Olson-Buchanan, 2014).

Pre-Collegiate Career Development

In Western cultures, consideration of career development before high school is relatively

unheard of and, when it happens, it occurs in the form of informal or general education activities,

focusing principally on the formation of basic skills in language, mathematics, science, and

social studies (Porfeli et al, 2008). Western societies tend to view childhood as a time of

innocence and play with children not yet aware of or ready for career development (Porfeli et al,

2008).

Other research on Western societies has found the opposite (Porfeli & Lee, 2012).

Seligman et al (1988) found that those viewed as children are already beginning to form their

occupational interests as early as age 5, with a high percentage found by Seligman et al (1991)

having a sense of occupational identity by age 10. While the career development in youth may be

significant overall, uncertainty of recollection among college students about such experiences

played a role, despite limiting data collection about pre-collegiate memories to those occurring during adolescence.

A notable barrier to expanding on pre-collegiate career development research has been the need to overcome the perspective of innocence and poor awareness cited by Porfeli et al (2008) mixed with the tendency for researchers to focus on adolescents and young adults in the first place (McMahon & Watson, 2005). One item revealed by Phipps (1995) is the trend of knowing more about which occupations children aspire to, than knowing anything about the processes contributing to their knowledge of the occupations or the diversity of occupations available to choose from originally. An example of this is Auger et al (2005), who studied first-, third-, and fifth-grade students to discover what types of career aspirations and expectations the students held. The findings paralleled significantly the findings of Seligman et al (1988) and Seligman et al (1991) mentioned previously.

The transition indicates that a level of career development, specifically introducing the college student to potential career alternatives, must occur at some point prior to college. This is necessary to ensure that the student entering college has the basic skillsets to empower both the advanced learning necessary at the collegiate level and the ability to know what direction, academically, is necessary for pursuing their desired career paths. Too often, however, the process has either been neglected or short circuited by earlier experiences, most typically from social, familial, or parental influences (Seligman et al, 1988). The issues created can take many forms, including a dislike for challenging fields perceived as 'high-risk' for failure, such as engineering or other STEM fields (Wang et al, 2016). It is noted that such concerns and perspectives stem from the negative images of the particular field as being 'hard' and

psychologically undermining of the student's confidence in their own abilities (van Tuijl & van der Molen, 2016).

Implications for Talent Development

While talent and career development hold much in common, there are sufficient differences between supporting the general workforce in personal development and growth on the one hand and providing support and direction for those within the workforce possessing critical skills and talents to warrant separate consideration on the other (Muratori & Smith, 2015). Practices within HRD should focus on both improved employee performance and subsequent improvements in organizational performance (Kareem & Hussein, 2019). This requires, in part, creating confidence and credibility within key individuals through the practices of talent development (Jardak & Matoussi, 2020).

As with any productive process, it is necessary to understand the materials involved. To ensure a particular outcome, one needs to understand the characteristics, strengths, weaknesses, and flaws within the materials and how to strengthen them to meet the needs of the process (Permarupan et al, 2013). With human resources development, the materials are the individuals within the organization. The processes of WD, CD, and TD seek to strengthen the workforce and individuals within the workforce, supporting HRD and OD (Kareem & Hussein, 2019). To assess the qualities of the individuals calls for an understanding of the person's sense of identity and the sociocultural processes that have contributed to that sense of identity.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this research study is constructed upon two models:

1. Identity status in occupational identity development (OID) theory from Erikson's (1968) identity development model as modified by Kroger & Marcia (2011), and

2. Social cognitive career theory (SCCT)'s agentic influence based on Bandura's (1981) social cognitive theory (SCT), as refined by Lent et al (1996).

There are three general worldviews from which adolescents create their sense of self-identity: ideological mindset, interpersonal relations, and occupational career (Erikson, 1968). Erikson described each worldview as a spectrum spreading from confusion to definition. The worldviews, viewed as scales of stability, were overly simplified versions of reality and later elaborated upon by dividing each into intersecting fields of exploration and commitment. The four defined outcomes, or identity development states (Rowe & Marcia, 1980), are generalities within which numerous states of cognitive identity development exist (Sankey & Young, 1996).

In their study on the future of identity development research, Syed & McLean (2018) noted two relevant areas of research that were needed. First, the question of *when* identity develops (presumably including occupational identity), noting that the age of the individual does not meet the standards for a reliable metric as every student varies in the amount of potential occupational skills and experience exposure at any given age. Second, they recognized the need for research into the content of identity and the subsequent development of a content taxonomy or landscape of attitudes, beliefs, values, behaviors, and experiences of the individual. Syed & McLean argue that the process and mechanics of identity development have been significantly researched but understanding how each component of one's identity interconnect and affect the overall identity and the underlying process development and the sociocultural effects surrounding the individual is still lacking.

Occupational Identity Development

A student's identity, separate from their parents and family, is a creation built from a series of milestones. One of the most important aspects of this construct is the development of an

occupational identity (Phelan & Kinsella, 2009). The OID process provides a meta-metric model that assists in understanding *where* a student stands in the process of developing their occupational identity on a two-axis structure or snapshot consisting of occupational exploration on one axis and the level of career commitment on the other (Kroger & Marcia, 2011).

Optimally, an occupational identity is the element of one's integrated identity that embodies both the person's career participation and vocational purpose within the society. The practical goal of students at institutions of higher education, regardless of academic level, is to find a place within the vocational structure of society. Establishing an occupational identity is a part of both that student's relationship with the job market and their own personal image of who they are (Darity & Goldsmith, 1996). In other words, a student's occupational identity becomes a part of their integrated identity (Nyström, 2009) to the point that their occupation takes up a central part of their perception of their identity (Christiansen, 1999).

Structure of the OID model

The operationalization of Erikson's model (Erikson, 1968) elaborated on the concept of development spectrums by creating a two-axis model, expanding the spectrum into a two-dimensional model of *exploration*, i.e., the examination of the possible identities available, and *commitment*, i.e., the choice of which possibilities to accept (Rowe & Marcia, 1980). The structure of the OID model consists of four factors (including foreclosure, achievement, diffusion and moratorium) that reflect the exploration and commitment that students experience while establishing their identity (Kroger & Marcia, 2011).

The two-axis OID model. The OID model essentially describes the interaction of two identity components: exploration and commitment. The first condition measures the quantity and quality of effort on the part of the college student in exploring their occupational options.

Exploration occurs while the student is choosing their career, usually during their adolescent years (Kracke & Schmitt-Rodermund, 2001). The second axis under OID describes the level of commitment to the selected occupation (Colarelli & Bishop, 1990).

Table 1: Occupational Identity Status Source: (Rowe & Marcia, 1980)

		Exploration	
	Level	Low	High
Commitment	High	Foreclosure	Achievement
	Low	Diffusion	Moratorium

Diffusion. In identity diffusion, an individual has done little to explore their career options and lacks any firm commitments (Fadjukoff, Pulkkinen, Lyyra, & Kokko, 2016), demonstrating a state of apathy towards their occupational identity. It would intuitively seem that total diffusion would be impossible, but circumstances may have led the student to be dejected and unmotivated in determining occupational identity (Allen, 2015). Such difficulties leave college students mentally unable or unwilling either to continue exploration of or commitment to a particular career path without significant guidance (Morgan & Ness, 2003).

Foreclosure. Under identity foreclosure, students have found their way to a commitment without exploration. Generally, foreclosed adolescents either found their identity through the acceptance of parental (or other) standards and values without exploration or experienced some life events that profoundly truncated their identity development process (Al Diyar & Salem, 2015), not necessarily detrimentally. In either case, the student is no longer exploring their options. Under foreclosure, the student has chosen a specific occupation that may or may not be in alignment with their true personal image of themselves or their interests (Hassan et al, 2017).

In caste-based societies, this choice was often imposed, as students in those societies were generally expected to hold the same occupational position in society as their parents (Munshi & Rosenzweig, 2006). Currently, significant progress has been made towards phasing this practice out, although some families and social groups still maintain these values (Srinivas, 2003).

Moratorium. Moratorium is a state of exploration as it relates to the student's occupational identity. As noted, some students choose to avoid career indecision by foreclosing their career choice in favor of their parents' input. Other students, through a process of exploration and experimentation, assert themselves into the market in a way that is consistent with their constructed identity. The state of moratorium can be viewed as positive or negative, depending on the reason the student is in that development state. Students in moratorium seek to identify and understand what career options are available to them (Berman et al, 2001). The student is in the process of exploration of their options and interests without having made a firm decision regarding their career choice (Al Diyar & Salem, 2015). In the positive mode of this state, the student may be authentically caught up in examining their options, wanting to make a good choice for their future. In the negative mode, the student may have found himself or herself bewildered by the many options and in desperate need of guidance.

Achievement. The mark of success under the OID model is the state of achievement, indicating a successful navigation of the occupational exploration process and a selection of a suitable career path. Young & Lichtenberg (1996) presented achievement as the successful establishment of identity separate from parental or familial influences. While the establishment of a separated identity may be true for some, it is not necessarily true for all as has been found in cases of "helicopter" parenting (Kovach, 2019). While OID suggests that the individual is in control of their identity formation (Phelan & Kinsella, 2009), sociocultural groups like the

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student's family play an integral role in constructing the person's sense of occupational identity (Rudman & Dennhardt, 2008). In achieving this status, students strive to improve their potential for both success and job satisfaction (Luyckx et al, 2010).

Beyond the OID

Over time, students may realize a fifth status, "searching moratorium," or a reconsideration of their previously achieved identity (Schwartz, et al., 2011). The status of achievement under the OID model, while stable in and of itself, is not necessarily the end of the cycle. The cyclical nature hidden within the OID model creates a spiral that alternates between achievement and moratorium, marked by periods of reconsideration of the established identity, usually in response to some crisis event (Zikic & Klehe, 2006). Therefore, OID status is also transient. This insight makes understanding the OID process and those forces that influence the process more important, as the individual may face an identity crisis at multiple points in their life, requiring a periodic repetition of the exploratory phases of the OID (Schwartz, et al., 2011). The prevalence of the mid-life crisis may suggest an integrally developmental phase of OID over time.

Social Cognitive Career Theory

The principal aspect of SCCT use arises around understanding core differences between the experiences of students from individualist (Western) versus collectivist (Eastern) culture. The SCCT itself is a product of individualist culture; does this mean it does not apply to collectivist cultures? In principle, it should apply due to the structure of the SCCT model. That is, by dividing social influence into the abstractions of individual, proxy, and collaborative agencies, Bandura (1981) and Lent et al (1994) left its usefulness open-ended, applicable in principle to any environment or culture.

Hofstede (1991) used an analogy of any cultural and other social influences being akin to the software installed on a computer. The closest analogy to hiring a new employee would be buying a used computer and having no idea what the prior owner installed or stored on its hard drive. The available "software" is dependent on the person's past sociocultural career development, which affects the person's performance within the workforce and any future career development. As globalization expands, understanding the dynamics between workforce development (WD) and career development (CD) grant increased clarity into the roles of HRD and its interactions with academic and parental CD, both in regard to personal development and organizational capacity building.

Society exposes college students to a vast number of social signals regarding the operations of the society around them and their role within its activities. It is particularly true that such signals can affect the student's perceptions of their future career. For both domestic and international students, the generalities of the SCCT model provide the structure for evaluating the cultural differences between individual, parental, and other social effects on OID and academic career decision-making (Lent et al, 2002).

On academic campuses, this allows the typical influences of peers, parental figures, instructors, and academic advisors to be isolated and recognized. In individualist cultures, the agentic contributions and choices of the student are stronger, in theory, than parental proxy influences; for collectivist cultures, parental and social agencies are stronger. The SCCT model guides examination of the balances between the influence sources.

Historic perspectives on adolescent development focused on the young student's need to have significance within their society (Yeager & Dweck, 2012). Indeed, the role one plays within society can reflect considerable significance for the concept of identity (Sokol, 2009). While

seldom overt, influences from this on the process of role identification continue as the college student chooses his or her career path.

Career indecision is an inability to make a decision about the vocation one wishes to pursue (Santos et al, 2014). Career indecision is related empirically to various intra-individual constructs that tend to cloud the efforts of students when making a choice regarding their future (Guay et al, 2003) including perceptions of parental control over the person's career decisions (Kırdök & Harman, 2018). Additional concerns occur in cases of parentally imposed career choices or when parents exhibit undue pressure upon the development of the student's career narrative (Singh & Agrawal, 2015), which can adversely affect the person's sense of wellbeing in their occupation (Bhatia & Bhardwaj, 2017), triggering potential indecision.

Prior to developing the social cognitive theory (SCT), Bandura was convinced of the importance of the sociocultural environment in the learning process (Bandura & Walters, 1977); this he dubbed the social learning theory (SLT), later retitled as Bandura and others began to realize the broader application of Bandura's work to other social contexts. Under the social cognitive theory of agentic influences, Bandura recognized that each person is subject to multiple internal and external social forces that affect their career decision-making and ultimately other life choices (Bandura, 1989). The social influences fall into three categories—individual, proxy, and collaborative, with some degree of overlap—forming the framework for better understanding influences over the individual identity (Bandura, 1999).

Social cognitive career theory (Lent & Brown, 1996) embraces the insights of Bandura's (1981) social cognitive theory (SCT). Previously, models sought to understand how people were influenced in their career choices by focusing on the results of internal (cognitive) approaches. Under Bandura's (1981) SCT model, social relationships, including one's relationship with

oneself, exhibit a capacity to influence the identity development process. By expanding the model to include social influences, Bandura opened the door to a more comprehensive understanding of the occupational identity development process. Lent & Brown (1996) recognized that SCT also applies to the development of one's career identity. Applying this agentic model to the career decision-making model (Lent et al, 2002), the SCT is extended and transformed into the social cognitive career theory (SCCT), detailing the manner in which each agency channel affects the occupational identity and career decisions of the individual.

While subsequent research includes claims to prior findings' validity, the truncated timetable in Lent et al (2019) lacks long-term substantiation, with only four months between samplings. Longitudinal studies generally call for multiple examinations over an extended period to define and verify the trends within the dataset and populations studies (Sedgwick, 2014). The claims of validity also stand with the lack of explanation as to the predictability of outcomes based on the underlying model. This failing is of particular importance for HRD in that human resource development (and in particular CD) is an ongoing social activity that occurs over the course of years, rather than months. The claimed findings of validity and predictability are apparently to be accepted without question or rational support for their limited application.

In overcoming the weaknesses of Lent et al (1994, 2000, 2002, 2016, 2017, and 2019) mentioned previously, however, it is necessary to examine the SCCT in action. What follows is an examination of each of the three agentic channels disclosed in the prior literature sources, showing that the SCCT model is a functional and contributory mate to OID.

While the prior work from Lent et al (1996, 2016, 2017 & 2019) are open to question, the SCCT model has proven a functional guide for understanding the social, familial, and cultural inputs into the OID and career-decision processes. The validity question can, therefore, be set

aside. Subsequent use of the SCCT model for research studies has, in practice, proven the logical

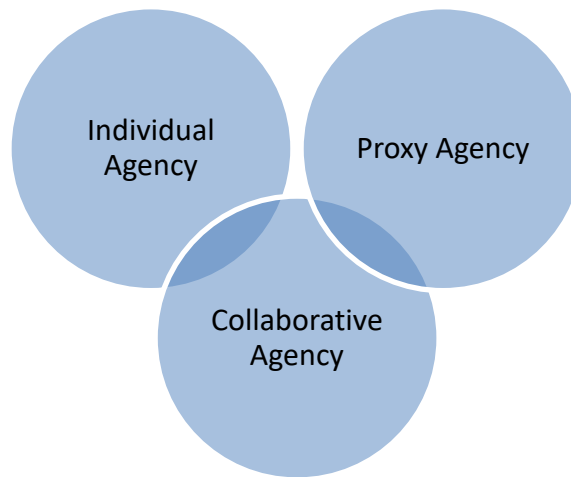underpinnings of the model. (See Figure 1.)

Figure 1: The social agency model. *Source:* Bandura (1981).

The Student as an Individual Social Agent. Individual agency is a complex topic in

that a person is both an actor and the subject of the action, a plurality or feedback loop of

personal construction (Bandura, 1999). Bandura recognized that people are not subject strictly to

environmental influences but also by internal influences and motivations of their own design and

implementation. Actions within this scope are designed by a person to contribute to and build the

skillsets necessary to accomplish their goals and desires (Bandura, 1989).

Under the SCCT, the individual is treated as a social agent affecting their occupational

identity through agentic actions. As with external influences, internal influences can support or

hinder the goals and intentions of the individual (Shogren et al, 2017). As individuals seek to

establish a stable occupational identity, they become both actor and target of the action, creating

an agentic duality (Lent & Brown, 1996). The agentic duality gives the individual the power to

guide their own choices about what influences to accept and what influences to resist in determining their future path.

The role of the individual as self-agent in career development opens the path to the self-management of the individual, allowing the expectations of the individual to weigh in on their decisions of goals and dedication to their chosen career path (Lent et al, 2016). Again, these expectations hold the same positive-negative relationship with outcomes that parental expectations hold (Rosenthal, 2009), further supported by the skillsets and interests the person's prior experiences have equipped them with (Syed & McLean, 2018) and that empower both their occupational identity formation and their future career development (Howard, Castine, & Flanagan, 2016).

Parents as Social Proxy Agents. Agentic proxies in occupational identity development and the career decision-making process are those influences in which a person seeks the action of others or acts upon the wishes of others (Bandura, 1999), rather than taking action on their own behalf or within the context of their own best interests or the best interest of others. A student might use their proxy agency by looking to others for a decision about their career. For instance, a student who forecloses their career choice in favor of influence from their parents uses proxy agency, accepting the decision or judgment of the parents in place of making their own determination (Meeus et al, 2002). Alternatively, parents can exert a more direct form of proxy agency by steering their son or daughter into particular activities over the course of time, increasing the likeliness of the college student favoring certain career options over others (Walker et al, 2011). This form of agency is of particular interest in this study as the influences of parental pressure on the career choices of college students is similar to the pressure exhibited

by football and little league parents who seem to live vicariously through their children, directing the activity, but not being directly involved in the game.

In their review of prior literature and agendas for future research, Sax et al (2009) found a significant lack of empirical literature on college student development at a major institution in California. While significant strides have been made in many issues, including career decision-making, the interaction between SCCT and OID is still a significant subject lacking empirical research—a subject this study addressed with its examination of parental influences and involvement in the life-long career development of their children. DeRidder (1990) found that parental influences on students begin in early childhood as parents influence the play, exploration, and experimental stages of the child's career development. As the child responds to the influences or shows talent or interest in particular areas, supportive parents can affect the path the child takes (Lowe & Dotterer, 2018), eventually affecting the child's occupational and career choices when they make the transition to higher education (Smith, 2018) and establish themselves as independent adults. In recent years, the trend of parental involvement in the career development of their children has grown, forcing institutions of higher education to take notice as parents have become increasingly active in the collegiate academic activities of their children (Winters, 2016; Simmons, 2018) and prompting the need to examine the role parents play in the process. Notwithstanding these findings, participants in the present study had very few concrete reflections of pre-collegiate CD or parental influences (see Discussion).

Schachter & Ventura (2008) discussed the role that those working and interacting with young children and adolescents have on influencing and shaping the identity-formation process through intentional participation in the activities known to contribute to the experiences of youth. This participation can be defined using three profiles, identified by Zhou et al (2019): (1)

supportive, but not intrusive, (2) unsupportive, but not permissive, and (3) ambivalent, and controlling. Of the three profiles, the unsupported students reported higher career ambivalence and lower career adaptability, associable with the OID diffusion status and career indecision. Students whose parents were supportive and encouraged their child to be independent showed clearer autonomy and decisiveness trends in their ability to make career choices, though many also reported seeking parental input (Haines, 2017).

The parenting styles that students experience in childhood and adolescence can also have significant effects on their career development and decision-making abilities. Salim & Preston (2019) found in their study involving 427 male and 397 female high school students that not only did parenting styles affect the students but that there were also significant differences in gender response. Female students showed a positive correlation with paternal authoritarianism and authoritarian maternalism while for male students, the styles were reversed, implying that males and females fare better under differentiated parenting. The style of parenting also has implications for HRD in that employees who experienced authoritarian parenting performed better in their careers under similar leadership, while those who experienced non-authoritarian parenting performed better under participative and transformational leadership (Chen, Huang, & Chen., 2019).

The Family as Collaborative Social Agency. Agentic collaboration is also a factor in that under collaborative agency multiple parties work together towards a common goal (Bandura, 1999). In the case of this study, the goal would be reaching the state of OID achievement such that the student has successfully navigated their way through the exploration process with the help of others, including their parents, and has committed to an occupational path of their choice

and interest (Lent et al, 2002). In the state of collaborative agency, the student would seek advice and assistance in their exploration of career options from others (Zikic & Hall, 2009).

Families reflecting healthy differentiation between members allow each member to define the appropriate balance of intimacy or connectedness and individuality or separateness (Wingfield & Haste, 1987). In general, such families can be defined as having clear boundaries of personal identity, a lack of intergenerational alliances, uninhibited communication, and exceptional conflict resolution. While this family structure and culture can encourage individuality (Allen, 2015), its analogues are not unknown in traditional cultures. According to some researchers, this represents an environment in which identity achievement is optimally possible (Dellas & Jernigan, 1990) but not accomplished until the individual breaks their identity from that of their parental figures (Lucas, 1997).

A major complicating issue is the socioeconomic state of the family. Wang et al (2016) found that states of poverty appeared to inhibit healthy parental involvement in their children's education, though the mechanisms linking the issues were not examined in their study. Thomas-Lester (2017) found similar results, but expounded upon the mechanisms, describing the time-demands of work impeding the parents' ability to show much needed support for the education of their children.

The prior literature seems to convey the message that parents play an integral part in career development, to varying degrees of success. Drawing on the prior literature, understanding the phenomenon of parental involvement in the career development process will enhance the current body of knowledge. This raises the question whether career development parenting can be defined on the level of a family project (Young et al, 2001) or with parents having merely an advisory influence on lifelong career development (Levine et al, 2018)?

The distinction between the family project and an advisory influence might be viewed as distinctions between the cultural bases of career development. From the perspective of a collective culture, bringing a child to the point of career choice might be a planned, long-term project with a specific goal in mind (Young et al, 2001). In an individualistic culture, career development is treated as an ongoing process that extends from childhood until retirement (Levine et al, 2018).

Disengaged families tend to leave their children feeling rejected and insecure. Such feelings may lead the student to become engulfed in a state of OID moratorium, exploring career and identity options for extended periods before making any commitments (Salim & Preston, 2019). Families that are enmeshed and poorly differentiated lack the necessary boundaries for unfettered career exploration and commitment (Kinnier et al, 1990). Undifferentiated families seldom allow the expression of individuality and personal opinions. Students from an undifferentiated family may fall into a state of inaction or diffusion of identity (Berrios-Allison, 2005).

Students experiencing overinvolved parents tend to become dependent on parental support and allow OID foreclosure of their identity to gain parental approval (Young & Lichtenberg, 1996). In such cases, the individual allows the influence and pressures of familial occupational traditions or expectations to take over their own preferences (Bloemen-Bekx et al, 2019). Families from Asian communities may exhibit a state of collectivism in which the person's identity is intermixed and dependent upon family and community (Polenova, 2018). Avoidance of shaming the collective social structure binds the individual to parental, communal, or cultural expectations of behavior, including career decision-making (Kantamneni et al, 2018).

Literature and the Research Questions

1. How do Singaporean college students, studying in the US, view the career

   development activities of their youth, and to what extent do they feel those

   experiences have influenced their current career decisions and development path

   (RQ1)?

   a. To what extent were their parents involved in those activities (RQ1a)?

2. How does parental influence in the context of SCCT inform the process of OID over

   the career decision of Singaporean college students in the US (RQ2)?

   a. To what extent do the two theories' processes influence one another, or are they

      exclusive in their relational effects (RQ2a)?

   b. How does the evidence gathered reflect this structure and inform the career

      development process (RQ2b)?

Prior literature generally addresses RQ2. Specifically, the relationship between the SCCT

and OID models involves more than the SCCT simply informing OID but exhibiting more of a

symbiotic relationship where a person's identity development is defined and affected by the

social cognitive environment round them, and the environment is then affected by the person's

sense of identity. From this insight, application of both models are both possible and necessary to

properly capture the full picture career selection by international college students. Examining

both OID and SCCT is also necessary due to the dynamic relationship that exists between them;

OID provides a snapshot of the person's progress in developing their occupational identity while

SCCT provides the paths of influence that lead to the student's OID status, revealing the internal

and external influences affecting a student's decision to pursue their occupational identity.

Additionally, key differences between individualist and collectivist cultures seem to require a reexamination of these dynamics to help determine any cultural differences in RQ1.

Parenting Styles

Positive Career Parenting. Gust (2015) found that while significant differences exist between international and domestic student populations over career decision-making self-efficacy, no familial or parental influences seemed relevant other than general career support focused on the student making their own choice, rather than having a career imposed on them. Notably, although many students in each category described the perception of familial and parental expectations, such expectations seemed to have inconsequential effects on the students' ultimate choices; international students more frequently reported a mismatch between their chosen pursuits and the expectations of their familial or parental expectations (Gust, 2015). Consulting friends and other relatives reportedly addressed the conflict over the mismatch (Ma et al, 2014). Strategies to earn the approval and support of parents included negotiated compromises between personal interests and parental expectations and pushing themselves to earn academic honors (Ma et al, 2014). These strategies may be the first recognizable practices contributing to the concept of career supportive parenting.

The findings of Haines (2017) suggested that parents can and do act as career coaches in some cases. Combined with DeRidder (1990) and the other sources cited, the role of parents as career coaches can be viewed as a lifelong, collaborative phenomenon (Middleton & Loughead, 1993) that supports career development tasks (Rogers et al, 2018). When examined through the lens of the SCCT (Lent et al, 2016), parents who hold perceptions of positive support for their child when compared to the child's perceptions showed a predictive association with the students' successful career choice achievements (Ginevra et al, 2015). Olle and Fouad (2015)

found further support for the effects of parental support as predictive of positive outcome expectations. It is interesting that Olle and Fouad's findings closely parallel the findings of Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968), which found positive expectations of teachers correlated with positive academic outcomes of their students, an effect known today as the Pygmalion effect. While the experiment focused on the effects of classroom expectations, the findings of Olle and Fouad (2015) seem to suggest that the effect applies to the parent-child relationship as well. Alternatively, as Hofer and Spengler (2018) found, negative expectations and parenting appear to have the opposite effect, known as the Golem effect (Rosenthal, 2009).

Examples of positive parenting approaches treat the student with dignity and respect. This includes respecting the child's personal occupational interests. Subsequently, career-supportive parenting intentionally exposes the child to activities and experiences that encourage and support those occupational interests (Maree, 2018). A child interested in computer programming, for example, might need a computer suitable to experiment with programming. Likewise, paints and other artistic materials would make excellent gifts for a child interested in becoming an artist.

A documented example of negative parenting approaches, known as "helicopter," parenting, has been associated with over-controlling or over-protective parents (Padilla-Walker & Nelson, 2012). Helicopter parenting is an allegory about the parent 'hovering' over a child, controlling or manipulating most, if not all, major decisions or experiences the child might have. The child of over-protective and over-controlling parents are seldom successful in establishing an independent identity (Pautler, 2017), harming the student's ability to create a suitable occupational identity (Biddle, 2016).

Another form of negative parenting identified exists primarily in collectivist cultures in which the person's identity is tightly enmeshed with that of their families. In such cultures, the individual is interdependent with their family and community and raised to defer to parental expectations in order to avoid bringing shame or dishonor upon their family or community (Kantamneni et al, 2018). This includes the person's choices of occupation and career. Griffin & Hu (2019) found significant evidence of parental career expectations and the related effects in their examination of 370 applicants to medical school.

Implications of Collectivist Parenting Styles. The parenting style that the individual has been exposed to will affect, for example, the management or leadership style the individual will exhibit within their organizational role as well as the person's response to particular management or leadership styles (Young et al, 1991). Recognizing that parental and social influences play an integral part in the development of each person's sense of identity informs HRD of the person's psycho-historical personality—including their sense of occupational identity (Jungen, 2008)—meaning that consideration of collectivist culture's influences on parenting style is necessary.

Collective cultures tend to either treat the occupational identity and career development process as a series of negotiated agreements or as imposed social structures that establish the expected and acceptable relationship between the student-child and the sociocultural authority figures (Keshavarz & Baharudin, 2009). This is influenced heavily by the parenting style under which the student-child is raised, affecting both the development of the student-child's personalized identity and their future relationship with sociocultural authority figures, including academic instructors and school administration. Evaluation of parenting styles, therefore, depends upon the culture within which they occur (Borstein, 2005).

In collectivist cultures, the prevalence of authoritarian parenting is high and has significant implications for the developing youth within the cultures (Keller et al, 2004)**.** One of the critical implications is the transmission of intergenerational values by which developing youth learn their role and status within the social and familial relationships (Rudy & Grusec, 2001). In collectivist cultures, authoritarian parenting is not based on control or power, but on social continuity and resilience, a fundamental difference between eastern and western authoritarianism that has significant effect on the student's self-esteem (Herz & Gullone, 1999).[4] Additionally, authoritative and permissive parenting styles are also slightly differentiated between individualistic western cultures and collectivist eastern cultures. In their study of the collectivist culture of Malaysia et al, Keshavarz and Baharudin (2009) found that Malaysian parents shared perspectives with other Asian collectivist countries, favoring collective traditionalism as a positive parenting style, unlike Western individualist parents who view authoritarianism as unfavorable or even damaging to the youth's individuality.

According to Rudy & Grusec (2001), again these correlates to the transmission of traditional values from one generation to another, affecting possible responses during and after adolescence as young students defer more to elders, in order to develop their own sense of identity and responsibility within those parameters. This demonstrated that the formation of identity can be influenced by parental intrusion.

In collective cultures and in cases of helicopter parenting, the parent can be viewed as pressuring their child to act by proxy influence to honor the parent's expectations, subjecting the child to an environment of authoritarianism (Biddle, 2016). Parents that follow a collaborative

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[4] This difference is significant enough that it properly warrants its own distinction as, say, between traditionalist (eastern) and authoritarian (western) parenting styles. Where necessary for cross-cultural clarity of distinction, this study uses "traditional" or "traditionalism" to capture the eastern ethos.

approach seem to foster stronger states of independence and autonomy, a mindset that influences how the student views the world and their roles, personally, socially, and professionally within it (Middleton & Loughead, 1993; Rogers et al., 2018). The findings for parents as social agents are significant. The available literature infers that parent make (and are governed unconsciously by) decisions regarding their parenting approach, modifying their behavior towards their children, and influencing the environment in which the child is raised.

OID/SCCT Feedback

The idea of occupation informing identity that some attribute to Christiansen (1999) was a part of Erikson's (1968) original vision, though its importance was not focused upon. Christiansen was the first to examine specifically the link between occupation and identity, showing that occupation in modern societies can become linked inexorably to both personal identities and to the public image presented to society. Christiansen further argued that while identity guides the development of occupational pursuits, occupation also becomes a part of the person's identity, creating a psychological feedback loop.
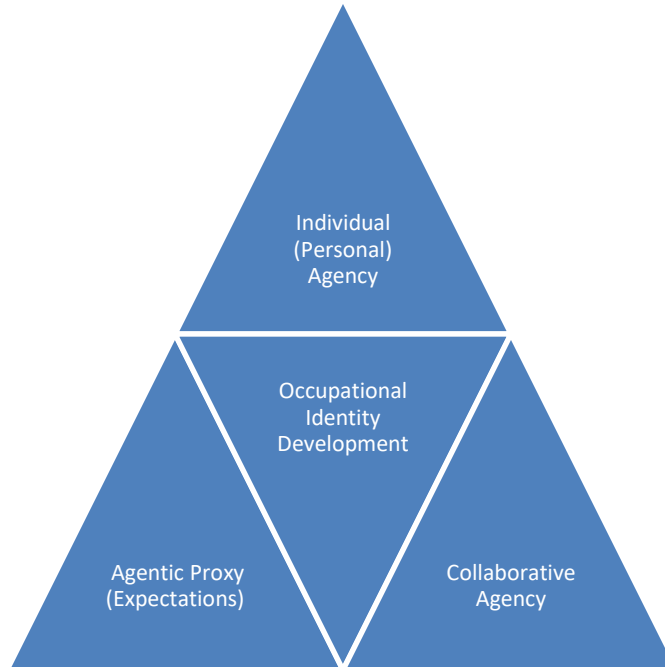
Figure 2: Construction Relationship between SCCT and OID Models

Phelan & Kinsella (2009) argued in favor of Christiansen's perspective, depicting occupation as an active contributor to identity rather than as simply another achievement in the career development process. Phelan & Kinsella's research was also limited by the continued individual-centered meta-theory; they mention the moral implications of communities and societies imposing upon the person's development of a personal identity as an immoral condition.

Yates (2017) provides additional insight into this by depicting the OID as a set of possible, non-exclusive selves, each of which may have their own vision of prototypical occupational identity and have unique sociocultural influences justifying the occupation. In this understanding, a person has many possible paths to follow, both in identity and in occupation, the ultimate selection of which is affected by external influences, including potential agenda-driven influences from the student's parents and other actors.

Career Development's OID Dependence. Many college students are still exploring their career options while attending academic pursuits and preparing themselves to enter the workforce; as such, they have not yet established their professional identities. While the application of career development practices in higher education claims to have some influence on their career decisions, a level of occupational identity or an understanding of what interests the students' have are necessary to guide the decision-making process during the transition from childhood to adulthood (Matthews, 2017). It is somewhat problematic (outside of the strict legal definition) to define an exact age at which the transition from childhood to adulthood occurs as each person matures at their own rate, with some starting to make the transition prior to their teen years and others not transitioning psychologically until well into legal adulthood (Erikson, 1968).

It is clear that career development is a sociocultural activity that can be defined within Bandura's social cognitive model (SCT; Bandura, 1989), particularly as extended by Lent & Brown (1996) with the SCCT model. It is important to stress again, however, that much of the SCCT research available focuses on the person's agentic activities (Lent et al, 2017) within individualist cultures, rather than on the extended sociocultural influences that affect the occupational identity and ultimately the career decisions of the individual (Lent et al, 2016).

Under the SCCT model, a student making a career choice based solely on their own interests is flexing their personal agency (Bandura, 1999). Doing so should enable the college student to establish their individuality without regard to other social influences. However, considering that social interaction shapes the student's perceptions of the world around them, this would be an impossibility according to Bandura, and places the student at odds with the social structure and other social agents around them (Bandura, 1989). Additionally, the created identity

influences future reiterations of the social cognitive process. Figure 3 summarizes the SCCT model informing OID model.
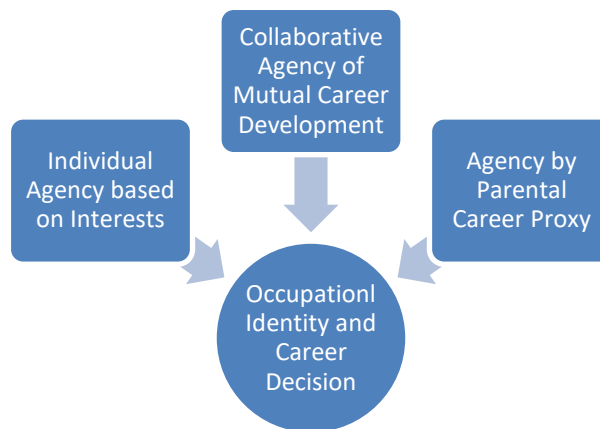

Figure 3: SCCT Informing OID. Source: Lent et al (1994)

Career Development as a Social Activity. In human resource development and career development counseling (CDC), employees or students are often viewed in isolation. They are assessed, typically, for personality and psychological fit with the company and for the skills that may be of value to the organization. What is not seen are the myriad of people who have had a hand in raising, teaching, training, and influencing the employees prior to their application for employment. As such, the responsibilities for training abdicated by companies and expected of educational institutions would do well to compass this social activity and variety as much as possible—at a minimum, to the degree that it affects the employee's performance.

Summary of the Literature

The role of identity exploration is an integral part of becoming an adult, including the integration of one's occupational choices and career development process (Stringer & Kerpelman, 2010). While no single theory or model can explain or contain every possible permutation, the goal of career counseling and development is to inform and guide the student

using theoretical frameworks such as OID (Kroger & Marcia, 2011) and the SCCT (Lent & Brown, 1996) to aid the student in establishing a career path.

The available theories, when viewed together, create a continuous timeline of learning, from adolescence to occupation (Seligman et al, 1988; Seligman et al 1991; Super 1990). Models such as OID afford a snapshot of the student's current position on their path and give insight into how counseling professionals might aid them in their progress. Under the SCCT model, students take part in their development through multiple channels of agency. Individually, the student seeks to understand and pursue their personal interests by becoming both agentic actor and subject (Bandura, 1999).

This gives the student great power over their own development. However, when parents exercise their agentic powers over the student's development, best practices indicate a collaborative effort involving any key stakeholder (student, parents, teachers, and friends, as appropriate). Thus, identity and career development do not only involve a solitary venture but rather a collaborative enterprise that prepares the student for the future. Beneficial to understanding this processing are the evidence drawn from SCCT-informed OID (and vice versa)—specifically around how the student's childhood experiences have affected their career interests and decisions, and how the practices of career-supportive parenting build the capacity of students to define their future occupation.

The insights which can be taken from these theoretical frameworks in the context of this study are quite straightforward. First, for international students from a collectivist (or hybrid) culture, application of the SCCT must likely be done with adequate recognition that parental, social, and cultural proxy agency have greater power upon the OID process when compared to students from individualist cultures. This offers clear benefits and drawbacks: i.e., an already

narrowed and focused set of expected future career options as choices (benefit) but also brings conflicts or tensions when students desire something other than those choices. Second, regarding students from individualist cultures, personal agency will seem to have greater power given that the choice of occupational identity (at least experientially) seems to come from the students themselves. This again has benefits and drawbacks: a potentially unlimited array of future careers as options to choose from (benefit) but far less guidance and increased anxiety about the "right" choice to pick.[5] Third, students from hybrid cultures, such as Singapore, may reflect elements of both individualist and collectivist cultures.

While much of the prior literature brushes the surface of the relationship of parenting and the social cognitive theory (SCT), an in-depth understanding of the deep dynamics of parenting and how parental influence over the college student's development from childhood is needed but still lacking (Lei, 2016). From reviewing the available literature, this seems particularly true with regard to international students from a collectivist or hybrid culture like Singapore (Khasmohammadi, 2018). Moreover, because students and their parents may only be marginally aware of the decision-making process and any parental influences upon it, locating or drawing out data to support the theoretical framework and future research into the phenomenon remains challenging (Bulgan & Çiftçi, 2018).

Nevertheless, the potential benefits outweigh the difficulties. By better understanding the deep dynamics of parental influence, strategies can be formed to address long-term career development more effectively (Yeo & Chee, 2018). Though this would not normalize the historic academic role and attitude of *in loco parentis* (Latin: in the place of a parent; Couture et al.,

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[5] Longitudinal research to study ultimate satisfaction with career choice between individualist and collectivist cultures would be an interesting topic for future research, both for parents and students.

2017), it may mean that having a better understanding of a person's upbringing and how it contributes to the SCCT/OID process could contribute significantly to the body of knowledge and goals of both academic institutions and human resource development.

Levine et al (2018) found that the understanding regarding career exploration by young students is incomplete, lacking exploration into the impact of career interventions and inquiry into what changes are needed in career exploration and academic support for students struggling with incomplete occupational identities. Prior research tends to focus on the indicators or outcomes of specific interventions, generally over a truncated timeline (Lent et al, 2019). Additional longitudinal and multiple intervention studies are needed to establish long-term effectiveness of existing interventions and to allow comparative analysis to identify the best intervention strategies available.

CHAPTER 3:

METHODOLOGY

This study aims to establish an understanding of the applicability of the OID and SCCT models to international students from a collective society while minimizing any confounding variables. The fact that most Singaporean schools teach in English minimizes the effects of linguistic differences, allowing more focus on cultural differences. By seeking to understand the career development activities of Singaporean college students when recalling activities during their youth, the dynamics between parental figures and college students from collectivist cultures may be ascertained.

This study also examines the effects of the social cognition career theory's power to inform the development of college student's occupational identity through the analysis of parental influences on college student and their career decisions. This study explores the research questions by using parental involvement in the career decision process as a real-world examination into how the SCCT agentic channels inform and build upon the existing identity structure of the student, with focus on students originating from a collective culture. This study qualitatively explores the research questions (below) through a combined framework of SCT/SCCT and OID frameworks, along with parental and collectivist culture frameworks to explore its central subjects.

Research Questions

1. How do Singaporean college students, studying in the US, view the career development activities of their youth, and to what extent do they feel those experiences have influenced their current career decisions and development path (RQ1)?

a. To what extent were their parents involved in those activities (RQ1a)?

2. How does parental influence in the context of SCCT inform the process of OID over the career decision of Singaporean college students in the US (RQ2)?

a. To what extent do the two theories' processes influence one another, or are they exclusive in their relational effects (RQ2a)?

b. How does the evidence gathered reflect this structure and inform the career development process (RQ2b)?

Potential Personal Bias

My own background as a member of a collectivist culture motivates this study. My Asian background includes a mindset in which honoring the wishes of one's father is a part of one's identity. As discussed in the prior literature, such parental influences often include an expectation of career as defined by one's parents. As such, the personal interests of the college student may not be acknowledged. With this experience from my own culture, the topic of this study is important to me both in understanding my own history and in contributing that understanding to the body of knowledge for human resource development and academic career counseling. While it is important for me to minimize any biases arising from my biography, perfect objectivity is never possible within qualitative research. The goal, therefore, is to prevent my own experiences from clouding my judgment when analyzing the data collected for this study.

Research Design

Qualitative research uses open-ended response instruments or metadata taken from interviews, literary sources, or informant reports to study social and cultural conditions and interactions (Myers, 1997). Fraenkel et al (2011) found that designing such instruments and

experiments requires researchers to know what data they want and how to measure it. In social science research, however, qualitative research is frequently more appropriate when the research intent is exploratory and descriptive in nature, or when the central phenomenon in question is unquantifiable or where no valid instrument has emerged to attempt to model the qualitative data (Watkins, 2012). In particular, the goal of qualitative research is to study and uncover the "meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of things" (Berg & Lune, 2007, p. 3).

Rationale for Qualitative Inquiry and Research Approach

As Boodhoo & Purmessur (2009, pg. 1) observed, "Qualitative research is said to be exploratory, which is the collection, analysis and interpretation of data by observing human [behavior]." It is observed that even this definition fails to encompass all conditions outside of qualitative research. While some research can focus on quantitative factors and methods, many concepts or areas of research call for the use of a qualitative, non-quantitative approach (Green, 2007; Turner III, 2010). As such, this study is a synthesis of existing theoretical models, prior research, and the current research interviews. This study aims to be both a consolidation and validation of prior research findings. By seeking to identify the effectiveness of diverse parental interventions as influences on student career and occupational identity development, the researcher seeks to improve and expand the underlying body of knowledge for human resource development.

During the data gathering phase of this study, international Singaporean students at a public research, tier-1 university in the United States were interviewed about their memories of career development activities from middle adolescence (age 14-17) to the present. Interviews were transcribed and qualitatively analyzed through frameworks in prior research on career

development parental influences, involvement, and interventions on college-aged children. Investigation of college student career decision processes and the effects of parental influence on those processes benefit from a flexible model of data gathering - requiring more than counting objects or soliciting predefined responses on surveys. This amalgamation of sources and requirements is unsuitable for quantitative research methods, calling for a qualitative approach.

As this study investigates subjects that occur under natural conditions that resist quantification required under quantitative research, data for this study must be pursued in an exploratory manner (Watkins, 2012). Because this study intends to open the path to a better understanding of the relationship between parental influences and career choices by international college students from Singapore through a qualitative exploratory approach, the interview questions design for the qualitative exploratory research instrument must reflect that aim.

Qualitative interview questions for this study incorporate factors taken from the Occupational Identity Survey (OIS) to synthesize a link between the study data and the occupational identity development (OID) model. While the OIS is constructive for estimating the OID status of students, it lacks any mechanism for conducting further inquiry regarding the qualitative effects of parental influence or early career development activities. Additional questions investigating parental influences on career development through the social cognitive career theory (SCCT) were used to link the SCCT model's effects to the OID process, thereby adding to the overall body of qualitative knowledge in this field. Accordingly, responses to interview questions were codable in terms of the OID, SCCT, parenting models, and cultural influences set forth in prior literature. Data analysis was performed using directed content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005), a form of analysis based on an existing response codebook reflecting potential OID and SCCT responses. See Instrumentation section later in this chapter.

Research Setting

This study was conducted at a public research university in the Midwest United States with a large international student population (approximately 24% of the total student body). The majority of students originate from China, Singapore, South Korea, India, and Bangladesh, with smaller percentages from Europe, Africa, Southeast Asia, and Saudi Arabia. The form of interviewing was altered in response to the COVID-19 pandemic from in-person to virtual interviews via Internet teleconferencing platforms to protect both the participants and the interviewer form potential exposure. Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for research with human subjects was secured prior to any further steps of this study (Appendix B) and was approved conditional upon the protective use of teleconferencing software.

As the University has an organized body of Singaporean students, this population was selected as a semi-homogeneous example of international students having a shared cultural identity, allowing a lower rate of error than might be encountered with a more diverse Asian population. Additionally, Singaporean students come from a generally hybrid culture, a culture that respects the needs of the family or community mixed with the needs or interests of the individual. Junior- and senior-year students were selected because, unlike freshmen or sophomores, these students have assumedly chosen a specific major (or majors) and have a generally clearer understanding of what career or occupation path they want to pursue. This has importance for this research because a settled decision on a major (as a career path) may better afford participants a vantage point to reflect on the degree or intensity of parental influences on that choice. If students are still unclear, or in the midst of trying to weigh up factors to make a choice, the actual weight of parental influence may be skewed (upwards or downwards).

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Data Collection

Interviews were conducted using pandemic protocols (virtual interviews via Internet communication platforms versus in-person interviews). The protocols provided a unique opportunity in that many students had returned to their home countries in response to the growing pandemic crisis. Virtual interview platforms allowed the safe interviewing of subjects, regardless of their current physical location. Subsequently, the conducting of interviews was made possible that might otherwise have been impossible, given the sociological conditions and demands of the pandemic crisis.

Target Population and Sample

To explore the effects of parental involvement in the experiences and career development of international students, this research focused specifically on the collectivist/hybrid culture of Singapore. The population of this research was comprised of Singaporean students attending the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in any discipline with junior- or senior-year status who have officially declared a major. The aim of the research is to give insight into the applicability of prior OID and SCCT models (western/individualist constructs) on the international student population from the eastern/collectivist or hybrid culture of Singapore. International students from Singapore are raised a cultural hybridization of parenting and social customs and have historically reported issues of culture shock and disparities when attending institutes of higher learning in the United States similar to students of the eastern/collectivist nations of their surrounding Asian neighbors (Noordin et al., 2002). The issues are further complicated by the already challenging tasks involved in occupational identity and career development (Guichard & Lenz, 2005).

Recruitment

Recruitment for participants was conducted via the campus Singapore Student Association (SSA). The researcher contacted members of the SSA's leadership board to introduce the research project and share its details with the board members to gain their assistance in eliciting interest from its members in participating in the study. The researcher created and emailed a document with research details to the SSA administrators for distribution on the campus list server.

Sample Size

This study recruited fifteen (15) international Singaporean students for the semi-structured interview. Inclusion criteria for this study were: (1) international, Singaporean undergraduates, (2) with junior- or senior- year standing, and (3) who have officially declared a major. Successful participation of all fifteen was through virtual meetings performed via online communication platforms, such as Skype, Zoom, or Discord during January and February of 2021. The platforms allowed virtual interviews to be conducted without physical contact, a sensible requirement under the current COVID-19 pandemic restrictions.

Compared to quantitative study sample sizes, 15 participants may seem small. However, three factors justify the sample size in qualitative studies:

1) Much smaller sample sizes in qualitative studies compared to quantitative studies are both common and internally valid empirically;

2) The central phenomenon in question—student perceptions of parental influences on career choices—necessarily requires close (in-depth, deep, rich, detailed) attention to the fine-grained details of those perceptions and experiences. This makes bulk (very large) sampling infeasible and close data analysis intractable; and

3) Collecting data on 15 participants will likely reach data saturation, i.e., the point at which further new information ceases to meaningfully emerge from additional interviews, well before the fifteenth interview. Such values in qualitative research are often arbitrarily set (Francis et al, 2010). This study, however, takes into account the available Singaporean international student population (estimated as 120-150), selected a 10:1 ratio as the bases of inclusion (12-15 students), and taking the upper limit as representative of the population of interest.

Participant Consent and Data Sampling

The lead researcher secured signed electronic consent forms (Appendix C) from all confirmed participants (i.e., will read the consent form to participants, ensure they understand the conditions of participation, and provide a printed-out copy of the electronically signed consent form) prior to any data collection.

Data sampling was then conducted through an introductory demographic questionnaire (Appendix D), collected online, and semi-structured, in-depth, one-on-one audio-recorded interviews using the online platforms previously mentioned. The online platforms will allow the interviews to be recorded, permitting verbatim transcription for coding, with the transcripts provided to and discussed with interviewees during the follow-up sessions for member-checking to enhance data validity and for participant debriefing. All data (recorded, transcribed, and collected electronically) will be anonymized to protect the confidentiality and privacy of participants and kept in a password-protected electronic format accessible only to the researcher.

Instrumentation

The design of the interview protocols reflected the goals defined in the study's research questions. The questions were designed to elicit responses relevant to the SCCT/OID model, the

effects of culture and cultural experiences, and the influence and intervention of parenting elders, based on the research questions defined earlier and their interaction within the SCCT/OID model.

Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted by the researcher between September 2018 and October 2019 to prepare for this full study to examine further on the cultural parenting style and childhood career influences. Participants of this pilot study were junior and senior standing students from the College of Liberal Arts and Science who were close to the targeting population of this study. Recruited participant for the pilot test were ten (10) junior and senior students for the one-on-one interviews and all ten (10) participants completed the interview. The interviews were conducted at a secure room at the College of Education on University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign. After obtaining the permission of the participants, the interviews were audiotaped and transcribed only for analysis purposes. After the interviews, member-checking and inter-rater reliability was performed to ensure the accuracy of the interview analysis. The focus of the data analysis was to examine whether the interview structure, questions and theories could obtain relevant responses from participants regarding their parental influences on career choices. Findings of the pilot study were used to 1) demonstrate the practicality and quality of the interview instruments and 2) to inform the full dissertation study design.

Demographic Survey

Demographic survey was carried via SurveyMonkey (Appendix D) and consisted of two sections. The first section focused on the participants' personal demographic such as gender and race, while the second section of the survey focused on academic information such as academic

standing and major. The survey took no longer than 10 minutes to complete. All surveys are anonymous; an acronym was assigned to each participant.

Interview Protocol

Interviews consisted of one-on-one, audio-recorded interviews utilizing an open-ended, multi-faceted response format (Appendix A; Nold et al, 2018) for exploring the central phenomenon of this research using the online platforms mentioned previously. The 40-minute interview duration allowed four 10-minute segments that coincided with student attention spans (Cluskey et al, 2011) and yielded four data blocks, one for each topic: OID, SCCT, parental involvement, cultural influences. This allowed three to four questions for each topic. Interviewees completed the consent form (Appendix C) and introductory questionnaire (Appendix D) prior to interviewing.

It is noted that the general format of the interview questionnaire instrument was used in a prior study by the researcher, modified for this study to improve participant response quality and to focus more on the cultural parenting styles and childhood career influences. The results (presented in Chapter 4) indicate additional refinement of the research questionnaire is needed to explore the aspect of childhood influences more directly.

Participation Incentives

Participants who completed both the online demographic survey and interview received a $20 gift card. Participants who decided to exit the study at any stage would not have received a monetary reward, but none did so.

Data Analysis

This study used a concurrent, theoretical framework approach to data analysis, using directed content analysis methods. This allowed the structured analysis of the interaction

between the OID and SCCT models, and the flexibility to glean evidence of career-supportive

parenting practices and the effects of those practices in a group of Singaporean students raised in

a collectivist culture while attending college in the United States. Two qualified coders, the

researcher herself who is currently a PhD candidate with years of research background, and the

co-coder who recently received a PhD in Curriculum and Instruction from UIUC's College of

Education, independently coded the interviews (see Inter-Rater Reliability below). As the coders

examined each set of interview responses, their analyses were guided first by the OID and SCCT

theories and second by the goal of identifying potential clues to career positive parenting

practices.

The analysis of the data in this qualitative study was based on the pragmatic worldview

that not everything of importance can be measured quantitatively but can still be recognized

qualitatively. Interview questions were selected to establish a general understanding of where the

participants were in their career exploration and commitment, as well as, the dynamics leading to

the OID status by exploring the SCCT relationships involved. While qualitative research

generally tries to avoid preconceptions, established theories can assist in the grouping of

discourse or response fragments and the development of a deeper understanding of both the data

collected and the theoretical framework. The interview instrument for this study began with

questions used in a pilot study. Questions were then modified to address international students

compared to all students studying at the university. This change was made to explore how

parental influences (and subsequently cultural influences) affect the career decision processes of

Singaporean students studying at a university in the United States. The results are presented in

chapter 4.

Core analysis of the data hinged on several themes, including the degree of presence or absence of parental influence and any specific career choices made by the student (as reflected by the number of topic mentions or associated phrases, referred to as 'hits' by the raters) (Super,1990). For this study, expanding the scope of understanding requires interview questions that explore the childhood and adolescent career-oriented experiences which may have influenced the college student's career choices. Based on the findings of the mentioned pilot study, anticipated possible examples of such experience would include the student's perceptions of parental work attitudes, educational activities, and extracurricular activities, such as Boy- or Girl Scout-like organization participation and hobby activities.

Directed Content Analysis

Analysis of interview questions presents a qualitative analysis challenge (Elo et al., 2014). According to Hsieh & Shannon (2005), there are three approaches to the analysis of qualitative content. In areas where research is limited, conventional content analysis (CCA) is useful. Under CCA, researchers begin with few to no preconceptions about their research or their expected findings; they allow categories to surface from the content of research materials, given that there is very little theoretical basis for their work. Directed content analysis (DCA), in contrast, draws on a substantive theoretical background in the field being analyzed, allowing categories to be defined from and through a grounded theory framework. For this study, qualitative analysis of interview responses was based on directed content analysis, which reflects the following procedural criteria.

Interview questions were open-ended but topically constrained (i.e., limited to answers addressing the question itself, rather than undirected conversations). Here, the expected set of the responses is in principle finite and limited to a relatively narrow band of conceptual categories

originating in the theoretical framework. This topical constraint creates a response funnel, but the responses may still be unbounded and highly unpredictable in their details and wording. Directed content analysis affords grouping responses using theory-based keywords and conceptual categories grounded within the OID theoretical framework as detailed in the prior literature.

The interviews collected supplied a data-pool of occupational choices made by students and shed additional light on parental effects as they influence students career decisions. Anchored in SCCT, directed content analysis of the interviews allowed for data analysis focused on the themes of career choices, the reasoning behind those decisions, and the perceived effects of parental influences on the career decisions of the participants.

Coding Themes

Borrowing from the core techniques of Strauss (1987), transcribed interviews were coded through an SCCT and OID model lenses into key phrases of expected response categories, using the NVivo categorical nodes protocol. The origin of this study's codebook is based on the SCCT (Lent & Brown, 1996) and OID models (Kroger & Marcia, 2011) in conjunction with categories identified from prior literature on the effects of parental involvement in the career development process. This means that the expected response categories drawn from the theoretical framework of the study were used to collect and categorize interview responses along with emergent response categories relevant to previous research (Humble, 2009) and to this study's research questions.

With some interpretive discretion, these emergent keywords and phrases were clustered into quasi-scales of relevant parental influence, career exploration difficulties, career commitment, and various other influencing factors. Coded response nodes, grounded in the theoretical framework results, were assigned identifying values. The relationship among these

factors infers answers to the originally posed research questions. Accordingly, analyses of parental qualities, styles, and intervention contribute to the findings for RQ1 and RQ1a, while the nature of parental influence and interventions (along with student responses) supplies information to address RQ2, RQ2a, and RQ2b by translating the manner and effects of parental influence and interventions within the body of the OID/SCCT model. The tables in Appendix E show the coding themes and examples used in the process of analysis and interpretation.

Inter-Rater Reliability

Two coders were used to thematically code the interview transcripts to improve inter-rater reliability (IRR) (Armstrong et al., 1997). IRR indicates the amount of agreement among coders in their judgment of qualitative data and its significance (Lange, 2017). IRR is used to reduce or assess the potential for bias in the coding process. The co-coder for this research received a PhD in Curriculum and Instruction from UIUC's College of Education. Coders independently coded each interview record. It is also recognized that each coder brings a personal perspective to the process that may allow for varying understanding of the interview content.

Coding the qualitative data addressed any discrepancies by conducting resolution conferences until the desirable level of IRR was attained. The level of desirable IRR rating is calculated based on the number of raters using the formula $1 - (\frac{1}{r+1})$ where r equals the number of raters. For a two-rater system, the minimum desirable IRR rating is 67% (Gwet, 2014). While absolute agreement is not required, a conference between coders was held to examine reasons for major differences of coding. Interviews with ratings below the IRR threshold were flagged for further discussion with the participant to validate their responses as described below.

Member-Checking

Further validation of the data gathered was performed via member checking (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Digital transcripts were prepared for each participant interview using Microsoft Office components and included review comments and the coding interpretations of the raters. Line spacing of the transcripts were triple, rather than double, spaced to allow ample space for participant notes and comments. The transcripts were reviewed by the researcher with the associated participant for their feedback on the accuracy of rater interpretations via collaborative online platforms (in conformity with pandemic protocols). The participants were also asked to comment on any significant rater differences and to seek his or her opinion on the item. Ideally, member-checking and feedback would occur face-to-face, but exigencies required electronic or digital exchanges to facilitate this step. Additionally, participant feedback was incorporated into the final document report with any clarification of rater discrepancies detailed. This reduced rater bias in the process and afforded the participant an active role in preparing the final understanding of his or her responses.

Additionally, a significant amount of the disagreements in the coding process were resolved by the coders recognizing that each response may invoke two or more DCA categories. This recognition resolved many of the coding issues: rather than attempting a one question, one category model, each response was examined as dynamic components of evidence, holding the potential of multiple points of significance.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This chapter begins with the reporting of the demographics and career pursuits of the participants and a summary of the key findings or significant discoveries. Second, the relationship between interview questions and findings with the research questions are examined. Lastly, detailed explanations of how the interview responses were assessed and their significance to research questions are examined with specific examples from the directed content analysis (DCA) codes.

As stated in Chapter Three, directed content analysis (DCA) was used to analyze the study interviews with two raters coding the responses. The coders examined the interview responses independently, allowing each coder to apply their personal perspectives and interpretations to the interview coding. Accepting that independent examination allows for disagreement in the coding outcomes, an inter-rater reliability score was generated. Inter-rater reliability (IRR), or the amount of agreement between the coders, with two coders should be no less than 67% (Gwet, 2014). In this study, the initial IRR score exceeded 90% and, after comparative conferences between the raters to establish the reasoning for any differences, the final IRR score exceeded 95%, generating a high confidence in the accuracy of the interview coding.

Analysis of the interview questions consisted of examining each response for potential mentions of or phrases indicating a relation to one or more of the DCA categories, such as discussion of parental expectations (PROXY_PAREXPECT) or individual interests (IND_INTEREST). Each mention or phrase, as stated previously, constituted a "hit" or match to the associated category. Greater than three hits are considered significant for the category.

Participant Demographics

      Among the 15 interview participants there were seven (7) males and eight (8) females. Four (4) of the males and three (3) of the females were university juniors, leaving three (3) males and five (5) females as seniors. Dual or complimentary degrees were evenly split between male and female participants, and, with some exceptions, male participants appear to prefer STEM degrees with female participants appearing to prefer non-STEM degrees. The details of the demographics are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Participant Demographics

Participants	Gender	Year	Academic Pursuit
Participant 1	Female	Senior	Strategic Communications and Business, Administration
Participant 2	Female	Senior	Public Health
Participant 3	Female	Senior	International Business
Participant 4	Male	Junior	Engineering
Participant 5	Male	Junior	Computer Science
Participant 6	Male	Junior	Sociology and Mathematics
Participant 7	Female	Junior	Human Resource Management
Participant 8	Female	Junior	Communication
Participant 9	Male	Senior	Economic
Participant 10	Male	Junior	Aerospace engineering
Participant 11	Female	Junior	Environmental Engineering
Participant 12	Male	Senior	Lyric Theatre
Participant 13	Male	Junior	Psychology
Participant 14	Female	Senior	Political Science
Participant15	Female	Senior	Sociology

Summary of the Overall Finding

Understanding the significance of the study findings for the research questions requires understanding how the interview questions relate to the research questions. Answering the research questions fully requires both the participant responses and analysis of the models used. Four categories were defined during data analysis and contributed to the answers for RQ1 and RQ2, revealing the applicability of the OID and SCCT model for analyzing the effects of parental involvement on the participants' career choices. RQ1 asked, "How do Singaporean college students, studying in the US, view the career development activities of their youth, and to what extent do they feel those experiences have influenced their current career decisions and development path," including, "To what extent were their parents involved in these activities" (RQ1a).

Participants, for the most part, gave little to no indication of childhood development activities and any parental participation in them. The lack of related interview responses, with the noted exception of Participant 15, appears to infer the possibility of the participants not being consciously aware of pre-collegiate career development effect. Participant 15, expresses interest in making a sociological difference by improving the human experience through work in the nonprofit sector, also described experiences in first aid and Girl Scouts - both of which contribute to improving the human experience. This brings us to the position that, in response to RQ1 and RQ1a, college students are generally unaware of the influence childhood experiences have on their career development and decisions.

RQ2 asked generally, "How does parental influence in the context of SCCT inform the process of OID over the career decision of Singaporean college students in the US," and specifically, "To what extent do the processes of the two theories' influence one another, or are

they exclusive in their relational effects" (RQ2a), and "How does the evidence gathered reflect this structure and inform the career development process" (RQ2b).

Findings of this research study for RQ2 were consistent with the author's anticipated outcomes, showing a significant level (>3 hits) of parental expectations generally associated with Eastern, collectivist cultures, but tempered by significant levels (>3 hits) of collaborative decision-making. Interestingly, the students perceiving higher levels of parental expectation (>5 hits) compared to parental collaboration (<3 hits) suggested a mutual exclusivity between these two influential conditions; the inverse of this condition, collaboration greater than (>5 hits) parental expectations (<3 hits) also occurred. Based on the apparent conflicting interrelation between parental collaboration and expectancy, applications of the findings infer a dynamic correlation between collectivist and individualist cultural mindsets.[6]

While collaboration between the parent(s) and student can be strong, a definite weight of parental expectancy appears as well. The number of cases where both collaboration and expectancy are found (hits <6 but >2) infers that the two conditions are not mutually exclusive, creating an identifiable cultural hybridization within Singaporean society[7]. Indeed, the data suggest a hybridity of "individualistic" and "collectivist" emphases displays a characteristic combination of independence (autonomy, self-reliance) and interdependence (loyalty, community-mindedness) in students' choices around career.

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[6] It is important to note that, within this context, the difference between individualist and collectivist cultures refers to the power relationships involved. In individualist cultures, parents have a perceived responsibility to ensure their child has the greatest chance of independence from the family. In collectivist cultures, the child is viewed as having an on-going obligation to the parents, gaining individual respect in their actions by honoring their parents and the parents' expectations of them, rather than their own interests and occupational desires.

[7] C.f., The section "Individualist and Collectivist Cultures" in the Introduction of this study.

RQ2 seems to be answered by the strong presence of parental expectations, the results showing first that parental expectancies are present, even in most collaborative environments. At first glance, this seems to be paradoxical, until one considers the internalization effects of continuous parental expectancy (positive or negative) under Rosenthal (2009) and Hofer and Spengler (2018). Neither collaboration nor expectation seems to have a significant effect on individual interests. While responses to RQ2 depend on the exact nature and quality of parental influences, expectancy, and intervention, rendering RQ2b difficult to assess, this suggests a need for further future research on the topic, perhaps with a larger study group.

RQ2a, however, resonates with both prior literature and the interview data. The lack of apparent effects between parental collaboration and personal interest, or between parental expectation and personal interest, appears to demonstrate a robust separation of individual interests from parental contributions. The apparent relationship between expectancy and collaboration shows that there is a conditional effect on the career development process; the levels of one condition appears to suppress the levels of the other. Understanding this relationship should provide insight into RQ2, RQ2a, and RQ2b.

Summarized Relationships between Interview Findings to Research Questions

While examining the findings in aggregate demonstrates the overall applicability to the research questions, understanding where the data comes from on a per interview question can show the thinking processes of the participants and subsequently the effects of parental involvement on those processes.

IQ1, while intended simply as an inquiry into the student's academic path, showed a contribution to understanding the participant's OID status beyond an example of occupational commitment. Participants 3 and 10, for example, volunteered information regarding their

occupational exploration. While both showed an initial interest in engineering, Participant 3 indicated a change into the field of business based on adverse experiences around the demands of engineering, while Participant 10 indicated a change in the type of engineering interests based on experiences with the type(s) of engineering initially pursued.

IQ1a focused on the participant's commitment to their chosen field, contributing to an understanding of the participant's OID status. The question, abstractly inquiring on the participant's feelings about their choice, also prompted responses that clarified the personal interests of the participants and contributed to understanding the parental influences experienced by them.

For some participants, the deciding factors seem to be based on the perception of employability or relevance of their education to potential employability. Others reflect the spectrum of parental influences, ranging from adverse (Participant 3) to the resolution for occupational exploration by parental recommendation (Participant 7) to a summary deferral to the father's occupation (Participant 4). In response to IQ1a, one participant expressed doubt regarding their occupational choice, based on the challenges and difficulties encountered during coursework.

IQ1b focused specifically on the participant's sense of confidence in their choice. In response, half of the participants admitted to some level of doubt or indecision regarding their occupational choices. Others rated their confidence in unsolicited terms of a 1 to 10 scale, mostly ranging from 5 to 7. As a side note, this may indicate this question should be asked on such a 1 to 10 scale in future research studies.

IQ1c focused on the contributions to the participant's level of confidence (or lack thereof). Participants 2 and 4 explained their doubts respectively as being related to the

uncertainties of the COVID pandemic, and a feeling that important 'soft' skills (presentation and social skills) are missing from the education curriculum. Participant 1 highlighted the potential employability in the field contributed, while Participant 6 cited the applicability of obtained skills to other fields. The most noted contribution to confidence, was parental and in one case, grandparental support (total 6 out of 15 participants). Participant 15 expressed an interesting perspective regarding confidence; regardless of what decisions are made, new choices can be made if one is not happy with the choices already made. This is clearly a recognition by the Participant that the OID and career decision-making process can be performed more than once in the individual's lifetime.

IQ2[8] and the following questions turn the study's focus to factors contributing to the participants' decision-making processes, with IQ3 et seq delving into childhood activities and hobbies that might contribute to or round out an individual's field of interests, specifically seeking information on childhood career development (RQ1). IQ4 et seq examined the familial influences over the career decision-making process while IQ5 examined external, non-familial influences, seeking answers to RQ1a. IQ4 and IQ5 also have implications for RQ2, parental influences through agentic proxy and collaborative agency informing the occupational identity development alongside the participant's personal interests, explored under IQ6 and IQ6a, which attempts to establish the participant's goals and vision of their personal future visions. While RQ2a turns to prior literature for its answer, RQ2b looks to the analysis of responses from IQ2 through IQ5, framed using the perspective of RQ2a to show that the research questions are successfully addressed by the data collected.

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[8] Note: References to *parental influence* mean actual parental influence on decision-making, while *parental involvement* includes both influence and expectation and incorporates both direct and indirect effects from that factor. (See the further discussion in the following section.)

Under IQ2, more than half of the participants held that personal interests guided their decisions, though two cited parental advice as a part of their process. Family influences or concern for providing for their elders influenced three others while one chose their career based on following in their "father's footsteps."

IQ2a showed that a majority of the participants have no specific goals in mind, but two maintain that personal reputation stands at the core of their goals and two others hold social significance as their goal. As IQ6a is closely related to IQ2a, comparison of those with specific goals is possible. Participant 1 expressed specific interest in improving personal finances while Participant 3 expressed a long-term vision of employment in the financial industry itself. While Participants 14 and 15 both expressed goals of social significance, participant14 seems to be pursuing a career in international relations while Participant 15 appears focused on social behavioral research with an intention of social improvement applications.

IQ2c et seq explores the avenues of career exploration. Under IQ2ci, occupational interest assessments, three participants said they were useful in finding the strengths and weaknesses of their interests, but six of the participants described them as not useful. When prompted about literature use, two cited Googling information about their career options, two used Glassdoor to explore their options, and five noted the use of LinkedIn for that purpose. In response to IQ2d, participants did not indicate influence from their peers on their career decision, even though most indicated similar decisions regarding academic pursuits.

As to the age at which the participants recognized their occupational interests (IQ2e), six participants indicated knowing their careers since early youth, four did not know until secondary school, and three did not choose their occupations until college. Three participants (2, 12, and 15) had hobby interests (IQ3) paralleling their occupational interests (e.g., veterinary, music and

dance, and first aid and girl scouts/social action, respectively). Participant 2 reported support for their hobby (IQ3a), but was also encouraged to consider additional hobbies. Participant 12's parents discouraged his hobby but, with support from his grandfather, he continued to pursue his individual interests. Four others reported their parents encouraging them to diversify their interests.

Only six participants reported pursuing occupations similar to that of their parents (IQ4), five of whom encouraged this (IQ4a) with three reportedly giving active advice to their children (IQ4ai). Seven other participants reported receiving advice from their parents but made choices for careers in other fields. Three students reported perceptions of parental expectations (IQ4aii) when it came to their choice of occupations, though Participant 12 resisted those expectations. Participants reporting occupations differing from their parents did not report being influenced by the differences (IQ4b) or being encouraged to consider secondary occupational choices (IQ4c).

Responses to IQ4d showed that seven participants viewed their parents as following a collaborative parenting style while the results of the parenting style analysis showed only five perceived this accurately. Five participants described the parenting style of their parents being that of agentic proxy (three of them apparently accurately), while two described a hybrid state (and analysis suggesting four actually).

Coding Results of Participant Interviews

A total of 15 interviews were recorded, transcribed, and subsequently coded pursuant to the codebook defined for the OID (occupational identity development) and SCCT (social cognitive career theory). The three subcategories of the SCCT, individual (IND), proxy (PROXY), and collaborative (COLL) agencies, were expanded under the interviews as examples

of each were determined and sub-coded to identify the subtype of each example. Details of the categories are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Interview Results in Sequence

PARTICIPANT	GENDER	LEVEL	OCC_EXPLORE	OCC_COMMIT	OCC_INDECISION	IND_INTEREST	IND_EXPERIENCE	IND_EXPECT	PROXY_PAREXPECT	PROXY_PARSUPPORT	PROXY_PARINFLUENCE	PROXY_OTHER	COLL_PARJOB	COLL_PARSUPP	COLL_PARINFLUENCE	COLL_PEER	COLL_OTHER
1	F	S	6	8	2	3	2						1	5	5	2	
2	F	S	6	5	2	5	1		6	3	1						
3	F	S	10	6	1	10	2		5				1	2	1	3	
4	M	J	5	3	3	5			3				2	2		3	1
5	M	J	4	7	1	6		1				1	1				
6	M	J		5		11			1				2	5			
7	F	J	8	2	3	7			1				2	4	3		
8	F	J	4	5		7	1		8								
9	M	S	2	4	3	5			2				3	3			
10	M	J	4	1	3	1			6							1	
11	F	J	2	2	7	3			4							4	1
12	M	S	1	6		6			4								2
13	M	J		3	3				1				4	2		1	2
14	F	S	2	5	1	6			3					4	1		3
15	F	S	2	5	2	4	1	4	1					1	1		

An example of how participant falls under the category of parental influence (PROX_PARINFLUENCE) under agentic proxy is that the student indicates external source has given significant direction to or influenced the student's career development in a direct manner. Example of an interview response will be "My mother always said, with my interest in architecture that was the direction I would end up going." Detail explanation of the coding scheme can be found on Appendix E.

The numbers under each code are identified as "hits" which are the number of times the codes appear or pops up during the coding of the interview. For example, participant 2, she has a hit of 10 under OID exploration. This shows that, in her responses, the number of times she shows career exploration is very frequent compared to participant 12, which only has one hit (show up only once during the interview). Expansions are noted in the summary of each interview. Expansions are noted in the summary of each interview.

The interviews themselves appear to represent a dynamic diversity of experiences and parental influence profiles. This diversity was expected by the researcher given Singapore's hybrid culture. Evidence from the interviews appears to support the model of cultural hybridization while confirming the strong presence of parental expectancy typically found under the cultural influences of Asian collectivist society.

Categorization of Parental Influence

In analyzing the interview responses, it is necessary to clarify what is being coded; in this case, what aspects of parental involvement and individual interests are significant to the social cognitive process. Parental involvement, encompassing both direct and indirect aspects, includes both agentic proxy (expectations of a student bending to the will of the parent) and collaborative agency (where parents and student work together to develop the career decision). Collaborative

agency can also include parental influences such as observed parental occupational experiences and career advice. Parental involvement can encourage or discourage a student's career choices. The question is how and to what extent?

During the coding process, an additional 12 subcodes (see Appendix E) were identified within the SCCT framework. Three were identified under individual agency, four under proxy agency, and five under collaborative agency. Along with the main codes, these codes and the counts of hits for each (as defined in Chapter Three) are used to define the nature of SCCT influences towards the participant's career choice and OID status.

Rationale for Categorization

When examining the hit counts for proxy (expectation) and collaborative agencies, an apparent counterbalance between the two SCCT influence channels is noted; that is, values of greater than five are associated with values of less than three of the other. Values between three and five for agentic proxy subtopics mirror a similar range of collaborative agency. When charted, these two values create two similar slopes that indeed mirror each other.

Four categories are identified. Category One, collaborative agency cases, are defined by the high levels of collaborative activities (meaning parents and participants both contributed to the final career decisions) and by low levels of parental expectations. Category Two, hybrid cases, reflect the transition from collaborative to agentic proxy, identifiable by increased parental expectations, but with continued flexibility or negotiability of the final career decision. Category Three, reflecting high parental expectations (or agentic proxy), involve situations in which the ability to negotiate career decisions becomes increasingly difficult. Category Four are exception cases that include those in a state of laissez faire (minimal) parental influence and one

(Participant 12) that demonstrates an extension of the collectivist influence beyond parental expectations.

Each of the parental influence categories (including indirect parental influences such as observed parental occupational experiences, and direct parental interventions under collaborative agency and parental expectations) yield independent answers to RQ1 and RQ2. The strong parental expectations (agentic proxy) category answers the research questions by showing how high parental expectations can influence or alter the participant's career choices to career selections as directed or approved by the participant's parents.

> Participant 2: when I first started school, I wanted to be a veterinarian, so during freshmen [year], I took classes that tailored towards vet school. But my parents don't think veterinarian will land me a good job in [Singapore] so I slowly changed route into public health.

The collaborative parental influences category holds that positive career parenting encourages the individual to pursue their individual interests, resulting in many customizing their degree or combining two degrees into a single, hybridized degree.

> Participant 4: I think they are very traditional Chinese parents and somewhat involved in my decisions lah. Like they won't say *no this no that*, they will offer advice, but of [course] they will set some hard advice like do not go into design, because I'm not good in drawing those kinds.

Cases reflecting a balance between the two seem to show that both agentic proxy and agentic collaboration can coexist, typically with the expectations of the parents manifesting as discouragements in following certain career paths.

Participant 14: My father is in the business field and my mom is in education.

They are supportive with my choice of major. Although from time to time, my

mom will ask me to double major in women's study.

The outliers follow one of two decision paths: low parental agency (laissez faire) or an override of agency by a superior elder. Participants 5 and 15 have little agentic influences coming from their parents, allowing both to pursue their individual interests, showing that an individual can exercise their own agency under the SCCT model.

Participant 5: They trust I can do the best at what I'm doing.

One exception that proves the rule of collaborative agency under a collectivist society is Participant 12. While the participant's parents discouraged him from pursuing a career in stage performance, his grandfather, also a stage performer, encouraged him. The respect and deferral to one's elders in collectivist cultures has effectively forced the participant's parents to accept the participant's choice, regardless of their own wishes.

The four categories identified from the interview responses answer RQ1 and RQ2 effectively: That the effects of parental involvement depend on the nature of the parental involvement. The collaborative environment created by career positive parenting affects the participants' choices one way, the expectations of collectivist parents affect those choices in another (see Table 4).

Table 4: Interview Results Grouped by Category

PARTICIPANT	GENDER	LEVEL	OCC_EXPLORE	OCC_COMMIT	OCC_INDECISION	IND_INTEREST	IND_EXPERIENCE	IND_EXPECT	PROXY_PAREXPECT	PROXY_PARSUPPORT	PROXY_PARINFLUENCE	PROXY_OTHER	COLL_PARJOB	COLL_PARSUPP	COLL_PARINFLUENCE	COLL_PEER	COLL_OTHER	CATEGORY
1	F	S	6	8	2	3	2						1	5	5	2		**1**
6	M	J		5		11			1				2	5				**1**
7	F	J	8	2	3	7			1				2	4	3			**1**
9	M	S	2	4	3	5			2				3	3				**1**
13	M	J		3	3				1				4	2		1	2	**1**
3	F	S	10	6	1	10	2		5				1	2	1	3		**2**
4	M	J	5	3	3	5			3				2	2		3	1	**2**
11	F	J	2	2	7	3			4							4	1	**2**
14	F	S	2	5	1	6			2					3	2		2	**2**
2	F	S	6	5	2	5	1		6	3	1							**3**
8	F	J	4	5		7	1		8									**3**
10	M	J	4	1	3	1			6							1		**3**
5	M	J	4	7	1	6		1				1	1					**4**
12	M	S	1	5		6			4								2	**4**
15	F	S	2	5	2	4	1	4	1					1	1			**4**

Category One: Participants with Strong Parental Collaboration

Collaborative efforts between the student and their parents depict a general understanding of the individual's interests as supported or mutually negotiated. Inclusion in this category requires an aggregate parental collaboration score (COLL_PARJOB, COLL_PARSUPP, and

COLL_PARINFLUENCE combined) of six hits or more (see Table 5). The student's parents refrained from imposing any expectations, positive or negative, upon the student's choices. This is significant in this category as this level of freedom appears to allow the participant students to feel free to customize their occupational coursework (Participants 1 and 7) or to combine academic coursework into dual career endeavors (Participant 6).

For participants within collaborative environments, student and parent(s) negotiate the student's academic and occupational choices together. Effectively, this pattern of negotiation develops the student's career narrative with minimal conflict, seeking a harmonious decision that reflects the concerns of the parents and the interests of the individual student- with the expectations of the parent centered around high academic and professional achievement (Mao et al, 2017). Expectations within collaborative environments manifest in discouragement from occupational areas which the student has shown minimal interest or talent.

The key distinction is that occupational identity and career decisions are not dictated but encouraged. The end choices are owned by the student, generally with the responsibility and accountability for the decisions being solely in their own hands. Participant 6 described the establishment of parental collaboration in explicit terms, addressing RQ1a: "I consult with my parents; they have more experiences and always give some good advice and guidance to where I am supposed to be."

For others, parental collaboration is subtler. Participant 7, for example:

… they did not nag me when I kept changing my major but encourage[d] me to explore. When I was young, my mom [was] very strict, like she [would] hire tutors to make sure I'm at a good standing.

Indirectly, this comment also addresses RQ1 and RQ1a, revealing a small example of the student's perception of childhood career development.

Participant 9 demonstrated another manifestation of collaborative environment, marked by the examples of his father and grandfather, but with no perceptions of occupational expectation from them:

> Since young, I know I wanted to be in this major because I follow around my
>
> grandfather and father to office and felt involve around them … My family are all
>
> in economic or related field, so I think I grow up in this environment and
>
> eventually I want to be like them …

Participant 13 demonstrates that, even with parental collaboration, there are no guarantees or protections from career indecision, "They always give me advice on what I should do, and it is helpful." … "I felt alright, no hard feelings … I don't like or hate this major; it is interesting."

Table 5: Coding Results for Category One: Participants with Strong Parental Collaboration (refer to Appendix E for code definitions)

PARTICIPANT	GENDER	LEVEL	OCC_EXPLORE	OCC_COMMIT	OCC_INDECISION	IND_INTEREST	IND_EXPERIENCE	IND_EXPECT	PROXY_PAREXPECT	PROXY_PARSUPPORT	PROXY_PARINFLUENC	PROXY_OTHER	COLL_PARJOB	COLL_PARSUPP	COLL_PARINFLUENCE	COLL_PEER	COLL_OTHER
1	F	S	6	8	2	3	2						1	5	5	2	
6	M	J		5		11			1				2	5			
7	F	J	8	2	3	7			1				2	4	3		
9	M	S	2	4	3	5			2				3	3			
13	M	J		3	3				1				4	2		1	2

Participant 1, a senior female double majoring in strategic communications and business administration, presented significant achievement status with moderate occupational exploration that centered around a series on internship experiences (OCC_EXPLORE, 6 hits) and high commitment levels (OCC_COMMIT, 8 hits) based on those internship experiences, though she admits to earlier struggles in coming to that status (OCC_INDECISION, 2 hits). Participant 1's career exploration was described as a combination of management, marketing, and other business-oriented courses. Likewise, her internships were with multiple companies in different fields, accumulating experience to aid with her post-academic career exploration.

> Like the courses I took such as management, marketing, they are very practical,
> and helped me while I interned with different companies … I started to intern
> with different companies to gain more experiences and hopefully it will help me
> with my career exploration when I graduate.

The participant claims skillfulness in mathematics, less so in history and geography, hence her focus in the double majors of strategic communications and business administration. The participant's commitment to this path is based on job availability and potential income. The participant does express some doubt, due to the current environment created by the pandemic and its economic impact.

> Hopefully get my dream job after I graduate but, the COVID, I'm a bit scared. A lot of my friends can't find jobs or a good internship, but I hope the pandemic will clear soon.

While showing modest levels of individual interest (IND_INTEREST, 3 hits), the participant described significant levels of collaborative parental support (COLL_PARSUPPORT, 5 hits) and influence (COLL_PARINFLUENCE, 5 hits). The participant expressed the perception of public relations and business being simultaneously easy and complex (COLL_PARJOB, 1 hit), with her internships presenting her with business situations that she found challenging, forcing her to learn from her superiors.

> PR and business can be really easy, but at the same time, it's very complex I feel. Because like, when I interned for an insurance company right, I bumped into many difficulties which I did not learn from school, some I managed to solve it but many I needed to rely on my seniors.

Despite such challenges, the participant feels confidence in meeting them, particularly with the support from her parents who are also in the business field ("My family are all in the business field or work within this field so I mean, it's like if I have any questions, I will go to them and they will help me out…") and with her existing skill set ("…I am always good at math and not so much in history and geography.").

She perceives her parenting environment as being morally supportive with her parents' expressing satisfaction with their work and the income received from it.

> …my parents are both in business administrator, so they do talk about work when
>
> we were at home. They also complain a lot (hahahaha), but they are happy with
>
> what they do and also the pay is good…

Her parents expressed a viewpoint of both facets (satisfaction and income) being independent, yet mutually important for a successful career and contributed their advice to the participants academic and occupational decisions. "…My father kept saying must find a good and stable paying job, if not no money to feed the family…"

Participant 1, therefore, presents a collaborative environment under which she was able to successfully navigate her OID process and pursue an academic development course that somewhat interests her and meets the approval of her parents. Beyond the influence of her parents, the participant described a positive, long-term (8+ years) relationship with peers who share her business interests, offering each other advice on internships and career decisions.

> …All my JC friends, some are in PR same as me, some are in like engineering
>
> loh. Why do I think so ah? I don't know eh maybe their interests (hahahaha). My
>
> best friends are same major as me because we want to stick together (hahahaha)
>
> you know like at least look out for each other and can intern or work at the same
>
> company, but also, we like this major lah.

Participant 6, a junior male double majoring in sociology and mathematics, presented a potential state of foreclosure, exhibiting low exploration (OCC_EXPLORE, 0 hits), but notable commitment (OCC_COMMIT, 5 hits) to his chosen field. The participant expresses that, while

challenging, he finds that he has talent in the field of mathematics and expresses personal interest in the field of sociology.

> I think it was quite challenging in a good way. I like sociology and I'm good at mathematic so although they are very different and I am struggling from time to time, I think eventually they both will fit well.

The combination of the two fields appears to have high alignment with his personal career goals, apparently negating further need for extensive exploration of career options and negating the first impression of OID foreclosure and positioning himself firmly into a state of OID achievement.

> Well, I have a better outlook of the world, how business interacts, how human social with one another from sociology background, I mean also through talking with people and reading. So, a lot of aspects make me confident with the decisions I'm making.

Despite an acknowledgment of the challenges of his dual studies, the participant expresses confidence in his decision and the future integration of the two fields of study, thus establishing an academic positioning aligned with the participant's career goals. The participant expresses high interest (IND_INTEREST, 11 hits) in his fields of study, indicating that, while exploration is absent, his choice of occupation meets with his individual interest and meets the standards of achievement status.

I think it was quite challenging in a good way. I like sociology and I'm good at

mathematic so although they are very different and I am struggling from time to

time, I think eventually they both will fit well. … I guess, it became, I became

more aware of what I want to be in the future so right now, I will try to gear my

goals towards that direction. … I have a better outlook of the world, how business

interacts, how human[s] social[ize] with one another from sociology background,

I mean also through talking with people and reading. So, a lot of aspects make me

confident with the decisions I'm making. … for me is very simple. For me you

know, I like sociology and math, so I read and find information that is related to

these major and know what types of job I can find after I graduate.

Participant 6 describes significant conditions of collaborative parental support

(COLL_PARSUPPORT, 5 hits) and low perceptions of parental expectations

(PROXY_PAREXPECT, 1 hit). The participant describes a parenting environment supportive of

his career decisions, including positive influences from his mother who is, herself, a mathematics

teacher (COLL_PARJOB, 2 hits). Participant 6 depicts the collaborative environment explicitly:

I consult with my parents; they have more experiences and always give some

good advice and guidance to where I am supposed to be … I know I want to

major in mathematic[s] since young because my mother is a math teacher.

The single condition of parental expectation described by the participant manifests as

more of a discouragement from entering the fields of engineering or science, based on the

participant's personality not being that of an engineer or scientist; the participant notes that his

father's assessment is valid, placing it as an agreed upon limitation to the participant's career

choices. "My father know[s] I am not a science person so he said don't go into engineering or science because I will not succeed. I mean he is not wrong, so I go into math."

Participant 7, a junior female double majoring in business management and human resources, presents a classic case of identity moratorium, characterized by high levels of exploration (OCC_EXPLORE, 8 hits), but low levels of commitment (OCC_COMMIT, 2 hits), leaving the subject in a state of occupational indecision (OCC_INDECISION, 3 hits). The participant describes herself as being mathematically inclined and ending up in her current academic studies after finding economics unappealing and having issues finding internship opportunities in pure mathematical studies. The occupational exploration of Participant 7 is explicitly, described as is the occupational indecision she has contended with:

> So, I was jumping from major to major, you know, kind of like exploring options … I always like math related subjects so when I started uni[versity], I pick[ed] economic. But along the way, micro, macroeconomic is not really my area so I jump[ed] to mathematic, but it's hard for me to find internship. A lot of my friends in other major found internship except me so I was like, you know question myself if I can ever find a job because I don't want to be a faculty. Then my father suggests me to try out business coz he said within business, there are a lot of math related job like analysis, accounting so that is how I ended up with this major after 4 years of jumping … I like to keep trying new stuff, but at the same time I will bump into a lot of obstacles like either course work is not what I expected or hard to find internship. Like I know I want a math related job, and I changed major 3 times.

The participant also discloses using Glassdoor and LinkedIn for exploration of her career opportunities and has described her academic career as being one of jumping from one major to another. Only recently has she settled into a dual major of business management and human resources.

The participant expressed extensive personal interest in her chosen field (IND_INTEREST, 7 hits) due to her interests in mathematics after significant, collaborative parental influences (COLL_PAR JOB, 2 hits; COLL_PARSUPPORT, 4 hits; COLL_PARINFLUENCE, 3 hits). The participant's decisions to pursue her current academic majors is based in part on her interest in mathematics and in part on her father's suggestion to apply her interest in the field of business.

> … my father suggests me to try out business coz he said within business, there are
>
> a lot of math related job like analysis, accounting so that is how I ended up with
>
> this major after 4 years of jumping.

Her parents are largely understanding of her frequent shifts in majors, recognizing that the participant must have a level of personal comfort in her occupational choice.

> Supportive? I mean they did not nag me when I keep changing my major, but
>
> encourage me to explore. When I was young, my mom is very strict, like she will
>
> hire tutors to make sure I'm at a good standing.

In the case of Participant 7, the minor parental expectation (PROXY_PAREXPECT, 1 hit) manifested in the father discouraging her from seeking work in the social sciences or art field, expressing doubt as to whether the participant might find work in those fields. As this represents a minor discouragement, it is perceived as relatively trivial.

I think because my mother is a nurse, and most of my family member are in

business so there are times of disagreement bah. Like she will want me to take

other courses that is not just simply all math related, like social science or art, but

my father will think it's no use since I won't be finding a job in those area.

Participant 9, a senior male, majoring in economics, presents a state of OID achievement,

recognized by a noticeable level of commitment (OCC_COMMIT, 4 hits) and a low level of

career exploration (OCC_EXPLORE, 2 hits). The participant's commitment appears focused on

either helping the family's business or possibly shifting into investment analysis.

Since young, I know I wanted to be in this major because I follow around my

grandfather and father to office and felt involve around them … My family are all

in economic or related field, so I think I grow up in this environment and

eventually I want to be like them … to help in family business or find a job in

investment analysis.

The participant, however, describes himself as being only "somewhat confident" and

having a "love hate relation" regarding his career decision, reflecting a notable state of

indecision (OCC_INDECISION, 3 hits). "Love hate relation … sometimes is very easy to

understand, but sometime is so difficult that I want to pull my hair out."

Yet the participant also envisions himself earning a master's degree to improve his

prospects for improved employment conditions. "I might apply for master's degree after

graduation as in Singapore, if you have a higher degree, it's easier to find a better pay job."

Participant 9 expressed some parental expectations from his mother who attempted to

pressure him to try other occupations and encouraged him to try outside recreational activities

(PROXY_PAREXPECT, 2 hits).

They want me to be more of an outdoor person, especially my mom because she

thinks guys should be like out and about and explore … I remember my mom ask

me to explore more options because she says everyone is in economics and why

don't I try something new? Bring some new ideas to the family, but I don't know

what to choose so just stuck with economics.

The participant, however, maintained his intent in pursuing economics

(IND_INTEREST, 5 hits), particularly in following his father and grandfather, learning from

them. "Since young, I know I wanted to be in this major because I follow around my grandfather

and father to office and felt involve around them." Paternal influences were described as

occupational examples and advisory support (COLL_PARJOB, 3 hits; COLL_PARSUPPORT, 3

hits).

My mom always asks me to explore and do something new, I think it's good but

at the same time, I'm stress because I feel everyone in family is in economics, and

If I choose something else, I feel left out.

Participant 13, a senior male, majoring in psychology, presents a curious profile, showing

no individual initiative but a strong collaborative standing with little to no parental proxy. The

participant shows equal commitment (OCC_COMMIT, 3 hits) and indecision

(OCC_INDECISION, 3 hits). The participant relates no exploration activities, but notable

commitment, even though he seems ambiguous in his opinion of his occupational choice,

expressing no personal interest or passion in his field. "I felt alright, no hard feelings … I don't

like or hate this major; it is interesting."

The participant describes his occupational choice as based on his family being in the field and available to help (COLL_PARJOB, 4 hits; COLL_PARSUPPORT, 2 hits) including non-parental family support (COLL_OTHER, 2 hits).

My family are mostly in health care and I have quite a few cousins in psychology, so I think in a way it is easy because we can help each other out … everyone in my family is in this area, so unlikely I will find something else.

My father always say[s] health care is a good field because everyone will need to visit health care one way or another, whether if its doctor or therapy. And it is a good paying job so, I mean, why not, right? … I think they are supportive? I mean they always give me advise on what I should do and it is helpful.

Rather than entering his field under pressure from his family, he seems to have chosen to continue in the field his family (parents and cousins) have been in for years. Absent of any efforts toward occupational exploration, the participant has made a personal choice to pursue the field of his family that, while foreclosing other options, is nevertheless a decision consciously made by the participant.

In general, parental collaboration seems to be viewed positively by the participants, with equal acceptance between active (consultative activities) and passive (leading by example) collaboration. It is, therefore, clear that parental collaboration without explicit expectation is effective in guiding the child-student through the process of occupational identity development, particularly when the child-student's interests push the boundaries of a specific academic-occupational degree. This finding yields an interesting response to RQ1a and demonstrates one perspective for answering RQ2 and answering how the evidence gathered fulfills RQ2b: collaborative agency by parental encouragement and advice contributes to a career positive

environment within which the student's career choices are supported, rather than any particular outcome being expected.

Category Two: Participants Strong Parental Intervention

Strong parental intervention or authoritarian parental expectations apply to the research questions by imposing pressure on the student to pursue (or in some cases to avoid) a particular field or specific occupation. Mirroring the parental collaboration group, this group consists of participants with an agentic proxy score of 6 hits or more (see Table 6). As noted previously, the findings of Rosenthal (2009) and Hofer and Spengler (2018) supported the view of such expectations having a direct influence over the student's subsequent behavior and academic and career performance.

In authoritarian environments, the career decisions of the individual are usually abrogated by the expectations of the parental figure. This, too, comes in diverse manifestations. While some parental expectations are usually defined in their positive implications ("You will do this"), expectations can also be defined by their negative implications ("You will not do this"), clearly establishing an additional, internal axis to be considered when assessing the effects of parental expectations on the career decision process.

Among those experiencing positive authoritarian parental influence, Participant 8 expresses expectations from her parents to focus on her strong points.

> … in secondary school, I took normal math and also higher math, you remember right we have those advance math class, yeah. And I always score full points compare to other subjects. My parents also suggest me to focus on this since it is what I'm good at …

Participant 10 expressed a concern that seems to be central to most parental expectations, finding a good job after graduation.

> They always say don't find those odd major if not hard to find jobs, so when I
>
> finally transfer to engineering, they very happy [because] it's something they
>
> know about, and it is popular.

Participant 2 shows the alternative, negative aspect of parental expectations. Having initially pursued a career choice of veterinary medicine, the participant expressed concern from her parents as to her employability in that field. This resulted in a move towards public (human) medicine and the defining of the participant's environment as authoritarian, not as a direct command from her parents, but as a clearly understood expectation.

> … when I first started school, I want to be a veterinarian, so during freshmen, I
>
> took classes that tailor towards vet school. But my parents don't think veterinarian
>
> will land me a good job in [Singapore] so I slowly change route into public health.

Participant 12, on first glance, appears to make a career decision rebellious to his parent's expectations, but closer examination shows the participant honoring his grandfather (also a performer) while pursuing a career path that interests himself—a superseding of the parental expectation by a senior familial member's occupational example as well as the student's individual interests. Rather than serving as a rebuttal to the effects of parental expectation, the participant clearly represents a confirmation of the social dynamics within a collectivistic family; this conflict was also an element of the student's decision to study abroad.

We have huge fight regarding my major, they don't agree with lyric theatre even
up to this date. Every day they are asking me to check out business or some other
major, nothing music related. they think it is a very cheap major, if you get what I
mean. Like what can you do with this major, they don't think I am able to find a
job with this and will suffer. But to me, I feel like I rather do something I like, if I
fail, I will keep trying you know. My grandfather is a good example, he is very
good in this field, why can't I? My dad and I fight a lot when it comes to my
major, because some of my cousins find good internship during summer, but I
will be practicing or trying to [compose] something new, so this argument had
been going among my family for years … that's one main reason I came to the U.
S.; to be far away from them. Imagine everyday they nag you on your major, I
will go nuts.

Table 6: Coding Results for Category Two: Participants with Strong Parental Intervention

PARTICIPANT	GENDER	LEVEL	OCC_EXPLORE	OCC_COMMIT	OCC_INDECISION	IND_INTEREST	IND_EXPERIENCE	IND_EXPECT	PROXY_PAREXPECT	PROXY_PARSUPPORT	PROXY_PARINFLUENC	PROXY_OTHER	COLL_PARJOB	COLL_PARSUPP	COLL_PARINFLUENCE	COLL_PEER	COLL_OTHER
2	F	S	6	5	2	5	1		6	3	1						
8	F	J	4	5		7	1		8								
10	M	J	4	1	3	1			6							1	

Participant 2, a senior female studying public health, presents significant occupational
exploration (OCC_EXPLORE, 6 hits) and commitment (OCC_COMMIT, 5 hits), but with minor

concerns for the future of her chosen field (OCC_INDECISION, 2 hits), primarily due to the current pandemic crisis worldwide.

> When I first started school, I want to be a veterinarian, so during freshmen, I took classes that tailor towards vet school. But my parents don't think veterinarian will land me a good job in [Singapore] so I slowly change route in to public health. I mean for internships, I still looking for, you know, lab tech positions research … I did a lot of arts and craft related things; a lot of hands-on activities and I love to read and I still do. Yeah, and then I like animals, animals have always been a passionate when I was younger, and like that's the whole veterinarian thing started. But that was before I realized there were other things you can do.

The quote above serves not only as an example of the OID model in action, but as an example of the dynamics between the OID and SCCT models. Her current studies have moderate alignment with her personal interests (IND_INTEREST, 5 hits). Parental expectations are high (PROXY_PAREXPECT, 6 hits; PROXY_PARSUPPORT, 3 hits), particularly encouraging the participant to continue with public health, rather than the veterinary studies the participant expresses interest in. This finding appears to be a confirmation of the findings of Ma et al (2014) as a negotiated compromise between the participant's personal interests in veterinary medicine and the expectations of her parents. The compromise allowed the student to maintain her interests in medicine while shifting her focus from veterinary to human care.

Participant 8, a junior female in communication studies, presents a strong state of achievement, combining modest exploration (OCC_EXPLORE, 4 hits) and commitment (OCC_COMMIT, 5 hits).

So, I was jumping from major to major, you know, kind of like exploring options.
I was an economic major then change to mathematics and finally ended up in
Business … I always like math related subjects so when I started uni[versity], I
pick[ed] economic[s]. But along the way, micro, macroeconomic is not really my
area so I jump to mathematics, but it's hard for me to find internship. A lot of my
friends in other major found internship except me so I was like, you know
question myself if I can ever find a job because I don't want to be a faculty.
Somewhat confident [because] I like to keep trying new stuff, but at the same
time I will bump into a lot of obstacles like either course work is not what I
expected or hard to find internship. Like, I know I want a math related job, and I
changed major 3 times … in secondary school, I took normal math and also
higher math, you remember right we have those advance math class, yeah. And I
always score full points compare to other subjects. My parents also suggest me to
focus on this since it is what I'm good at … I think I feel pretty confident with my
decisions, I mean I will do some research and ask around people, but it gear
towards my interest … not too bad, it's a fun and interesting area I feel.

The career decisions of the participant appear to strongly align with her personal interests
(IND_INTEREST, 7 hits) despite strong discouragement from her parents and pressure to pursue
STEM occupations.

How confident? I think I feel pretty confident with my decisions, I mean I will do some research and ask around people, but it gear towards my interest … I am in mass communication and media because I like music, media and films, so I think this is a good path to go into … But I don't have interest in either maths or science and I feel everyone is in that major. I want to have something different … Maybe during secondary school, I was in band and I really enjoy music. I collect vinyl and old cassette tapes. I think it will be really cool to work in the entertainment industries … To them, communication is a "cold" major and till today, they are still not happy with this major, they nag around like I can't find a good paying job or what kind of job will you end up with, with this degree … Although they disagree, but they did not stop me from choosing, my dad says, it is what I choose, and I need to face any consequences after.

Absent of strong parental expectations (PROXY_PAREXPECT, 8 hits), the participant might have been categorized in the final category (laissez faire). Participant 8 successfully resisted parental expectations, continuing her interest in communications and entertainment.

Participant 10, a junior male in aerospace engineering, presents a state of modest exploration (OCC_EXPLORE, 4 hits), low commitment (OCC_COMMIT, 1 hit), and significant indecision (OCC_INDECISION, 3 hits).

Aerospace engineering, but I just transfer[red] … was in civil and environmental [engineering] … at first, I thought I like CE but I realized the course is not what I though, so I switch to aerospace to try it out … I am all over the place, I was in arts and science, then transfer to engineering … They always say don't find those odd major if not hard to find jobs, so when I finally transfer to engineering, they very happy [because] it's something they know about, and it is popular. Do I like it, I don't know but I'm still exploring.

I like to explore new stuff but tend to change my mind very often haha so it's not a good thing … I didn't think that far, one step at a time … just stay happy loh, I mean never know mah, in 5-10 years, maybe I'm not even in this engineering field.

The participant appears to be in a status of occupational foreclosure, apparently giving in to parental expectations (PROXY_PAREXPECT, 6 hits) rather than personal occupational interests (IND_INTEREST, 1 hit).

Before I was in arts major and she keep saying I'm not good at arts, no talent, which is true, but I just want to try it out. And she says you see other people in business, engineer, they [are] better, and can earn a lot more money, so I transfer[red] to engineering.

In general, Participant 10 seems to have an unfocused sense of occupational identity, evidenced by the recent change of majors from civil and environmental engineering, much to the apparent displeasure of his parents.

In summary, authoritarian parental expectations can be presented in positive or negative forms but can be overridden by superior influences from elders of the family, showing that even

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within authoritarian collectivist culture, significant social dynamics beyond parental expectations play a critical role in the student's career narrative. This provides important insight by defining another possible answer to RQ1a, as well as applicability to RQ2 and RQ2b by demonstrating the dynamics of parental expectations as an agentic proxy, as defined by Bandura (1989) and refined by Lent & Brown (1996); as such, the influence of parental agentic proxy via parental expectancy of specific outcomes in the students' occupational identity and career choices has been clearly identified.

Category Three: Participants with Hybrid Parental Influences

Participants in this category show parallel levels of parental collaboration and expectation, representing moderate levels of each condition. The finding of both parental influence and expectancies (>2hits) demonstrates that parental collaboration and expectation are not mutually exclusive conditions (see Table 7). The overlap of the two conditions shows that each is more an independent balance of the other, converging into a manifestation of the hybrid culture.

The apparent independence of parental influence and expectancies appears logical; authoritarian expectations do not necessarily manifest in collaboration nor support activities and vice versa. It is therefore expected that there may be diverse manifestations under a hybridized culture, and the interview findings do not disappoint. While three participants meet the criteria for hybrid cases, each reveals a different OID status, answering RQ1a in its own way.

Participant 3, for example, presents a state of occupational identity achievement as defined by Kroger & Marcia (2011). The manifestation of parental expectations for the participant stands as a negative expectation (i.e. "Don't do this.") wherein the expectation is a

discouragement from pursuing art and design as a career, but this position aligns with the participant's own feelings on the matter.

They want me to put my knowledge into good used. So, they keep telling me don't go into art and design, because there's not much of math and science but rather design perspective. Also, it's hard to find job with those degree … I don't like arts and design either, and I feel business for now is a better choice.

The form of support and collaboration likewise aligns with the participant's occupational interests, conveniently avoiding conflicts between the student and her parents.

… my parents are always there to support me on my decision and lead me the way. So, when I was struggling with my major, they suggested me to try out business because that's what they are in and they can guide me because they have more knowledge in those area … I will consult with my parents with my decision and they know I'm good at math and science so they don't suggest me to go into arts and design.

Participant 3, therefore, offers in answer to RQ1a that parents can encourage their student-child to pursue a career choice that the individual already demonstrates proclivity and talent towards.

Participant 4, however, presents a state of occupational identity moratorium (Kroger & Marcia, 2011), reflecting continued exploration with modest commitment. While this might otherwise place the participant in the achievement status, the amount of indecision expressed by the participant raises questions over his level of commitment. "I don't really like the job scope hahaha and as I have more work-related experiences, I realized I like statistics and analysis."

The manifestation of parental expectation for Participant 4 is also a negative "Don't do this" aspect whereby his father discourages the participant from pursuing art and design occupations, though in this case the expressed rationale is the perceived lack of good jobs. "I think all the old mind set, do not choose art so yea haha, art can't find a good job lah, no money you know haha!"

Beyond this single firm position on income potential, the participant perceives general support for his career choices, but with some level of added expectancy the student successfully negotiates around.

> My mother is housewife so she gave me some moral support … my parents are
> those traditional mind you know, I think when I was young, they ask me to go in
> to doctors or lawyer, but I don't think I can make it hahahaha yeah, so I choose
> engineering instead … I think they are very traditional Chinese parents and
> somewhat involve in my decisions lah. Like they won't say no this no that, they
> will offer advice…

In this, Participant 4 gives a nod to the influences of his parent's collectivist, Chinese ancestry and their present hybrid flexibility, allowing the student to ultimately chose his occupation with minimal expectancies from them. This offers an answer to RQ1a that parents can steer their child-student away from some occupations, based on presumably poor employment potentials. As noted, however, this parental approach may lead to levels of doubt in the student's mind regarding their career choices[9].

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[9] It is important to note that the differences between individualist and collectivist cultures have additional impacts on the long-term relations between child and parent. In collectivist cultures, children are expected to provide for their elders in old age. Trends in individualist cultures lean towards virtual abandonment of the elderly to the care of retirement and nursing homes, the conditions of which are often deplorable, with the costs covered by Social Security, insurance, or pensions. It may be important to consider how this issue may impact hybrid cultures like Singapore in the future. The core difference behind this is the collectivist tradition of "honoring" one's family through deference and obedience to one's elders.

Participant 11 presents a state more closely matching occupational identity forfeiture

(Kroger & Marcia, 2011) with low occupational exploration and commitment. Expectancy in this

participant's case seems to be in her internal perceptions of not wishing to disappoint her parents.

> Personally, I love animat[ion], I wanted to major in arts and design and work on
>
> comic[s], but because my parents' old age and I don't want them to worry, I
>
> choose this current major [environmental engineering] … they did not say no
>
> when I said I want to major in animate, but I myself think I don't want to let them
>
> down. I think they are supportive in some ways … I draw a lot, even till today.
>
> They encourage me but they said this is not a job … my parents are old, they are
>
> like 70 this year, so, if I choose animate, I think they will be very sad as it is not a
>
> stable job and they will keep worrying … if I really choose animate, they might
>
> be ok on the outside, but deep down I think they will be disappointed.

Within this statement, Participant 11 shows that even indirect, perceived parental

expectations can dramatically influence the student's career choices. While the participant's

responses fail to reveal overt expectations, the participant steers away from her interest in

animation and 'comic' arts towards a career path she feels will address her parent's perceived

worries over her having a recognizable, stable job.

> I draw a lot, even till today. They encourage me but they said this is not a job …
>
> my parents are old, they are like 70 this year, so, if I choose animate, I think they
>
> will be very sad as it is not a stable job and they will keep worrying … if I really
>
> choose animate, they might be ok on the outside, but deep down I think they will
>
> be disappointed.

In this participant's case, we find another answer to RQ1a in that in some cases even the *perceptions* of parental approval or disapproval can alter the student's choice of career path, choosing a career assumed to be more 'appropriate' or 'acceptable' over the student's actual occupational interests, effectively foreclosing the student's desired career.

A common thread throughout the hybrid influence cases appears to be concerns over the student's future employment stability and income potential. Ultimately, this yields a rather vague answer to RQ1a that parents encourage their children to choose occupations with high potential for employment and significant income. Sometimes the parental expectations align with the student's occupational interests and at other times forces a compromise in their career choices to bring the student into a state of OID achievement, rather than a state of submissive OID foreclosure.

Lastly, Participant 14 gives an indirect hint at the effects of childhood development on an individual's career development process.

> My bff is in business and some of my friends are spread across many majors. I think each of us have different goals and what we are good in. I mean during secondary school, we all took same class such as math, science, history, etc., from there, I think we kinda know like what areas we are better at. So, when we enter university, we go into different directions.

This gives a level of insight into the fact that similar education backgrounds do not always produce the same long-term outcomes. There are missing elements to the equation rooted in the existing identity matrix of each individual that alters the career path which seems already well established prior to any college level career choices. This finding, of course, reflects those found by Super (1990) and others in the field of education studies.

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Table 7: Coding Results for Category Three: Participants with Hybrid Parental Influences

PARTICIPANT	GENDER	LEVEL	OCC_EXPLORE	OCC_COMMIT	OCC_INDECISION	IND_INTEREST	IND_EXPERIENCE	IND_EXPECT	PROXY_PAREXPECT	PROXY_PARSUPPORT	PROXY_PARINFLUENC	PROXY_OTHER	COLL_PARJOB	COLL_PARSUPP	COLL_PARINFLUENCE	COLL_PEER	COLL_OTHER
3	F	S	10	6	1	10	2		5				1	2	1	3	
4	M	J	5	3	3	5			3				2	2		3	1
11	F	J	2	2	7	3			4						4	1	
14	F	S	2	5	1	6			2					3	2		2

Participant 3, a senior female studying international business, presents a definitive state of occupational identity achievement (OCC_EXPLORE, 10 hits; OCC_COMMIT, 6 hits).

I was civil engineering, but I switch to international business and enterprise during junior year, so I spent an additional year in taking business course … I could say overall it was a good choice to switch, because CE gave me the basics and foundation for logical thinking and mathematical skills and all that and make me realized that CE was not what I wanted … when I did my internship with a CE company, it involves a lot of design, infrastructure and system work which then I realized it is not something I want to do for the rest of my life. During sophomore years, at that point, I think choosing engineering was a logical choice, good pay and such. But it's when I started the course work and internship, then I found out more about the industry prospect and I thought maybe this isn't something I want to do, in the next few years, and then I also, it was the time, I met my friends who were taking business degree and because I got exposure to this business field from them, through that, I start taking financial courses from GIES, and because of that I realized that hey, I'm actually more interested in business and so I change my major.

… the decision was not very difficult. All the while I am studying, I'm was pretty much a math and science student and math was the subject I aces in. So, when it came to, when it's time to selected a major in sophomore, I thought either go into science or engineer degree and I choose civil engineer. Because I think if I choose a pure science or pure math degree, the career path will be tended towards an academic role, while engineering is more of a practical role, so I choose engineering as a degree.

While her occupational choice aligns well with her interests (IND_INTEREST, 10 hits), comments also indicate high parental expectations regarding the student's study path (PROXY_PAREXPECT, 5 hits), apparently tempered by input from her peers (COLL_PEER, 3 hits).

> I did my internship with a CE company, it involves a lot of design, infrastructure and system work which then I realized it is not something I want to do for the rest of my life … I guess because like I been given a lot of freedom on what I could like to pursue and usually when I make decision, I will try to find out more on what I'm pursing in, kind of like the direction of where it will take me … I don't remember, because like I said I'm always good in math and sciences and wanted a major that is related to both areas.

> They want me to put my knowledge into good used. So, they keep telling me don't go into art and design, because there's not much of math and science but rather design perspective. Also, it's hard to find job with those degree … I don't like arts and design either, and I feel business for now is a better choice.

After the client's change from engineering to business, the participant reported her parent's attitudes changed, from specific expectations to general collaborative (COLL_PARJOB, 1 hit; COLL_PARSUPPORT, 2 hits; COLL_PARINFLUENCE, 1 hit).

… my parents are always there to support me on my decision and lead me the way. So, when I was struggling with my major, they suggested me to try out business because that's what they are in and they can guide me because they have more knowledge in those area … I will consult with my parents with my decision and they know I'm good at math and science so they don't suggest me to go into arts and design. Plus, my father is also in business related so when I switch major, he is there to support me but at the same time, felt I wasted two years in engineering.

Participant 4, a junior male studying both chemical and environmental engineering, presents a notable state of quasi-moratorium, exhibiting significant exploration and modest commitment (OCC_EXPLORE, 5 hits, OCC_COMMIT, 3 hits) with a notable level of indecision (OCC_INDECISION, 3 hits).

I think is soft skill, like presentation skills, social skill. Because the technology knowledge I learn those in course work so can apply to some of the work, but yeah, what I'm lacking is the soft skill. Engineering courses don't really focus on presentation skills or social skills, so this is where I was and is still struggling … I follow my father's footstep into this path. I acquire all the technology skill, but I find that these skill[s are] not the primary focus of the job lah if you ask me, so I do think that the soft skill like I mention earlier are actually really will help a lot in our line of work. But honestly speaking, I don't really like the job scope hahaha and as I have more work-related experiences, I realized I like statistics and analysis.

I was quite confident during course work, but then, when I start my internship

right, I realized I'm not confident at all … I can hardly apply what I learned in my

degree for my work because what we learn is like the equations, formula, you

know, and designs. But engineering work is more than that … I don't think this

degree encourage social skill haha, there's no program that help us with social

skill if you ask me.

The participant describes his father as pressuring him to pursue medical or legal

occupations (PROXY_PAREXPECT, 3 hits), rather than chemical and environmental

engineering (IND_INTEREST, 5 hits), but with the example and moral support from his mother

(COLL_PARJOB, 2 hits; COLL_PARSUPPORT, 2 hits) and occupational examples and

influences from other family members and friends (COLL_PEER, 3 hits; COLL_OTHER, 1 hit)

to support his decision.

I choose the major because of my dad lah. Because my dad also works in this

field, so I basically follow his footstep, without knowing what I'm getting myself

into hahaha … I think since young because of my father's influence. Because he

keeps talking about his job when I was young, so I know I want to be like him

when I grow old … I think all the old mind set, do not choose art so yea haha, art

can't find a good job lah, no money you know haha! science is better that sort of

things.

Yes, many of my relatives are in this chemical engineer field. I think most of my

relatives are. My mother is housewife so she gave me some moral support … my

parents are those traditional mind you know, I think when I was young, they ask

me to go in to doctors or lawyer, but I don't think I can make it hahahaha yeah, so

I choose engineering instead … I think they are very traditional Chinese parents

and somewhat involve in my decisions lah. Like they won't say no this no that,

they will offer advice, but of [course] they will set some hard advice like do not

go into design, because I'm not good in drawing those kinds … Like oh, I also

talk to my relatives, who are already working, and they are most in engineering.

Participant 11, a junior female studying environmental engineering, exhibits strong

indecision and doubt in her chosen career (OCC_INDECISION, 7 hits) with a state of near

forfeiture (OCC_EXPLORE, 2 hits; OCC_COMMIT, 2 hits).

Personally, I love animate, I wanted to major in arts and design and work on

comic, but because my parents' old age and I don't want them to worry, I choose

this current major … For animate, I knew since young because I am fascinated by

the Japanese culture and how comic is being developed. As for current major, I

was deciding between business or engineering, and I choose engineering because

I don't feel a connection with business … in ten years, [I will] hopefully jump to

animate hahahaha, but that also depends right. Nothing is set.

The participant, while commenting on truly being interested in animation (a field

apparently unacceptable to her parents), has chosen her study course out of commitment to her

parents (COLL_INFLUENCE, 4 hits), even though this choice has not been met with perfect

approval of her parents (PROXY_PAREXPECT, 4 hits). This participant reflects the findings of

Kantamneni et al (2018) in that the expectations represent an internalization of the expectations, rather than an overt external expression of such expectations. "They did not say no when I said I want to major in animation, but I myself think I don't want to let them down. I think they are supportive in some ways."

> I draw a lot, even till today. They encourage me but they said this is not a job …
> my parents are old, they are like 70 this year, so, if I choose animate, I think they
> will be very sad as it is not a stable job and they will keep worrying … if I really
> choose animate, they might be ok on the outside, but deep down I think they will
> be disappointed.

Her chosen career does, however, align somewhat with her interests as a secondary occupational choice (IND_INTEREST, 3 hits).

> For animate, I knew since young because I am fascinated by the Japanese culture
> and how comic is being developed. As for current major, I was deciding between
> business or engineering, and I choose engineering because I don't feel a
> connection with business … I draw a lot, even till today.

Participant 14, a female senior studying political science, presents a strong occupational identity achievement status (OCC_EXPLORE, 2 hits; OCC_COMMIT, 5 hits) and a hint of occupational indecision (OCC_INDECISION, 1hit). The participant describes taking a course in international studies at a community junior college that whetted her interests for learning more about international relations and has decided that the nonprofit or public sectors are where she wishes to work. She expresses no interest in the exploration of other career or occupational options. "Not too bad, it is fun. I like how you can play around with politics … I'm very confident."

I could say is the international study class, it was really interesting because in JC

(junior college) I don't get to learn much about politics, needless to say

international study or comparative study.

When asked where she saw herself in the future (5 or 10 years from now), the participant said, "I did not think that far yet, hahaha now I just hope to graduate", indicating a level of possible indecision, although she currently expresses confidence in her occupational choice.

The participant also described her experience as triggering a firm interest or 'love' for her chosen occupational pursuit and a feeling that it will become her purpose in life. "I took an international study course in community college, and it opens a new door, and ever since, I fell in love with politics."

I think right now, I could like to work for a NGO [non-governmental

organizations] because it is closely connected with political science in a way that

it promotes social and political change on a broad scale or very locally.

Interestingly, the participant also illustrated the tendency of friends to pursue their own interests and goals that were significantly different from hers, even with similar experiences from earlier education, reflecting the findings of Super (1990).

My bff is in business and some of my friends are spread across many majors. I

think each of us have different goals and what we are good in. I mean during

secondary school, we all took same class such as math, science, history, etc., from

there, I think we kinda know like what areas we are better at. So, when we enter

university, we go into different directions.

This indirectly reflects the presence of personal interests and prototype occupational identities during current or prior educational experiences that have affected the career decisions of the participant and her peers, also in alignment with the findings of Super (1990).

The participant expressed marginal expectations [PROXY_PAREXPECT, 3 hits], though the expectations were described as more a 'feeling' from the father that the participant would "choose law or politics," and her mother "wants me to learn more science related but I just don't have the interest" and "from time to time, my mom will ask me to double major in women's study."

The participant also expressed perceptions of parental support and influence [COLL_PARSUPPORT, 4 hits; COLL_PARINFLUENCE, 1 hits]. While the other support quotes vary in wording, they are essentially all state, "… they are supportive … with my [choice] of major."

In general, participants in this category (hybrid environments) show that collaboration and expectation can coexist. This can mean expectations from one parent with the other acting collaboratively, or that the participant has managed to turn the expectations into a collaborative negotiation in which modifications to the participant's original interests are altered in response to the parental expectations.

Category Four: Exceptional Cases

The significance of the cases in this category reflects the dynamic nature of the career decision process. The laissez faire cases (Participants 5 and 15) depict a condition of low to no perceived parental involvement (expectancy and influence both scores less than 3 hits). These are students who made a truly independent choice regarding academic pursuits and occupational identity establishment. Participant 12 represents an apparent exception that validates the effects

of collectivist culture on career choice by demonstrating the effects of sociocultural hierarchy in a collectivist family. (See Table 8.)

As noted in the research findings, two participants show no significant presence of parental collaborative influence or authoritarian expectancy. While the participants may seem to be an anomaly in the pool of interviews, they stand as points of proof regarding the basic research questions. Atypical when compared to the other research participants, the participants show that individual students can make solid choices without perceived parental pressures or influences; they are the exceptions that prove the applicability of the SCT model of agency (Bandura, 1989) in that individual agency can stand independent of the other agentic categories.

> I'm feel that I'm not prepared enough to go into the new direction I'm seeking …
> I was force to choose this major because I couldn't get into others but that being
> said, I'm also keen in this major as well … like my dad, I don't like his job as
> civil engineer and took care building and I know it's not something I want or like
> to do. (Participant 5)
>
> I know my mom doesn't want me to be in the doctor field haha because she said
> she don't see me working in hospital and I don't have the patience to deal with
> people relations. (Participant 15)

Table 8: Coding Results for Category Four: Participants with Exception Cases

PARTICIPANT	GENDER	LEVEL	OCC_EXPLORE	OCC_COMMIT	OCC_INDECISION	IND_INTEREST	IND_EXPERIENCE	IND_EXPECT	PROXY_PAREXPECT	PROXY_PARSUPPORT	PROXY_PARINFLUENC	PROXY_OTHER	COLL_PARJOB	COLL_PARSUPP	COLL_PARINFLUENCE	COLL_PEER	COLL_OTHER
5	M	J	4	7	1	6		1				1	1				
12	M	S	1	5		6			4								2
15	F	S	2	5	2	4	1	4	1						1	1	

Participant 5, a junior male engaged in computer science studies, presents with strong exploration (OCC_EXPLORE, 4 hits) and commitment (OCC_COMMIT, 7 hits) and demonstrates a strong achievement status with minimal parental expectations and collaboration.

No, I mean I plan to do so, but as of now, I'm feel that I'm not prepare enough to go into the new direction I'm seeking … I was force to choose this major because I couldn't get into others but that being said, I'm also keen in this major as well.

The participant appears to stand alone among the participants, showing a perceived independent occupational choice (IND_INTEREST, 6 hits), absent of significant expectations or influences from his parents. The exception is an indirect influence (COLL_PARJOB, 1 hit) discouraging the participant from pursuing a career in civil engineering.

I feel that it is adequate that major and future job roles are link or somewhat related to one another, so I hope what I learn in class can apply in work as well … like my dad, I don't like his job as civil engineer and took care building and I know it's not something I want or like to do.

Participant 15, a senior female studying sociology, presents an achievement state characterized by modest exploration (OCC_EXPLORE, 2 hits) with strong commitment (OCC_COMMIT, 5 hits) and minor indecisiveness (OCC_INDECISION, 2 hits). The participant appears knowledgeable of her field of interest, indicating a level of exploration and thoughtfulness regarding her choice.

> I always consider myself to be open mind and sociology, you need to have an open mind because I learn this term sociological imagination which is the connection between personal challenges and larger social issue.
>
> May be sophomore because we were taking all the general classes right, then I took courses from all over major. I was choosing among Asian American study or sociology because both major the courses, topics are very interesting and not something I saw common in Singapore.

Within her commitment, the participant views herself as capable of decisive and effective decision making, combined with a confidence that others will see the wisdom of her academic and career choices.

> It's enjoyable … I mean I study social problems so what can go wrong right … like making quick decisions and they tend to work out well. If I see the opportunity, I will go for it instead of waiting and thinking. … I plan to go back home after graduation so with Asian American, my job scope might be limited. So, I choose sociology instead.

I want to work in the academic field, focus more on research such as behavior,

diversity and social changes in society because social sciences are not so popular

in Singapore compare to business or engineer so if more people are able to

introduce social sciences to Singapore, they will understand its importance.

The participant also shows a willingness to acknowledge the possibility of making

incorrect decisions but denies giving thought to the long-term outcomes of her choices until

prompted by the interviewer about where she sees herself in the future. "I might make a wrong

choice but there's always way to save a wrong decision. …"Good question. I never thought

about this question before. Ummm, let me think …"

Participant 15 is notably the only one that made a reference to a relevant childhood

experience, specifically the fact that she participated in the Girl Scouts when young. "I am quite

lazy haha, secondary school, I was in first aids, and girl scouts."

Like Participant 5, Participant 15 makes consistent statements referring to the alignment

of her career choice with her individual interests and the future expectations associated with that

choice.

I always consider myself to be open mind and sociology, you need to have an

open mind because I learn this term sociological imagination which is the

connection between personal challenges and larger social issue. And with open

mind right, you learn to not judge people/things/issues quickly.

Sociology teaches me varies topic from urban living to psychology, so in a way I'm learning society as a whole. My goal is to try improve society in a specific way or influence to improve the society. You see so much racism and other society problems, people are trying to resolve but it's never resolved so I will try one way or another to put in some effort to help to change/solve this.

I want to work in the academic field, focus more on research such as behavior, diversity and social changes in society because social sciences are not so popular in Singapore compare to business or engineer so if more people are able to introduce social sciences to Singapore, they will understand its importance.

While the participant's choice seems independent based on her personal interests and expectations, the quality and nature of her parents' input and her response to those inputs is enlightening when it comes to the participant's mindset. The lone parental expectation seems an admonishment to not become a doctor, due to the participant's admitted lack of patience.

My dad asked me to join some clubs in poly because he said I'm too lazy, but I don't find anything that seems interesting.

My mom is a doctor and my dad is engineer. I think my family is very diverse in terms of occupation. Everyone in a different field. My parents are very open so they let me choose what I like, they encourage me to try new things and not be afraid to fail.

I know my mom doesn't want me to be in the doctor field haha because she said she don't see me working in hospital and I don't have the patience to deal with people relations.

Participants 5 and 15 show that the strength of a student's personal interests and expectations can be a successful basis of career decisions, provided that one accepts the possibility and responsibility of potential failure. This seems to indicate a healthy sense of occupational identity that not only directs the student's career development process, but also acknowledges the risk of failure, even when the individual makes decisions based on a solid foundation.

Participant 12, a senior male engaged in lyric theatre studies, appears at first glance to be a candidate for foreclosure (OCC_EXPLORE, 1 hit; OCC_COMMIT, 5 hits) were it not for the lack of any indication of doubt (OCC_INDECISION, 0 hits).

> … very seldom right you hear this major. So basically, it's more like a dance and theatre performance in addition to music. I really want to be a choreographer … I am happy with my current stage; I get to compose and choreography dance and performance. Although it is still at a very early stage, but I hope one day, people get to see this performance … I think it runs in my blood, since young I love to dance and wish one day my performance will be seen by everyone.

The nature of participant 12's circumstances warrant an exception. Indications of parental expectations (PROXY_PAREXPECT, 4 hits) reflect discouragement for the participant continuing his current studies. The collaborative influences, however (COLL_OTHER, 2 hits), come from his paternal grandfather, who shares the participant's passion for lyric theatre, forming an expectancy force overriding the participant's parental expectations.

We have huge fight regarding my major, they don't agree with lyric theatre even up to this date. Every day they are asking me to check out business or some other major, nothing music related. they think it is a very cheap major, if you get what I mean. Like what can you do with this major, they don't think I am able to find a job with this and will suffer. But to me, I feel like I rather do something I like, if I fail, I will keep trying you know. My grandfather is a good example, he is very good in this field, why can't I? My dad and I fight a lot when it comes to my major, because some of my cousins find good internship during summer, but I will be practicing or trying to composer something new, so this argument had been going among my family for years … Every day, so that's one main reason I came to the US to be far away from them. Imagine everyday they nag you on your major, I will go nuts.

The participant, rather than giving in to the discouragement, has maintained his activities in alignment with his personal interests (IND_INTEREST, 6 hits) and with his grandfather's support (PROXY_OTHER, 2 hits). While this appears at first to be an exception to the collectivist perspective of traditional deferral to parental authority, it actually proves the point in that the participant is deferring to his grandfather's role as family patriarch in accordance with the collectivist perspective.

I am happy with my current stage; I get to compose and choreography dance and performance. Although it is still at a very early stage, but I hope one day, people get to see this performance … I think it runs in my blood, since young I love to dance and wish one day my performance will be seen by everyone … To choreography one great piece of performance haha, I know that seems like nothing to normal people, but within my major, this is not an easy thing to do. It is not just how you dance, but also the creativity, heart and soul you put in … I think it's in my blood … [I want to] own a studio of my own and prove my parents wrong. What's wrong with a guy in a music major right.

Participants 5 and 15 show that students without parental feedback (neither by agentic proxy, nor collaborative agency) or with only low levels thereof, can still establish their own sense of occupational identity; meaning that, by virtue of individual agency alone, students can successfully make their own occupational choices. While it is still debatable that the parents may have had some influence in earlier childhood, the perception the student holds of independence may contribute to their personal self-esteem and sense of self-efficacy well into their professional career development. As such, Participants 5 and 15 provide an interesting answer to RQ1a; in some cases, parental inputs appear to have little to no influence over the student's career decisions other than as indirect discouragement to pursue the same career as their parents.

While one might argue that Participant 12 made an independent decision, Participant 12 is the exception that proves the rule regarding collectivist culture effects. While the participant did not give in to his parent's expectations, he did so with the support and encouragement of his grandfather who was also into dance and performance. His grandfather, within the collectivist

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culture's framework, held a position of superiority to the participant's parents and therefore

overrode the expectations of the participant's parents.

CHAPTER 5:

DISCUSSION

In this chapter, key findings and implications of the research study will be discussed, specifically the findings of an inverse relationship between agentic proxy and agentic collaboration, the apparent effects of strong personal interests and agency, and the association of collaborative agency with customized and dual discipline degrees. Limitations of the study will also be examined, including the failure of the study to elicit significant evidence addressing the childhood career development found by Super (1990). Exploration of this finding and the possible explanations and implications of it are examined.

Limitations of the underlying theoretical framework are also examined, including specific gaps such as the SCCT's lack of mechanism to explain the reasons or motivation of particular agents to engage in sociocultural interventions and influences on the student career decision making process. Application of the study's findings for informing the SCCT and OID models and the implications for HRD practices and scholarship, along with a summarization of the research findings in answer to the research questions and recommendations for future research are made.

In introductory summarization, the key findings of this research study include:

- An identifiable inverse relationship between agentic proxy and collaborative agency in parental involvement in the career decision-making process

- The strength of individual interests for honing the career decisions of participants, often in direct conflict with parental expectations

- Significant occupational customization or dual career interests under collaborative/hybrid parenting styles

- General lack of references to pre-collegiate career development

- A lack of understanding in current OID model to explain sociocultural influences in the career decision-making process

- A lack of motivational rationale (the "why" behind agentic actions including parental interventions, career exploration, and ultimately the accomplishment of a career decision) within the SCCT model

Findings of Study

The results of the study revealed significant information and specific limitations for both the study itself and the underlying theoretical models. While the study was marginally successful, particular flaws exist, warranting changes for future replication of the study with an expansion of inquiry. Targeted inquiry into childhood career development and motivational forces behind the OID and SCCT should be added and refined.

The Inverse Relationship of Agentic Proxy and Collaborative Agency

The relationship between parental expectations (agentic proxy) and parent-student collaboration (collaborative agency) is inverse, as parental expectancy rose, the collaborative parenting declined and vice versa. This is similar to Rudy & Grusec's (2001) study showed that when expectation of an authoritative parenting strengthens, the likelihood of collaborative negotiations occurring would decline. Under the expectancy effects of parental agentic proxy, the student would more likely conform to parental expectations in families holding to collectivist traditions rather than their individual occupational interests, consistent with Bandura's views of agentic collaboration (Bandura, 1999) and their collectivist upbringing (Kantamneni et al, 2018).

Finding an inverse relationship between agentic proxy and collaborative agency is fundamentally logical. An agentic proxy relationship is based on the expectation of someone else

performing an action or function based on the agent's expectations or requirements. This is an imposed "you will do this" mentality with an assumed one-sided state of expectation with no balancing compensation ("If you do this, then I will do that"). Agentic collaboration is based on a mutually defined action or function in which two or more agents are involved. Under such a mentality, the work is parsed to the participants ("I will do this part if you do that part and together we can accomplish this") with a specific goal in mind.

The influential effects of parental expectation are, perhaps, best illustrated by Participant 12. Parental expectations caused the participant to shift her occupational pursuits from veterinary medicine (her individual interest) to public health (an occupation more favorable to her parents). In this context, the expectations of the participant's parents are imposed upon the participant, altering the nature of her career choice.

"… when I first started school, I want to be a veterinarian, so during freshmen, I took classes that tailor towards vet school. But my parents don't think veterinarian will land me a good job in [Singapore] so I slowly change route into public health."

In comparison, Participant 6 described having a collaborative environment in terms of his relationship with his parents, accepting their guidance and coming to a decision together. In this context, there are no imposed expectations. The participant has a state of individual agency or expectations that he discusses with his parents for advice in what direction he should take to accomplish his goals.

"I consult with my parents; they have more experiences and always give some good advice and guidance to where I am supposed to be."

As can be seen in these examples, there is a stark contrast between agentic proxy and agentic collaboration. In agentic proxy examples, the student is pressured to comply with the expectations of the parental figure (allowing for non-parental authority figures). This imposition is incompatible with collaboration, a concept which implies mutual effort and negotiated outcomes. As such, had the findings not reflected an inverse relationship, the validity of the findings would be in doubt.

The Strength of Personal Interests and Agency

As noted by Christiansen (1999), an individual's occupation can become central to their perception of identity. The alignment of their occupation with their personal interests can play a critical role in their career decisions and satisfaction by creating a sense of purpose within society and their community (Darity & Goldsmith, 1996; Bronk, 2011).

In the case of some participants, the strength of their individual interest led them to customize their academic endeavors, even when the customization might give rise to parental curiosity or disapproval.

Participant 1's choice of strategic communications and business administration, Participant 7's choice of business management and human resources, and Participant 4's combination of chemical and environmental engineering did not prompt parental questioning.. Each of these combinations are easily recognized as related fields, and the choices of the participants therefore seem logical. Motivations for such pairings, based on participant responses, are generally based on employability and income potential.

Participant 6's choice of sociology and mathematics may differ from this pattern. The participant cites having a notable level of skill in mathematics and sociology as a "fun" field of interest. The manner in which these fields intersect seems elusive unless the participant intends a

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career path of statistical analysis within the field of sociology. As such, this pairing seems most likely to raise some concerns for the parents. In these four cases (Participants 1,4,6, and 7) it is the individual's personal interests that seem to guide their career choices within a career positive parenting environment. Of course, besides parental and personal interests, the availability of dual, double, or hybrid majors (or conventional mixtures of majors and minors) at the institution necessarily shapes what fields a student can embrace within their education.

In other cases, such as Participant 8, personal interests that are complementary to parental expectations may lead the individual to pursue a particular career in alignment with the example or expectations set by the parents. Such a choice might even be perceived as the student following the career choice as a matter of family tradition, maintaining a standing tradition within historic, collectivist culture. Unsurprisingly, Participant 12 resisted the expectations of his parents with the encouragement and support of his grandfather with whom his personal interests aligned, leading the participant to instead pursue a career in alignment with his grandfather's example. This may be seen as a youth honoring his family within the traditions of collectivist culture, based on his grandfather's standing as the senior elder.

Incidence of Customized and Dual Major Studies

Students with minimal parental expectations, but with career positive parental support for their interests, are more likely to customize or merge available academic majors to match their interest (Zaggl et al, 2019). This often results in students taking up cross-disciplinary studies targeting a perceived need in the world, a deviation from degree and disciplinary standardization (McInerney, 2019).

In cases of heightened expectancy, the student seems to select a more traditional, mono-disciplinary major, often in general disciplines – bypassing on career customization and

development that can contribute to or, in some cases, dictate the occupational identity of the individual (Christiansen, 1999). In most cases, the determining factor in choosing a customized or dual major degree, other than individual occupational interests, or parental expectancy is in developing an identity that includes a significant sociocultural distinction or uniqueness (Yates, 2017). In families continuing in the traditions of collectivist cultural practices (Rose et al, 2002), the focus is on self-esteem or honor from conforming and belonging to the collective unit and family.

Participant 6 is a prime example of having a unique occupational identity. While sociology and mathematics are generally viewed as divergent, he believes they are well suited for integration, perhaps in the form of meaningful statistical analysis of social policy or policy effects. Hence, he establishes his sociocultural distinction while focusing on his understanding of society, perhaps in anticipation of his future contributions.

> "I think it was quite challenging in a good way. I like sociology and I'm good at mathematic so although they are very different and I am struggling from time to time, I think eventually they both will fit well."

Lack of Pre-College Career Development Information (RQ1, RQ1a)

There were only two cases where childhood career development information was evident in the responses. In Participant 15's case, she explicitly expressed a childhood interest in social activism, such as her participation in Girl Scouts and learning first aid at school. Also, Participant 9 noted:

> "Since young, I know I wanted to be in this major because I follow around my grandfather and father to office and felt involve around them … My family are all

in economic or related field so I think I grow up in this environment and

eventually I want to be like them …"

An absence of childhood career development information amongst the participants

appears to conflict with the findings of Super (1990). One other possibility for the lack of

relevant responses may be a question on the reliability of the participants' memory or perhaps a

lack of significance applied to those memories. It may also be that the participants did not

receive strong parental reinforcement for career-oriented statements when young, contributing to

this effect.

According to Super (1990), children may express career interests well before

adolescence. Where authority figures assume earlier career-sounding aspirations made by a

child to be youthful fantasies, it is less likely that they would be taken seriously and encouraged

by parents or elders. When these interests are mentioned to adults within collectivist cultures

where compliance with imposed career expectations and goals are considered the norm, the

expressed career interests may be dismissed by the parental figures, rather than being viewed as

significant career opportunities. Absent encouragement that would help cement the statements

into actual future goals in the young child's imagination, the career interests may be forgotten.

Subsequently, when prompted about these aspirations, the participants may be less likely to

recall them.

The general absence of responses in participants may also indicate a need to change the

research instrument, e.g., reverting to use of Super's Career Development Inventory

(Super,1990). The CDI was developed to measure the level of vocational development of

adolescent subjects. By assessing individual's career planning, occupational exploration, and

decision-making skills, the ability of the individual to make rational career choices can be better

defined. Additionally, findings under CDI could be coupled with interest assessments, allowing examination of the alignment of the individual's occupational choices with their individual interests.

Extending Super (1990), the results of the CDI could be further examined under the major roles and sociological theaters (or environments) model; specifically, from the role perspectives of 'child', 'student', 'leisurite'[10], and 'worker'. By exploring career development within these roles in the context of home, community, school, and workplace, a comprehensive image can be assembled, and a better understanding of the individual's career development activities can be established.

One other possibility for the lack of relevant responses may be that the participants, did not receive strong parental reinforcement for career-oriented statements when young. Although children express their career choices very loudly and often, they may not be future career desires, but statements made in the heat of the moment and are forgotten quickly. When these statements are mentioned so flippantly, they would not be taken seriously or reinforced by parents or elders (which would help cement the statements into actual future goals in the young child's imagination). Furthermore, statements such as "I want to be an astronaut when I grow up" may have more to do to with the desire to grow up than to actually be an astronaut; that is "be an astronaut" may function as a symbol in the child's mind for someone who is already grown up.

Earlier career-sounding aspirations made by a child, may be quashed, quickly forgotten, or are unclear in the first place. Hence, when prompted about these aspirations, the participants are less likely to recall them. Or in the case of Participant 12, it was less likely a matter of career choice to follow in his father's, grandfathers, and family footsteps but a desire to remain a

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[10] A phrase coined by Super to describe individuals who engage in leisure-time activities for lack of a previous, accurate descriptive.

member of, and retain a sense of belonging to his family. This is a matter to be explored and considered for future research studies.

Limitations of the OID (RQ2, RQ2a)

The OID is basically a snapshot (cross-section) of the individual's current occupational identity. While effective in this representation, critical elements can remain unanswered, specifically there is a lack of definition or rationale for what lies behind the snapshot. An example of this is the deferral status. Under deferral, the individual has stopped exploring their occupational possibilities. What is lacking here is an understanding why the individual has ended up in this state. Did the individual enter the deferral state because they have yielded to pressure from others? Or did the individual enter the state because of an early, relevant experience that triggered a sustained interest in a particular occupation?

As described by Kroger and Marcia (2011), the occupational identity statuses serve as a snapshot of the student's OID. A snapshot shows the current state of a system or process, rather than the activities within the system or process. The OID model is therefore useful in defining the current state of a student's development without regard to the environment or influences that have led up to the current state. Use of the OID model is ideally independent of the cultural, social, or economic climate and can therefore be used equally under individualist, collectivist, or hybrid cultures, although each of these does inform the OID process. More precise, and in the same way as is true for looking at a physical snapshot, it is critically necessary to keep at the forefront of one's analysis the cultural assumptions one brings to such looking. A snapshot of two 20-year-old males holding hands can be (correctly or incorrectly) read and misread in numerous ways depending on the cultural context of the picture and the person looking at it. This

is the challenge of all "static" data that abstract away from the contexts, processes, and dynamics in which the "captured" data actually live.

Limitations of the SCCT (RQ2, RQ2b)

The SCCT model outlines the sociodynamic influences that inform the development of occupational identity, funneling the myriad of sociocultural influences into the three agentic channels: individual agency, agentic proxy, and collaborative agency. These agentic channels account for the forces affecting the career decision process present (in principle) in all cultural environments. For example, high agentic proxy seems to correlate with high external expectancy or collectivist cultures and are typically parental or cultural in nature. High collaborative (or cooperative) agency appears associated with individualist cultures. The SCCT model does not distinguish between cultural environments but can be used to assess the nature of the environment, revealing the sociocultural conditions of the corresponding research studies of varying levels which contribute to the definitions of the cultural types. In short, the SCCT model can be used across cultural boundaries, provided one understands the sociocultural environment in which it is applied.

The SCCT, based on Bandura's (1986) SCT, effectively defines the types or paths of environmental influences that affect an individual's career interest development and career choices (Mozahem, 2020). Some, such as Alshahrani et al (2018), argue that understanding the why behind student choices can be understood using the SCCT, but such understanding is still limited to the environmental influences defined by Bandura (1986). Environmental influences define the intentional actions or agencies that encourage or discourage the development of the

student's career interests and choices. The motivational forces and agentic priorities or rationale behind the choices are still left undefined.

To understand this, let us take an example response from the research study's interviews. In his responses, Participant 9 stated:

"Since young, I know I wanted to be in this major because I follow around my grandfather and father to office and felt involve around them … My family are all in economic or related field, so I think I grow up in this environment and eventually I want to be like them …"

In this response, Participant 9 shows a motivational perspective of belonging with his family, specifically wanting "to be like them," referring to his grandfather and father. Belonging is one of the basic motivational factors, according to Baumeister & Leary (1995). While clearly having direct relevance to the participant's career choice, the simplicity of the SCCT model risks losing this specific motivational element.

What the SCCT model lacks is a characterization of motivating forces behind the agentic acts. One can define the environmental influences under the SCCT model by saying the parent(s) expected "x," but the student wanted "y," but understanding the motivations behind each of these is likely as valuable as knowing the OID status and the career decision sociodynamics of the participant.

Lacking the actual motivation behind any participant's career decisions and the parental expectations behind their involvement and collaboration leaves the why behind the individual's career decisions and the related parental interventions unanswered. While the fact that some participants have made definitive career decisions based on influences of their parents' opinions

or expectations while others appear to make independent choices can be mapped using the SCCT, their rationale for making such choices is left undefined.

The lack of motivational background in the SCCT may be a necessary one, however; any determination of motivating forces faces difficulties. The description of one's own motivations, for example, are usually retrospective constructions used to justify the decision rather than to understand the decision and are likely to be at least marginally erroneous. Describing the motivation of others (such as parents) are subject to the individual's own opinions and understanding and are, therefore, also likely to be at least marginally erroneous. However, the very fact that such ascriptions of motivation are ubiquitous (if not also ubiquitously wrong) means that they cannot simply be brushed aside. Such determinations will be difficult without more focused and in-depth inquiry.

As such, in weighing the forces that generate a career choice, the student's own desire not to upset their parents proceeds on their assumption of their parents' opinions and expectations, particularly within the context of collectivist or hybrid cultures. Whether correct or not, the assumption of parental motivation plays a determining role in the student's career decision process. Therefore, future inquiry into the motivational narratives of the individual and their parental figures (as both constructions and personal perceptions) is needed to better inform our understanding of the SCCT and the subsequent occupational identity and career decisions of the individual.

Hybrid cultures, for example, land between the two previously recognized cultures, balancing agentic proxy (collectivism) with collaborative agency (individualism). As the evidence drawn from the current research study shows, there appears to be a level of validity to this perspective. The study's findings show a notable spread of agentic proxy and collaborative

agency, as expected within hybrid cultures like Singapore, confirming the usefulness of the SCCT model in the analysis of sociocultural effects on international student career development.

Nevertheless, interpretive caution is called for on two fronts. First, because the individualistic vs. collectivist distinction originates in a self-professed individualistic culture (as discussed earlier). Second, and more concerning are how "other" or "collectivist" influences are positioned "oppositionally" in relation to individualistic desires. In particular, Participant 11 stated:

> "my parents are old, they are like 70 this year, so, if I choose animate, I think they
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> will be very sad as it is not a stable job and they will keep worrying … if I really
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> choose animate, they might be ok on the outside, but deep down I think they will
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> be disappointed"

To simply attribute this avoidance of a career in animation to parental influences seems dubious, as it is Participant 11's individual desire (her own sense of who she is as a person) to be someone who does not disappoint her parents—a characteristic not exclusive to collectivist cultures. The more supposedly "traditional" collectivist emphasis would arise when parents seek to control their children by reminding them, or threatening them, or imposing upon them, with statements like, "You know you're not supposed to disappoint us," and not merely in any tacit assumptions by offspring who (as part of their identity) want to be thought of well by their parents and not disappoint them. This again points to the importance of (1) getting to the roots of actual motivations or (2) at least seeing clearly what attributions and assumptions students are making of their parents. In this regard, future research might explore student *and* parent senses of mutual influence.

Implications for the Advancement of SCCT/OID Model

Individual agency encompasses the actions of the individual (in this study Singaporean students studying at a university in the United States) to establish and pursue their unique career interests and aspirations. As noted in the findings, Participant 5 demonstrated that individual agency alone can appear to support the establishment of an independent occupational identity. The findings of this study reinforce the assumption that strong individual interests (found by IND_INTEREST hits >5) result in stronger career commitment and appear to correspond to higher levels of career exploration for several of the participants.

The study findings also infer that the effects of authoritarian or agentic proxy contribute to the student's occupational identity, but the dynamics of agentic proxy contributions are themselves often complex. Participant 12 found himself caught between the expectations of his parents and the example of his grandfather. Within collectivist societies, elders are considered to be of higher authority. For Participant 12, this resulted in the supportive grandfather's authority superseding the authority of the student's parents. In general, parental expectancy is also associated with lower career indecision, the core career decisions being made by those in authority over the student, rather than by the student.

Collaborative agency informs the occupational identity of the student through the supportive and cooperative relationship between the student and their parental relations in regard to the student's career development. Career choices are based in part on the student's individual interests but also in negotiation with and with the support of parental figures. Parental figures encourage the student through moral and motivational encouragement, often assisting in the student's career development through educational and experiential opportunities.

The collaborative environment also supports the establishment of customized degree work, allowing and encouraging the combination of cross-disciplinary skills and knowledge. While most interdisciplinary students chose academic coursework that is obviously complementary (Participants 1, 4, and 7), at least one clearly defined a niche occupational interest for themselves (Participant 6). The collaborative environment therefore establishes the individual as an interdisciplinary professional who is not only fulfilling a unique role within the climate of the international socioeconomic gestalt but also creates an occupational identity for them that more closely aligns with their occupational interests and vocational passions.

The findings of this research study show how the SCCT defines and informs the occupational identity of international students equally as effectively as it does domestic U.S. students or others who choose to study within their own nations or elsewhere. The OID and SCCT models together are therefore useful for understanding career decision processes among students around the world.

Implications for HRD Practices and Scholarship

For the academic community, this study has important implications. For universities and colleges, awareness of the collective and hybrid cultures international students come from plays an important role in student recruitment and guidance. Knowledge of the cultural and parental influences is as important as understanding the specific needs of the international students they are seeking to bring to their schools (Falcone, 2019). Furthermore, the cultural and parental expectations the students experience may take precedence over their personal interest and goals, a trend that may or may not adversely affect the student's occupational identity development and subsequent career choices (Bulgan & Ciftci, 2018) or the preparation of adequately trained cadres of workers for national economies.

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Lastly, the tendency of students customizing academic paths to meet their personal interests and goals make understanding the motivations or perceptions informing such choices important when it comes to human resource recruitment and organizational placement of the new recruits holding such customized degrees. Super (1990) found that the development of a person's career and occupational identity begins in early childhood by bringing the sum of their lifetime experience into the work environment. Additionally, Bradley-Geist and Olson-Buchanan (2014) found, these life experiences affect the individual's perceptions and responses, including their response to authority figures. This subsequently affects the individual's ability to fit effectively within organizational structures.

Conclusion

The problem this study faced is common when venturing into unfamiliar territory where researchers are often uncertain of the specifics to be watched for or how to go about uncovering evidence relevant to their research questions. As noted by Gunderson (1967):

"The most serious flaw in a research design is lack of specificity. If specificity is

not evident in every aspect of a research design, the whole proposal is suspect

because the reader cannot be sure what the investigator intends to do."

While the researcher in this study sought specific answers, certain concepts involved ultimately remained abstract (exhibiting a fundamental lack of sufficient specificity) such that answers to certain research questions remain elusive. It is the humble professional who can recognize and be accountable for unexpected outcomes in research as well as taking credit when research reaches expected outcomes. Sometimes, unexpected outcomes are the most elemental part of breakthroughs in fields. For example, this research tantalizing exposes that Super's (1990) intuitively logical assumption—that the development of a person's career and

occupational identity begins in early childhood by bringing the sum of their lifetime experience into the work environment—may not be a necessary or adequate assumption, given the paucity of early career development activities and parental involvement in those activities found in this study.

Similarly, while the OID model and SCCT have been in use for decades, both have limitations and premises that leave their body of knowledge liable to question if those premises are not applicable in all contexts. The combined OID/SCCT model of this study informs the research process by providing a means to describe the process and status of occupational identity development—to turn the "snapshot" of the OID into a more dynamic, process-embedded "film" or video. The occupational identity development model gives insight into where the individual stands in regard to their identity development progress but lacks the means by itself to explain how or why the person arrived at the specific depicted status. The SCCT informs and supports the OID model by addressing the how (and the person's perceptions) behind critical sociocultural inputs into the identity development process. What the combined OID/SCCT model would still benefit from is a framework for accounting for the motivation(s) (as perceptions or attributions) behind any sociocultural inputs.

Limitations of Study

While examples of collectivist culture parenting exist within the interview data, the population is drawn from the hybridized culture of Singapore. Findings therefore are valid for the specific hybrid culture. Additionally, the study was limited to 15 participants from a single university. While greater detail might have been possible with a larger sampling, the COVID-19 pandemic-induced protocols restricted effective expansion of the sampling pool and any subsequent generalizations. Generalizations should not be drawn from this study but should be

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further explored during future research studies with multiple pools of subjects drawn from specific sociocultural backgrounds for comparative analysis.

Future Research

Future instrument inclusion of questions based on Vignoles et al (2006) should complete the overall model by establishing the role of individual motivations in the career decision-making process, as including questions based on Super (2009) will assist in establishing the foundations of childhood career development inputs. Future avenues of future research should focus on four core questions:

- Do the views of Singaporean college students (and more broadly those of international students in general) studying in the US differ from domestic, US students and, if so, in what ways?

- Does the environment of imposed, agentic expectations alter the academic and career interests of the students subjected to such environments, or do they merely alter the actual choices without influencing the interest of the students?

- In what ways do collaborative parents establish a career positive environment that supports the modification or customization of dual disciplinary degrees?

- Is the combined OID/SCCT model informed by additional considerations such as the motivations of the students and parents and, if so, how are they so informed?

The last question hinges on finding the "why" behind each individual's reasons for engaging in the career and occupational decision process. In understanding the why behind the processes, it may be possible to anticipate the needs of each group more comprehensively by addressing the concerns of each stakeholder. While this is beyond the current study, it may offer

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avenues for more effective understandings and applications of such knowledge in the future,

perhaps one day contributing to a theory of motivational career choice or occupational identity.

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APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Date: _____ Interviewer: _____

1. Can you share information regarding your current academic and or occupational

   pursuits?

   a. At this point, how do you feel about your choice of majors or occupation?

   b. How confident are you in your career decision and abilities?

   c. What makes you confident with the decision?

2. Can you share or explain the types of factors lead you to choose your current career

   path?

   a. What are your goals in choosing this major or occupational pursuit?

   b. Have you explored other potential career or occupational options?

   c. Can you describe the activities you used for your exploration?

      i. Did you take an occupational interest assessment during your

         exploration of career choices?

      ii. Did you consult any articles, printed or digital, regarding your career

         ideas?

   d. Did your friends go into this field of study or occupation? Why you think so?

   e. Can you recall how old you were when you decided upon your career choice?

      Do you recall the circumstances?

3. What outside activities or hobbies did you pursue during your adolescent years?

   a. Did your parents participate as well or encourage your participation? If so,

      how?

b. Did they encourage you to follow other activities or hobbies? If so, what kind of activities or hobbies?

4. Were your parents or other family members in a similar or related occupation?

   a. If so, how did your parents' experiences contribute to your career exploration?

      i. What occupational advice, if any, did your parents' give you?

      ii. Did they expect you to pursue a particular field of study?

      iii. If so, did this influence your opinions regarding the occupation?

   b. If they were in another occupation, did their experiences affect your opinion on your career decisions? If so, how?

   c. Did they encourage secondary occupational interests or training? If so, how and why?

   d. How would you describe the parenting style of your parents?

5. Did you talk with anyone else about your choices that might have influenced your decision? If so, with whom did you talk and why that person?

6. What are your goals in pursuing your chosen occupation?

   a. Where do you see your chosen occupation leading you in five years; ten years?

APPENDIX B: IRB APPROVAL

ILLINOIS

**OFFICE OF THE VICE CHANCELLOR
FOR RESEARCH & INNOVATION**

Office for the Protection of Research Subjects
805 W. Pennsylvania Ave., MC-095
Urbana, IL 61801-4822

Notice of Approval: Amendment #02

October 21, 2020

Principal Investigator	Wen-Hao Huang
CC	Danying Chen
Protocol Title	*THE IMPACT OF PARENTAL INFLUENCES ON COLLEGE STUDENTS' OCCUPATIONAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE OF SIGNAPOREAN COLLEGE STUDENTS IN THE U.S.*
Protocol Number	18616
Funding Source	Unfunded
Review Type	Exempt 2
Amendment Requested	• Title Change
	• Updating number of participants
	• Adding option for remote research activities
	• Updates to interview question
Status	Active
Risk Determination	No more than minimal risk
Approval Date	October 21, 2020 (Amendment Approval Date)

This letter authorizes the use of human subjects in the above protocol. The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed and approved the research study as described.

The Principal Investigator of this study is responsible for:
- Conducting research in a manner consistent with the requirements of the University and federal regulations found at 45 CFR 46.
- Using the approved consent documents, with the footer, from this approved package.
- Requesting approval from the IRB prior to implementing modifications.
- Notifying OPRS of any problems involving human subjects, including unanticipated events, participant complaints, or protocol deviations.
- Notifying OPRS of the completion of the study.

APPENDIX C: CONSENT FORM

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Consent Form

Purpose and Procedures:

The purpose of this research is to understand student's career and identity decision that contributed to occupational density and outcome. This research is being conducted by Danying Chen of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Participant will participate in an audio-recorded interview with the researcher that will last no more than 60 minutes. Interview will be conducted via virtual communications platforms such as Skype, Zoom, or Discord. Participants will be asked about their opinions on what, why and how they decided on their career decision.

Requirements:

All participants must be at junior standing or higher.

Participation is Voluntary:

Participation in this research is voluntary. Participants may refuse to participate or may discontinue participation at any time. The decision to participate, decline, or withdraw from participation will have no effect on the participant's status at or future relations with the University of Illinois. You have the right to refuse questions that make you feel uncomfortable without penalty.

Compensation:

By completing the initial questionnaire and digital interview, participants will receive a $20 gift card from campus bookstore. If the participant decides to withdraw from this participation at any stage, they will not receive any compensation.

Benefits and Risks:

There are no physical risks to participants in the research and the researchers do not anticipate any risk to participation beyond those that exist in daily life. To ensure the respect of all of participants, the researchers will try our best to protect the identities of them by creating pseudonyms to mask their identities and erasure of the digital recordings of the participant's responses after completion of the study. Random numbers will be assigned to each student to ensure their identity will not be directly linked to the information they provided. Student participation will facilitate intervention of the possibility to establish the pathway from career choice rationale to ultimate occupational outcome, giving insight into the dynamics of this environment and ultimately an indication of its net effects.

Confidentiality:

Audio recordings resulting from this interview will be used only for the purpose of transcription. Transcriptions will be analyzed by only Danying Chen. In the event of publication of this research, no personally identifying information will be disclosed. Under no circumstances will the audio recordings be made public. Faculty, students, and staff who may see your information will maintain confidentiality to the extent of laws and university policies. Personal identifiers will not be published or presented.

Whom to Contact with Questions:

Questions about this research should be directed to Danying Chen (dchen34@illinois.edu). If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this study or any concerns or complaints, please contact the University of Illinois Institutional Review Board at 217-333-2670 or via email at irb@illinois.edu. You may also contact my advisor, Dr. Wenhao Huang by email at wdhuang@illinois.edu. Many thanks for your cooperation and assistance!

I certify that I have read and received a copy of this form and volunteer to participate in this study. I give my permission to have my research session audio recorded _ [ ] (initial here)

Printed name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX D: INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONNAIRE

The purpose of this brief questionnaire is to gather basic background information about you that

are relevant to the purpose of this study.

BEFORE YOU PROCEED, PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

1. **All questions are optional for you to answer**. Only disclose information that you feel comfortable of sharing
2. **Please do not write your name anywhere in this document**. It is important that this form does not link to you in any way that is identifiable to others. Instead, I will assign an identifier that is only known to me when I collect this form back from you.
3. Please know that for all the information you will be proving, **I will ensure that it will be protected at the highest confidential level.**

Please find the following demographic questionnaire for your kind perusal.

A. Personal demographic information.
   a. Please share your gender _____
   b. Please share your nationality _____
   c. Please share your race ____

B. Academic related information
   a. Please share your program major _____
   b. Please share your academic standing _____
   c. Where do you currently live? On campus Off-campus (please describe) _____
   d. Please share the years of internship/work experiences_____

Thank you so much for completing the introductory questionnaire.

For researcher's use only
Participant reference number:
Date and time of interview:
Assigned pseudonym:

APPENDIX E: DIRECTED CONTENT ANALYSIS CODING THEMES

Table 9: Coding themes based on OID Factors

Code	Description	Example
Career Exploration OCC_EXPLORE	Student describes the process of occupational or academic degree selection. Possible elements are information seeking, goal establishment, and path selection	"I haven't chosen my major yet, but I have been looking into various environmental career options. That seems to be where my main interest is focused."
Career Commitment OCC_COMMIT	Student indicates a higher level of personal commitment or dedication to the chosen career or degree path.	"I have always been interested in the design of spaceships. I am going to be an aerospace engineer."
Career Indecision OCC_INDECISION	Student describes not knowing what career choice will be made or expresses confusion between multiple possibilities.	"I'm just starting my studies and focusing on the basics. I have no idea what I actually want to do with my future."

Table 10: Coding Themes from Social Cognitive Career Theory

| Code	Description	Example
Proxy Agency PROXY_PAREXPECT PROXY_PARSUPPORT PROXY_PARINFLUENCE PROXY_OTHER	Student indicates external source has given significant direction to or influenced the student's career development in a direct manner.	"My mother always said, with my interest in architecture that was the direction I would end up going."
Individual Agency IND_INTEREST IND_EXPERIENCE IND_EXPECT	Student indicates a personal interest or preference that may or may not align with occupational expectations of other influences.	"With my knack of numbers, I should be an accountant, they make good money, despite my father's pressure for me to be an engineer."
Collaborative Agency COLL_PARJOB COLL_PARSUPPORT COLL_PARINFLUENCE COLL_PEER COLL_OTHER	Student indicates that, while there is a mismatch between their personal interests and external expectations, the family worked out an acceptable negotiated resolution or peers assisted in the student's development	"My family expected me to follow in my father's footsteps, but I convinced them I would make a better programmer than cook."

Figure 4: Interview Data by Category
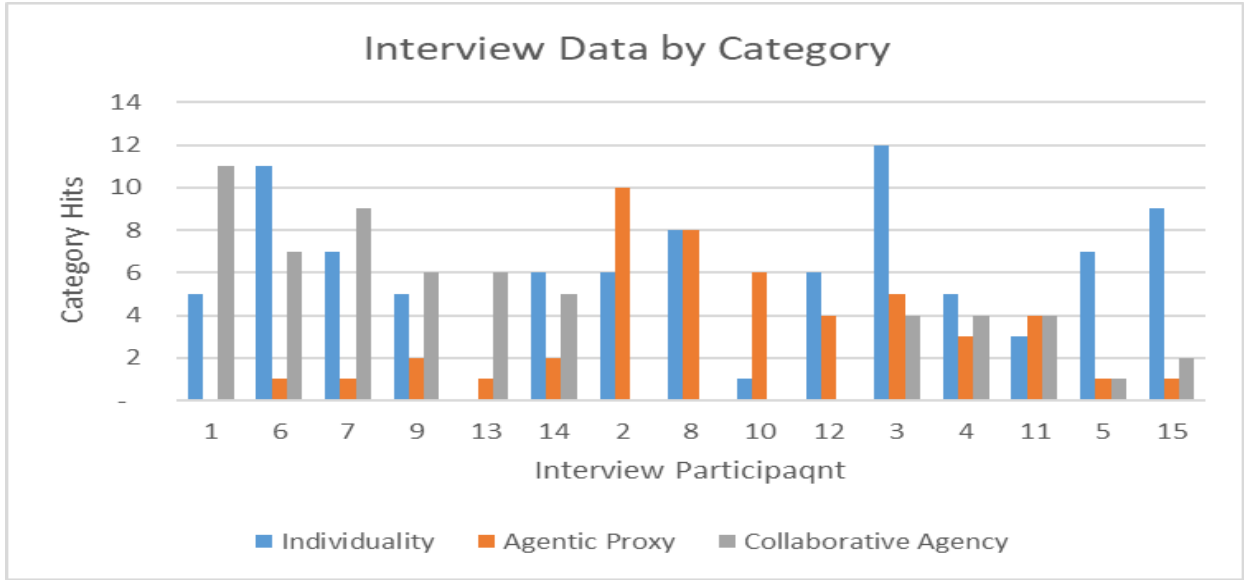
Figure 5: Agentic Proxy vs Collaborative Agency