INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS CAREER DEVELOPMENT:

ACCULTURATIVE STRESS AND CAREER OUTCOMES

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ABSTRACT

International students face many challenges as they adapt to a new host country. These challenges are present in social, psychological, academic, and career domains of life. Although students aim to reduce the difficulties encountered in the acculturation process, negative experiences often have a harmful impact. Acculturative stress can negatively affect mental and physical health, as well as career outcomes. The literature focusing on the career-related needs and placement concerns of international students with relation to acculturative stress is scare and needs further exploration. The present study investigated the relationship between acculturative stress and the career outcomes of work hope, career outlook, occupational awareness, career agency, career aspirations (leadership, achievement, and educational), and job-search self-efficacy. The findings from this investigation suggested that international students who reported more acculturation difficulties associated with Perceived Discrimination, Perceived Hate and Fear, and to a lesser extent Homesickness; also tended to report less Work Hope, a more Negative Career Outlook, lower Achievement Aspirations, Leadership Aspirations, Educational Aspirations, Career Agency, and Job Search Self-Efficacy.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Persons born outside of the U.S. continue to be a substantial and growing segment of the United States labor force (Council of the Americas (COA), 2005), as they bring skills, innovative ideas, and an entrepreneurial spirit that are critical to the U.S. economy (COA, Immigrants & the U.S. Labor Force, 2013; Smith & Khawaja, 2011). This is particularly important for projected growth industries and new global business and trade (COA, Immigrants & the U.S. Labor Force, 2013). Immigrants have enriched the U.S. culture and added to the productive capacity of the nation, thus enhancing the influence of the United States and providing an economic edge in the world (CATO Institute, 2002). One of the most important factors that contribute to a multicultural workforce is that many international students who seek employment in the U.S. after completing their degrees (Mahadevan, 2010). The total number of international students enrolled in public and private post-secondary institutions in the United States continues to grow. In 2013-2014, there were 886,052 international students studying in the U.S., representing an increase of 8% over the previous year (Open Doors, 2014). China, India, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, and Canada contributed the most to this growth in international student enrollment (Institute of International Education- Open Doors Report, 2014). Given the

positive contributions of immigrants to the U.S. workforce, and the increasing number of international students fueling this population, it is essential to increase our knowledge of the academic, career, and psychological needs of this student population (Lin & Flores, 2013; Mahadevan, 2010).

Research suggests that international students face numerous stressors and challenges, many of which are long-term and have a negative impact on cross-cultural adjustment and adaptation to new roles and rules (Constantine, Ogazaki, & Utsey, 2004; Duru & Poyrazli, 2011; Poyrazli & Lopez, 2007; Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1998; Yeh & Inose, 2003). These challenges typically include language and cultural barriers, discrimination, social isolation, acculturation stress, homesickness, loneliness, loss of identity, and academic difficulties, together with very limited financial and social resources to overcome these challenges (Austell, 2013; Du & Wei, 2015; Hyun, Quinn, Madon, & Lustig, 2007; Lee & Rice, 2007). In turn, these challenges can lead to experiences of anxiety, stress, depression, low self-esteem and low self-confidence (Duru & Poyrazli, 2011; Poyrazli & Lopez, 2007; Smith & Khawaja, 2011).

Experiences of acculturation involve changes that occur at the community and the individual level due to contact between the two cultures (Wadsworth, Hecht, & Jung, 2008). Acculturation is explained as the amount of culture-related values, beliefs, customs, traditions, and behaviors of the majority host culture, endorsed or adapted by the minority individual (Wang & Mallinckrodt, 2006). Different stages of acculturation involve a cultural, psychological, and social adaptation to a new culture which may lead to changes in individual behaviors (Berry, 2003). Acculturative stress refers to the psychological, social, and physical impact (often negative) of adapting to a new culture,

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which can lead to a marked deterioration of the general health status of an individual (Smart & Smart, 1995; Wang & Mallinckrodt, 2006). This can have damaging effects not only on personal and cultural adjustment, but also on the career development of international students (Reynolds & Constantine, 2007).

Despite difficulties experienced by international students, they often do not seek mental health treatment because of the stigma associated with seeking help, and also because many are not aware of the personal and career counseling services available to them (Shen & Herr, 2004). These students are, therefore, more inclined to seek out peers, friends, family, or colleagues for support, or attempt to manage these challenges on their own (Hyun et al., 2007; Shen & Herr). Although, social support can play a significant role in facilitating the transition process from home to host country (Duru & Poyrazli, 2011; Yeh & Inose, 2003), without the established support network from one's home country and difficulties associated with forming new relationships in the host country, international students can encounter further barriers to healthy growth and development (Smith & Khawaja, 2011). Educators and career service provid ers, thus, face many challenges in effectively addressing the needs of international students (Shen & Herr, 2004). The unmet educational and career needs of these students then increase acculturative stress and barriers in career planning (Smith & Khawaja, 2011). Although, the career placement concerns and success of international students are of great concern to educational institutions in the U.S., many of these needs are either not known (Reynolds & Constantine, 2007) or are not being met by existing services offered on college and university campuses (Singaravelu, White, & Bringaze, 2005). Due to the growing number of international students in the U.S., the potential valuable contribution

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they make to the U.S. workforce and economy, and limited research on their vocational concerns, the aim of the present study is to investigate the impact of acculturative stress on the career outcomes of international students.

International Students' Acculturative Stress and Challenges

International students' in the U.S. often face uncertainty and experience higher levels of stress than their American counterparts due to several challenges including language difficulties, financial stress, adjustment difficulties, social, and psychological barriers (Arthur & Popadiuk, 2014; Bang, Muriuki, & Hodges, 2008; Chen, 1999; Lowinger, He, Lin, & Chang, 2014; Mori, 2000; Smith & Khawaja, 2011). Differences in the personal, social, demographic, and cultural makeup of international students and host nationals lead to acculturative stress (Berry, 1997; Pedersen, 1991). Adjustment to a new culture is a psychological process that can affect an individual's performance and functioning (Mahadevan, 2010). Profound levels of acculturation stress can result in experiences of depressive symptoms and increased difficulties in cultural adjustment which may often evoke various types of stresses such as homesickness, fear, guilt, perceived discrimination, and hatred (Jung, Hecht, & Wadsworth, 2007; Poyrazli & Lopez, 2007; Reynolds & Constantine, 2007; Smith & Khawaja, 2011). International students may experience constant pressures to acculturate and adapt to the host culture, resulting in lowered levels of daily functioning (Mahadevan, 2010; Yakushko, Davidson, & Sanford-Martens, 2008). The needs associated with these challenges are likely to be minimized due to the demands to succeed and adapt that are placed on this population from their homeland and the host country (Chen, 1999; Chen, Curry, Nunez-Smith, Bradley, & Desai, 2012; Jung et al., 2007; Yakunina, et al., 2012).

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Discrimination, a part of acculturative stress, is a behavior in which differential treatment of a person is based on membership in a particular group, such as skin color, nationality, and culture (Lee & Rice, 2007). Discrimination can decrease students' confidence and lead to harmful effects such as low engagement and participation. Those who do not feel discriminated are more confident in expressing themselves and engaging with others (Karuppan & Barari, 2011). It is essential to acknowledge and understand the impact of such discrimination on the personal and social life of international students (Chen, 1999; Reynolds & Constantine, 2007), as they are particularly susceptible to discrimination as a result of cultural, academic, personal, racial, ethnic, and other differences (Lee & Rice, 2007; Lowinger et al., 2014).

Perceived discrimination is a common acculturative stressor experienced by international students (Karuppan & Barari, 2011; Lee, 2007). It is a unique source of stress that differs from general stress (Wei, Ku, Russell, Mallinckrodt, & Liao, 2008) and occurs when individuals perceive that they are encountering a harm, threat, or a challenge that exceeds their resources (Chen, 1999). The perception that an individual is discriminated against differs from other negative life situations in several ways. It denies access to resources that are critical for adapting to other stressors and opportunities necessary for personal growth and well-being (Clark, Anderson, Clark, & Williams, 1999). It may not only be present in individual interactions, but also at the institutional policy level (Harrell, 2000). Perceptions of both individual hostility and institutional discrimination can be a powerful combination that leads to the development of learned helplessness, poor self-esteem, and/or depression (Liang & Fassinger, 2008). International students' experiences of discrimination often go unreported as they fear

being deported, leaving the students feeling powerless (Lee, 2007). The presence of perceived discrimination not only hampers students' satisfaction when communicating with peers and instructors but also interferes with classroom participation and engagement (Karuppan & Barari, 2011; Wadsworth et al., 2008). Instances of such discrimination can be overt or subtle, in the form of microaggressions with a short-term, chronic, or accumulative impact (Wei, Wang, Heppner, Du, 2012).

Experiences of discrimination can lead students to employ self-blame, personalize external events, and adopt residual feelings of powerlessness. For students with high self-esteem, it can increase the emotional reaction, and result in externalizing discriminatory events (Wei et al., 2008). Discrimination and acculturation stress increase the identity gap between how international students view themselves and how Americans see these students. These identity gaps increase as students' self-concept and communication behavior with host nationals are not aligned in interpersonal communication (Jung et al., 2007; Poyrazli & Lopez, 2007). These gaps may be a possible source of international students' depressive symptoms (Bang et al., 2008; Jung & Hecht, 2004; Jung et al. 2007). Thus, depression is the most common presenting concern for international students seeking counseling, and is often a result of encountering high levels of discrimination (Cassidy, O'Connor, Howe, & Warden, 2004). Such negative effects on mental health and identity are likely to also affect career outcomes of students.

Perceptions of bias and discrimination are also determined by motivation, past experiences, and one's culture (Karruppan & Barari, 2011). Thus, one's personal bias and past negative experiences also play a role in perceptions of discrimination. These are

impacted by the size of the university, the number of the international students studying at the university, language (English, non-English speaking population), services available for international students, and the level of acculturation and familiarity with international student experiences in the university community (Bang et al., 2008; Karruppan & Barari, 2011).

Perceived discrimination can help create a sense of group membership and identification with a group without a preexisting history (Schmitt, Spear, & Branscombe, 2003). The rejection-identification model (Branscombe, Schmitt, & Harvey, 1999) claims that while perceiving prejudice and discrimination have psychological costs, those costs are suppressed by an increased identification with one's minority group. The model argues that the members of minority groups increase group identification in response to perceived prejudice and discrimination (Branscombe et al., 1999). There are psychological costs to the exclusion of sociocultural groups which are disadvantaged and stigmatize. Thus, the rejection identification model predicts that the perceived frequency and pervasiveness of discrimination negatively affects psychological well-being (Baumeister & Tice, 1990; Branscombe et al., 1999). There has been support for the rejection identification model based on studies conducted on African American and Mexican American populations. Higher levels of discrimination were perceived as pervasive and resulted in poor psychological well-being (Branscombe et al., 1999). Another view of perceived discrimination suggests that denoting/attributing the word prejudice could protect the psychological well-being of minority group members as it discounts the self as a cause of negative outcomes (Crocker & Major, 1989). Both of

these explanations suggest that the increased distress in psychological well-being affects

personal and professional development and performance (Hinkelman & Luzzo, 2007).

There are two general outcomes of the perception of discrimination by

international students, including increased identification with one's country of origin and

increased tendency to identify with the category 'international students' resulting in a

dependency bond with other international students (Lee & Rice, 2007). The outcome of

such dependency could be the result of being treated as an outsider or 'foreigner.' In the

higher education setting, such discrimination and mistreatment can emerge in the form of

rejection of admission, less than objective evaluations, being rejected or not being able to

qualify for financial aid, negative remarks from faculty or fellow students, and barriers to

forming interpersonal relationships in the host society (Lee & Rice, 2007). International

students are sensitive to perceived rejection in the verbal and non-verbal communication

and behaviors of domestic nationals (Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994). These experiences can

result in low self-esteem, status loss, and experiences of culture shock (Pedersen, 1991).

Thus, perceived rejection also contributes towards higher acculturative stress. Along

with experiences of perceived hate, fear is another factor that impacts acculturative stress.

The fear could be related to feelings of insecurity in unfamiliar surroundings, crime and

violence in the U.S., experiences of racial discrimination, and social, political, and

economic relations between country of origin and the U.S. (Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994).

Living in a culture different from one's home country for an extended period of

time can be very difficult (Redmond & Bunyi, 1993). Homesickness, loss of emotional

and social support systems due to separation from significant others and limited social

contact with domestic national, are also factors contributing to acculturative stress for

international students (Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994). Emotional stressors of autonomy and intimacy, along with being a great distance from loved ones, guilt, discrimination, and intense pressure from families and the home culture can impact academic performance and acculturation (Mori, 2000; Tavakoli, Lumley, Hijazi, Slavin-Spenny, & Parris, 2009). Language and cultural barriers contribute to loneliness and isolation for international students (Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994). Successful adaptation is largely determined by interpersonal flexibility, such as how well international students adapt to different points of view, suspend judgment when confronted by cultural differences, and solve problems created by cultural differences (Hammer, 1987; Martin, 1987). Successful adaptation also involves recognition of cultural differences (Redmond & Bunyi, 1993). It is understood that international students who are fluent in English, feel more confident and competent in communication with others, are likely to be less hesitant in expressing themselves and therefore may experience reduced levels of differences when communicating with host nationals (Jung et al., 2007). The next section focuses on career development of international students.

Career Development of International Students

The U.S. may be more attractive to students in the fields of engineering, business, and the sciences due to easier access to research funds, the opportunity to work with peers in their field, and the ability to absorb many highly qualified workers (Musumba, Jin, & Mjelde, 2011). However, the U.S. also offers a variety of fields of study that may not be applicable in the students' home country leading many students to pursue their careers in the U.S. after completion of the degree (Musumba et al.). Positive valuation of job opportunities in the country of study and a poor political climate in one's home

country, can also contribute to international students not returning home (Shen & Herr, 2004; Spencer-Rodgers, 2000). The uncertainty of future plans and financial aspects related to career choice presents students with several choices upon degree completion. Some international students may be more likely to pursue practical work experience in temporary jobs and pay off their loans before returning to their home country, while others may immediately return to their home country or go to a new country. This career decision making crossroad highlights the need to focus on the career development of these students (Mahadevan, 2010; Musumba et al., 2011; Nunes & Arthur, 2013; Shen & Herr, 2004).

Career needs. Literature addressing the vocational and career needs of international students is scarce, inconclusive, and needs expansion (Lin & Flores, 2013; Nunes & Arthur, 2013; Singaravelu et al., 2005). Research has focused mainly on adjustment and acculturation issues (Arthur & Flynn, 2001; Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994), leaving career development needs relatively absent from the literature (Arthur & Flynn, 2001; Singaravelu, et al.). The career literature that has attended to the work and mental health needs of foreign-born individuals has referred working adults (Hinkelman & Luzzo, 2007). The focus on international college students' career behaviors is more scant (Reynolds & Constantine, 2007; Shih & Brown, 2000; Spencer- Rodgers, 2000). As a result, often the assumption is that international students have well-defined educational and career objectives; when in actuality international students have vague or unrealistic rationales about their career decisions, and difficulty with program selection (Frost, 1991; Mori, 2000; Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994; Singaravelu et al.).

The career needs of international students extend beyond their initial transition to studying in a new country (Nunes & Arthur, 2013). Some students find it necessary to reassess their majors or career choices, especially when incongruence develops between their interests and abilities. Often the incongruence can be in relation to the cultural and parental expectations or individuals' cultural contexts, which may put students at risk for poor academic and career performance (Singaravelu et al., 2005). Vocational uncertainty and academic expectations along with the adaptation process can create feelings of alienation and dissatisfaction in college, and lead to reduced self-confidence, all of which affects persistence and involvement in career growth (Singaravelu et al.).

Career-related outcomes and behaviors of international students are also affected by the cultural practices and values of their country of origin. For example, some international students arrive from countries with limited career exploration opportunities. Countries with early stages of economic development tend to encourage individuals to pursue professions that benefit the national economy and are guided by informal systems, such as family, caste, or class. Countries that have moved toward industrialization create increased career opportunities which can lead to more career confusion and uncertainty in career goal formation (Singaravelu et al., 2005). Some of the assumptions about international students relative to career and academic propensity include the beliefs that they are a product of selective educational systems, have strong academic skills with high aspirations, and have clear college performance related perceptions. The assumptions are that these positive skills will enhance personal and educational adjustment (Kaczmarek, Matlock, Merta, Ames, & Ross, 1994). While some of the above assumptions can be true

for some students, the challenges, barriers, and uniqueness of situations still posit many challenges.

International students' broader career-related needs focus on discovering personal uniqueness through self-assessment, gathering information, decision-making, goal setting, and job-related opportunities in the U.S. (Crockett & Hays, 2011; Sangganjanavanich, Lenz, & Cavazzos, 2011). Specific career needs focus on skills in preparing a resume, learning effective job-search skills, writing a cover letter, obtaining meaningful employment in the Optional Practical Training (OPT) period, interviewing skills, and learning about Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) rules and regulations (Lin & Flores, 2013; Shen & Herr, 2004; Spencer-Rodgers, 2000). Hence, along with the incongruence between the interests and abilities, international students confront their unique issues when transitioning from academia to the professional world which are heightened by the visa rules and regulations (Sangganjanavanich et al., 2011).

Investigations of the career-development needs of international students have indicated a need for long-term U.S. employment, return-focused employment, short-term employment, reduction of barriers in the interview process, and general career planning as salient to these students (Spencer-Rodgers, 2000). International students report difficulties in successfully identifying the available resources for career needs and planning (Sangganjanavanich et al., 2011). For example, although the U.S. employment experience is often a salient vocational goal, a lack of knowledge regarding U.S. employment opportunities and job market and host culture has been related to deficits in individual job-search skills (Spencer-Rodgers, 2000). The employment-seeking experiences of international students, lack of resources, and difficulty understanding the

Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) rules and regulations increased employment stressors and the need to cope with the acculturation issues (Sangganjanavanich et al.). Therefore, there is a need for campus services to offer programs specifically tailored to international students that focus on obtaining a work permit and job market information, as well as skills in networking, resume-writing, and completing job applications. Diversified and well-advertised career fairs during the pre-graduation job-search process would also be helpful (Arthur & Flynn, 2013; Nunes & Arthur, 2013). The lack of vocational research on international students' career development and transition to employment is continued cause of concern (Arthur, 2007; Spencer-Rodgers, 2000).

Counseling needs. International students experience interpersonal isolation, intercultural confusion, and stereotyping during their educational experiences (Sangganjanavanich & Black, 2009). Stressors can be mitigated by the use of counseling and career services; however, these services are underutilized by international students (Crockett & Hays, 2011; Lee, 2014; Mori, 2000; Smith & Khawaja, 2011), and often times primarily cater to domestic students (Crockett & Hays, 2011). Although 33% of the international students may consider seeking counseling, only 17% actually use these services (Hyun et al., 2007). Other evidence suggests that only two percent of international students at U.S. colleges and universities seek help at counseling centers, and one third dropped out after the first session or ended counseling prematurely (Nilsson & Anderson, 2004; Yakushko et al., 2008). Although international students have friends and family in their home country, they typically avoid seeking help from them in order not to increase the worry of friends and family (Lee, 2014). Therefore, it is essential for

international students to find the necessary help to facilitate their transition in the host country.

Low utilization of counseling services may be a result of multiple factors. Counseling that is strictly based on traditional or western counseling frameworks, may not be suitable for work with international students, as their beliefs and values may not be reflected in those theories and result in negative counseling experiences (Olivas & Li, 2006). Within some cultural groups, seeking counseling services is a stigmatized act (Singaravelu et al., 2005; Yakunina & Weigold, 2011), while others may believe that counselors do not have adequate cultural knowledge to address their concerns. Some international students may have a tendency to somatise problems, and consequently reach out to medical professionals instead of a mental health professional (Bertram, Poulakis, Elsasser, & Kumar, 2014; Mori, 2000; Smith & Khawaja, 2011). Students often have minimal information and are unclear about career services offered at the university, thus reducing accessibility and increasing barriers in the transition (Shen & Herr, 2004). Additionally, a lack of support and language barrier also affects participation in counseling and other related services. Career counselors have been reported to not understand international students' experiences, not be familiar with the rules and regulations regarding U.S. employment, and to provide minimal support, suggesting a lack of multicultural competence and environment (Bang et al., 2008; Dine & Bapat, 2007; Shen & Herr, 2004; Sangganjanavanich et al., 2011).

Racial and ethnic minorities have worldviews that are different from European American populations, and these views are likely to affect career decisions in ways that are different from the majority (Mahadevan, 2010). For example, Asian Americans place

importance on extrinsic values such as money and status in occupational decisions (Leong, 1991). However, as Asian Americans are a diverse minority group with several ethnic subgroups and unique cultural values, it is important not to generalize to all in the ethnic group (Tang, Fouad, & Smith, 1999). Additionally, the meaning of career is also culturally bound, and therefore applying a western framework to understand and counsel populations whose values and cultural norms are different is not effective (Arthur & Popadiuk, 2010). Similar to the understanding of racial and ethnic minority needs, one cannot categorize the concerns of international students together with all students in majority populations due to findings that highlight differences. For example, career counselors report that Asian international students are likely to experience more discomfort with counseling as compared to their European counterparts (Shen & Herr, 2004). In addition, there exists a presence of higher family influence among non-Asian international students (Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East) as compared to Asian international students (Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, and Malaysia) which could be a result of varying levels of economic development (Singaravelu et al., 2005). Therefore, cultural formulation in career counseling and assessment is essential for managing international students' current and future career options (Arthur & Popadiuk, 2010; Reynolds & Constantine, 2007; Shih & Brown, 2000; Spencer-Rodger, 2000). Without understanding the influence of cultural adjustment on career outcomes, career advisors and counselors will continue to be poorly equipped to help international students and impact retention rates and degree completion (Reynolds & Constantine). Further research and training for career counselors is needed to address the provision of services for international students and the enrichment of their educational experiences and career

development (Savickas, Esbroeck, & Herr, 2005). The following section will discuss hope theory, work hope, and its relation to career development of international students.

Hope Theory and Work Hope

Human beings are goal directed. Goals provide a basic building block to human learning and coping (Snyder, 1995; 2002). This premise led to conceptualizing hope as cognitive energy and a pathway for goals, where higher hope reflects an increase sense of mental energy and pathways (Snyder, 2002; 2005). Hope refers to a cognitive set which is based on a reciprocally derived sense of successful agency (i.e. goal-directed determination) and pathways (i.e., planning to meet goals) (Snyder et al., 1991; Snyder, 1995; 2002). For hope to be present and affect individuals, it is essential to have both agency and pathways (Snyder, 2002; 2005). Though the hope model is cognitive in its emphasis, it highlights emotions as well. It suggests that the quality of individual emotions display the individual's perceived level of hope in the situation (Snyder, 1995). Hope encompasses the affective variable that sustains actions and affects thoughts and behaviors (Scioli, Ricci, Nyugen, & Scioli, 2011).

Hope is a fundamental condition that is often lacking when circumstances are unsatisfactory, damaging, or threatening (Lazarus, 1999). There exist two categories of hope, that which is associated with maintenance goals (i.e., those that comprise daily agendas in living) and enhancement goals (i.e., those focused on hopeful thoughts about building on what already is satisfactory) (Snyder, 2002). Initially, hope was thought to be not applicable in those goal pursuits where the probabilities of goal attainment were either nil or very high (Snyder). Over time, there was shift in reasoning to include very

high and very low probability goals as being relevant for hoping (Snyder, 2000, 2002).

Hope comprises of goals, pathways, and agency (Snyder, 2000).

Goals. One premise of hope theory is that people generally think in terms of goals that provide a target to mental action sequences (Cheavens, Feldman, Woodward, & Snyder, 2006**;** Snyder, 1995). Goals sustain attention if they are sufficiently important and valuable to individuals (Snyder, 1995). Four categories of goals include approach goals (moving toward a desired outcome); forestalling negative outcomes goals (i.e. delaying unwanted occurrences); maintenance goals (i.e. sustaining the status quo); and enhancement goals (i.e. expanding an already positive outcome) (Snyder et al., 2000). The level of goal attainment is important in hopeful thinking. Moderate certainty of goal attainment is likely to enhance hope as it increases motivation (Snyder, 2002). When goals are perceived to be too hard or too difficult, people are likely not to pursue them. Goals set on individuals' standards are more attractive than goals set on other people's standard (Snyder, 2002). Individuals with higher hope and with an elevated sense of agency and pathways for situations, approach a given goal with a positive emotional state, a sense of challenge, and a focus on success instead of failure. Whereas, low-hope individuals, with their enduring perceptions of deficient agency and pathways, are likely to approach a given goal with a negative emotional state, a sense of ambivalence, and a focus upon failure rather than success (Cheavens et al., 2006; Snyder, 1995).

There are two general types of goals. First, positive goals or approach goals may be envisioned for the first time (e.g., a person wanting to buy a first car), pertain to the sustaining of a present goal (e.g., wanting to keep retirement saving safe), represent the desire to further a positive goal wherein one already has made progress (e.g., wanting to

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support oneself as a writer after having sold a first book). Second type of goal involves

hindering a negative goal) (Snyder, 2002). It is stopping something before it happens or

delay the unwanted (e.g., not wanting to get laid off at work or seeking to delay being

laid off) (Snyder, 2002).

     Pathways. The second component of hope theory involves thinking about

individual's capacity to find workable routes to the goals and movement towards the

future (Snyder, 2002). It displays the perceived ability to produce successful ways to

reach the desired goals, basically linking the present to the future (Snyder, 1995).

Individuals with high hope are likely to be more decisive, more skilled in creating a

detailed, well-articulated primary route, or alternative route to goal achievement

(Cheavens et al., 2006; Snyder et al., 2000). However, for an individual with low-hope,

pathway thinking can be weak and not well articulated (Snyder, 2002). Pathway thinking

is likely to become more refined as the goal pursuit sequence progresses towards goal

achievement (Snyder, 2002).

     Agency thinking. Agency thinking is the motivational component of hope theory,

which involves thoughts about one's ability to initiate and sustain movement along

pathways towards goals, even when faced with barriers (Cheavens et al., 2006; Snyder,

2002). Agency thinking is most important when facing barriers, as it helps people to

channel the required motivation towards the best alternate pathway (Snyder, 2002). The

varying levels in hopeful thinking can result in differing strength of the pathways and

agency thinking. For example, for an individual with high pathways and low agency, it is

likely that active routing thoughts would not be energized by motivational thinking.

However, for an individual with low pathways and high agency, motivation will be

activated without the necessary pathways (Snyder, 2002). A hopeful attitude becomes a catalyst for identifying one or more goal-related action steps. When challenged with barriers, one must demonstrate flexibility to identify and pursue action steps around the obstacle which will allow the person to achieve their goal (Niles, Hyung, Bahn, & Amundson, 2010).

A person's pathways and agency thoughts are learned beginning in childhood (Snyder, 2002). Hopeful thinking is often accompanied by emotional sets or moods, which cast an affective tone on the goal pursuit process. For example, individuals with high hope are often happy, friendly, and confident. Whereas, those with low hope are negative and passive in task pursuits. Although goal-directed cognitions elicit particular emotions, they in turn shape and inform the cognitions of the person (Snyder, 2002). Outcome value occurs in the pre-analysis of goals phase, where an individual will see whether the potential outcome is sufficiently important for continued cognitive processing (Snyder). Sometimes an individual cannot appraise the value of a goal until they have begun to pursue the goal. In goal pursuit, an individual may encounter a stressor, or even earlier in the sequence. It may jeopardize hopeful thought and one may yield to stressors and derail in the goal pursuit. This may result in the individual perceiving that they may not reach the desired goals (Snyder). For individuals with high hope, stressors may be perceived as a challenge which can help in rechanneling agency to new or alternative pathways (Snyder, 2002; 2005). Unexpected events can elicit emotions, both negatively and positively, and affect agency.

Hope has been shown to be positively related to self-worth and higher academic achievement (Curry & Snyder, 2000). It has been considered to be a useful predictive

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tool for coaches in gauging how athletes will perform as higher hope reflects more adaptive and goal-directed thinking important for athletic performance (Curry et al., 1997). In the absence of hope, people are likely to not take positive action in their lives. Research also suggests that graduate students with higher levels of hope are less likely to procrastinate on tasks as compared to students with lower hope (Alexander & Onwuegbuzie, 2007). Research highlights that hope influences the perception of major life events concluding that hopeful people are able cope with difficulties in life, and are thus less vulnerable to trouble situations (Scioli et al. 2011).

Hope is also positively related to health and work outcomes (Scioli et al., 2011; Snyder, 2004). Employees, who have positive psychological characteristic such as hope, are likely to be more productive; concluding that hope is positively related to job performance than for employees with less hope (Peterson & Byron, 2008). The three aforementioned components of hope are important for effective career self-management (Niles, Yoon, Bahn, & Amundson, 2010).

Work hope. Attention to hope within the vocational psychology literature aligns with the profession's historical focus on individual's strengths and emphasis on resilience (Thompson, Her, & Nitzarim, 2014). Being hopeful is essential for managing an individual's career development because a sense of hope allows the individual to consider the possibilities in any situation and drives the individual to take action (Niles, et al., 2010). Building on Snyder's (2002, 2002) hope theory, consisting of three components (goals, pathways, and agency); Juntunen and Wettersen (2006) created the Work Hope Scale, integrating the positive psychology and hope literature with the vocational psychology literature (Park- Taylor & Vargas, 2012). Work hope is parallel to the hope

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theory, as it includes presence of goals, strategies to obtain goals (pathways), and the willingness to engage in action towards the goals (agency) (Juntunen & Wetterson, 2006). Work hope refers to a positive state of motivation which involves work and work-related goals and may have particular relevance to understanding the needs of disenfranchised individuals (Juntunen & Wettersten, 2006). Though work hope is a new construct with limited support, it represents an innovative and refreshing approach to future research (Park- Taylor & Vargas, 2012).

Role of hope in career development is related to a sense of agency, knowledge of personal goals, and clarity about career pathways (Savickas, 2003; Snyder, 2000). Work hope is a relatively new concept in vocational psychology, focusing on the positive motivational state impacting work and work goals with particular relevance for individuals with disenfranchised identities/populations and those who are denied to privileges and have economic disadvantage (Juntunen & Wettersten, 2006). People with fewer resources may struggle not only in pursuit related to work- goals, but also on a more basic level in identification of such goals (Juntunen, 2002; Wettersten et al., 2004). There are many individuals who experience discrimination as they may not belong to the majority groups, such as individuals who are sexual minorities, people with disabilities, and those with lower socio-economic status (Juntunen & Wettersten, 2006). Research findings suggest that increased levels of reported psychological distress, experiences of classism, and experiences with racism related negatively to work hope. Scores did not differ based on gender or generational status (Thompson, Her, & Nitzarim, 2014). These results suggest the importance of attending to mental health when assessing for, and making interpretations about, levels of hope.

Though work hope is positively related to career optimism, they are conceptually and empirically different from one another (Garcia, et al. 2015). Career optimism is a component of career adaptability, which positively influences career outcomes such as career aspirations, choice, and exploration (Garcia, et al. 2015). However, work hope is a positive psychological stimulus that sustains the job search process and maintenance of one's own work (Hong & Choi, 2013). It is suggested that work hope is important, as it enables people to continue to have confidence in the 'self' against barriers and to remain involved in work paths (Oyserman, Bybee, Terry, Hart-Johnson, 2004). The significance of work hope in career growth for adolescents experiencing multiple external barriers are acknowledged with its positive perceptions to the future of hope and career development (Diemer & Blustein, 2007). The role of hope in career development has been related to a sense of agency, knowledge of personal goals, and clarity about career pathways. Work hope as a construct can contribute to counselors' understanding of the connection between career experiences and achievement motivation (Kenny et al., 2010). Given the developing literature, suggesting work hope as a critical factor in achievement motivation (Diemer & Blustein, 2007); it may be a useful construct for the career counseling for international students. International students face many aforementioned uncertainties, especially in relation to being selected in a work visa lottery system and sponsored for a work visa. These three topics are individually defined and discussed in relation to career outcomes for international students.

Career Adaptability – Career Agency, Career Outlook, and Occupational

Awareness

Individuals benefit by developing resources to manage the work-related tasks, transitions, and traumas in the process of career development (Guan, et al., 2013; Savickas et al., 2005). Career adaptability is a psychological and social construct that signifies an individual's readiness and resources for coping with current and imminent job tasks, occupation transitions, and personal difficulties (Savickas et al., 2005). It comprises concern for the future, control, curiosity, and self-confidence (Savickas, 2011). Career adaptability refers to how individuals adjust to the challenges of a changing world of work and contexts in career decision making (Savickas, 1997; Savickas et al., 2005). It also reflects a readiness to take advantage of opportunities and overcome transitions, barriers and setbacks to prevent underemployment, prolonged unemployment and negative consequences in one's career (Koen, Klehe, & Vianen, 2012; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). Factors such as agency, optimism, occupational information, positive outlook, social support, and control are components of career adaptability (Mcllveen, Beccaria, & Burton, 2013; Rottinghaus, Day, & Borgen, 2005). Application of these can benefit physical health, adjustment to college, and productivity at work, as well as avert depression, help in coping with lack of work, and affect happiness and achievement (Aspinwall, 2005; Duffy, 2010). As such, career adaptability includes a set of individual resources useful to cope with developmental tasks, to participate in working life, and adapt to some of the unexpected needs with relation to the changes in the job market and conditions (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). Thus, these skills (agency, optimism, occupational information, positive outlook, social support, and control) help people

actively build their career life, when coping with the changing life situations one experiences in various social contexts (Santilli, Nota, Ginevra, Soresi, 2014).

Minorities and underrepresented populations are found to experience more barriers in career development (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994) than majority populations. International students are a minority in transition from school to employment, one of the most critical periods in the life of most students' careers, as it often dictates career outcomes and future success in the workforce (Koen, et al., 2012; Feldman & Ng, 2007). International students are constantly faced with challenges concerning employment, the job search, asserting control in a less controllable environment, low self-confidence, and difficulties pursuing career goals (Lin & Flores, 2013; Mahadevan, 2010; Shen & Herr, 2004). Though there are many stressful events in the educational path of international students, they are motivated to seek employment and aim for positive career growth (Shen & Herr, 2004). Higher levels of career adaptability not only result in increased optimism, hope, and life satisfaction (Santilli et al., 2014), but it also enhances job seekers subsequent employment quality, successful vocational transitions, better career-choices, underemployment, and/or unemployment (Koen et al., 2012). The struggles faced by international students, who are expected to work under a strict timeline as dictated by the regulatory policies of Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS) increases the need to enhance a successful school to work transition for career preparation focusing on skills such as career adaptability (Koen, et al., 2012). Promoting the understanding and learning of career adaptability skills may help international students find a suitable job during economic uncertainties, and with already fewer opportunities (Crockett & Hays, 2011; Mahadevan, 2010).

Career Aspirations

      Contextual and social factors such as socioeconomic status, ethnicity, community and school experiences, personal characteristics, and family are likely to serve as barriers to, or may boost the development of, career aspirations (Ali, McWhirter, & Chronister, 2005). Aspirations may include how individuals desire to advance within their careers and pursue opportunities for promotion, leadership, training, and supervising other employees (Gray & O'Brien, 2007). There are several factors that contribute to the formation of occupational and career aspirations beginning in childhood. Researchers have studied factors such as family socioeconomic status, ethnicity, and gender with relation to occupational aspirations (Watts, Frame, Moffett, Van Hein, & Hein, 2015) and have found that teenagers from higher income families report privilege, a path to pursue higher levels of professional income and are more likely to pursue their education than teenagers from lower income families (Mau & Bikos, 2000; Watts et al., 2015). Ethnicity and gender have been found to be strong predictors of occupational and educational aspirations (Mau & Bikos, 2000; Lee & Rojewski, 2009). Black and ethnic minority business graduates have been shown to hold career aspirations similar to their white peers and expect the same rewards for investing in vocational education with the desire to be successful (Kirton, 2009). Women and ethnic minorities often overcome multiple barriers to advancing within organizations, some of which may not be experienced by majority groups (Ayman & Korabik, 2010). These barriers manifests in subtle ways throughout a woman's learning and career, with regards to demanding work hours, provisions for child care, considered as supportive followers, and other barriers that may hinder advancement in career (Cooper, 2001). There are some jobs that are considered

"female appropriate", thus actually limiting the kinds of jobs women can do (Eagly &

Karau, 2002). These are oppressive and pervasive networks in contexts of education and

career that encumber minorities throughout the lifetime (Watts et al., 2015). If similar

generalizations exist for job specific or non-specific to international students, then the

barriers increase as a result of limited/reduced career opportunities.

Immigrant status such as a lack of English proficiency and resident alien or

citizenship status are likely to increase barriers and effect career aspirations and other

outcomes (Catsambis, 1994**;** Zambrana & Silva-Palacios, 1989). Specifically, in working

with immigrant populations within the United States, researchers have demonstrated the

importance of considering the role of immigrant cultural values, as the values may

conflict with American cultural and work values (Hill, Ramirez, & Dumka, 2003).

Career aspirations of Asian Americans indicated that they are more attracted to

occupations that are logical, analytical, and non-personal in nature as compared to

occupations that involve communication and interpersonal influencing (Leung, Ivey, &

Suzuki, 1994). Professionals who teach, counsel and advise African American and other

minority students in their career planning are challenged to address problems related to

discrimination and self-imposed boundaries in career aspirations and development (Evans

& Herr, 1994), highlighting the lack of resources and scarcity of supports for those who

experience discrimination. Some populations are likely to focus on high-prestige

occupations during such experiences, in order to move upward in the social structure, or

to satisfy various parental and familial expectations (Leung, et al., 1994). Unfortunately,

these problems have not been clearly defined, and have garnered very little research

attention with reference to international students' career aspirations.

Racial identity and perceptions of discrimination also may affect self-concept and career aspirations (Evans & Herr, 1994). Experiences of discrimination and school climate factors are likely to shape the career choices of international students. Research has suggested that acculturation affects career variables such as occupational segregation, mobility, career aspirations, and choice (Hartung et al., 1998). African, Asian, and Latin American international students' concerns about their individual competence in social, career, and academic contexts, were predictive of increased difficulties in identifying career aspirations and in expecting positive future career outcomes (Reynolds & Constantine, 2007). Findings also suggested that a lack of confidence and job-related insecurity can have profound effects on the future career goals and planning (Reynolds & Constantine). The need to adjust one's behavior to fit a foreign cultural context has been demonstrated to lead feelings of discomfort, incongruence, and awkwardness. Also, to make positive impressions and be perceived as similar to domestic applicants, international students often need to make modifications in individual behavior during the job interview process (Sangganjanavanich et al., 2011). These pose as substantial risk factors to international students' career aspirations and capacity for navigating acculturative stress. International students come from diverse backgrounds and cultures, influencing the way they perceive opportunities and access the available resources for career development (Arthur, 2004). Although they experience acculturation stress, the impact of the stress on career aspirations is unclear. Career aspirations help understand individual's career-related behaviors and choices, education pathways, and perception of the social forces affecting the nature and availability of career options (Rojewski, 2005). Indeed, additional research needs to focus on international students' experiences of

discrimination, cultural factors, career barriers, INS rules and legal restrictions, and the influence of these on their career aspirations. As career aspirations are important predictors for later occupational attainment (Howard et al., 2011, Spencer-Rodgers, 2000).

Job Search Self-efficacy

Job search self-efficacy predicts job search behaviors, career planning, interview skills and confidence, job search skills, and networking ability (Lin & Flores, 2013). College students nearing graduation typically seek new employment to apply their newly acquired skills and knowledge, and to launch new careers. These students may engage in poor career planning, invest less time and effort in the job search process, engage in search behaviors that are self-defeating, and possibly enter dissatisfying careers, or not find employment by the time they graduate (Renn, Steinbauer, Taylor, & Detwiler, 2014). Unemployment can increase the stress of a job search, thus negatively impacting physical and psychological health and well-being (Saks, Zikic, Koen, 2015).

Experiences of discrimination and stress effect self-efficacy (Lowinger et al., 2014). Self-efficacy is the belief in one's capacity to organize and execute actions, and belief in one's confidence level to perform a task and achieve a goal (Lowinger et al., 2014). Job search self-efficacy is the belief in one's ability to successfully perform specific job search behaviors and obtain employment (Saks & Ashforth, 1999). Social contact, age, ethnicity, supports, and past work experiences, all affect job-search self-efficacy. Visa regulations, cultural differences, and language difficulties increase the stressors in job search career planning and employment of international students.

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Job search behaviors are often understood from the perspective of intensity, the frequency with which individuals make use of various search strategies, and the efforts devoted to look for a job (Fort, Jacquet, & Leroy, 2011). Job search goals refer to performance goals set by an individual such as sending out a certain number of applications each week (Fort, et al., 2011; Lin & Flores, 2013). Job search concerns for international students include locating U.S. employment, preparing job search documents, and overcoming cultural barriers (Crockett & Hays, 2011; Spencer-Rodgers, 2000; Yang, Wong, Hwang, & Heppner, 2002). Because of these difficulties, international students have a heightened need for guidance and support in vocational tasks (Crockett & Hays, 2011). International students may not be able enhance their job search skills due to cultural barriers and misunderstandings, such as the use of networking being misunderstood as nepotism. The lack of previous work experience, being a non-citizen, poor connections/networks increases difficulties encountered in the job search process (Nunes & Arthur, 2013). There are mixed views in the literature regarding whether students are aware of employment resources (Crockett & Hays).

Job search club proponents suggest that once an individual has learned, practiced, and achieved employment through the acquisition of job search skills, that person is likely to retain those skills for a lifetime of career transitions (Bikos & Furry, 1999). Job search clubs focus on meeting the needs of international students and included topics of job search plans, writing resumes, using campus services, dealing with visa status and work permit, networking, interviewing, researching employers based on data collected from student advisor and director of the international students' office. Research suggests that students benefit by increasing their understanding of the unique aspects of U.S.

cultures. It increases their self-confidence, and by feeling more supported in their career path (Bikos & Furry, 1999). Job search self-efficacy is an important factor related to job search behavior (Saks, et al., 2015). It refers to the belief in one's ability to successfully perform specific job search behaviors in order to obtain employment (Saks & Ashforth, 1999). Job search self-efficacy refers to an individual's beliefs in their ability to perform various activities necessary for a job search including exploring personal values and interests, networking with other professionals in the field of interests, and successfully interviewing for the job (Solberg, Good, Fischer, Brown, & Nord, 1995). Job search self-efficacy has been positively related to preparatory job search behaviors, active job search behaviors, and job search intensity (Lin & Flores, 2013).

Students' cultural backgrounds and expectations in the host culture, language barriers, and individual uniqueness have been shown to play an important role in the job search process (Sangganjanavanich et al., 2011; Zhou & Santos, 2007). To increase the likelihood of a positive job search outcome among international students, it is important to gather information about job search actions (Lin & Flores, 2013). Individual variables, such as job search self-efficacy, influence both job search goals and employment goals, which in turn, determine job search behaviors and outcomes (Fort, Jacquet, & Leroy, 2011). This highlights the importance of studying these factors in an international student population. It is also of value to study international student's job search self-efficacy, as they are faced with time constraints due to visa status, OPT, and difficulty finding work visa sponsors. Although international students are an asset to the economy and to the increasingly diverse workplace, very few attempts have been made to identify the various needs of this student population, with even fewer studies focusing specifically

on career-related issues (Singaravelu et al., 2005; Yang, Wong, Hwang, & Heppner, 2002) stressing the need to investigate career adaptability, aspirations, and job-search self-efficacy.

Based on the understanding of acculturation and its impact on career growth of individuals, it is important to focus on the impact of acculturation on international students' ability to adapt to new cultural and career contexts and experience career growth and positive career outcomes. Career adaptability highlights the need for a sense of control and flexibility to approach work and working conditions (Duffy, 2010). The variables of job search self-efficacy, career aspirations, career agency, career outlook, occupational awareness, and work hope, focus on the sense of control, readiness, and participation on international students' career growth. Acculturative stress is understood to have a long lasting negative impact on individual growth and success. The purpose of the present study is to assess the relationship between acculturative stress and career outcomes for international students. Specifically, it is hypothesized that acculturative stress will be negatively related to work hope, career agency, occupational awareness, career aspirations, and job search self-efficacy; and positively related to negative career outlook.

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CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter will provide a critical review of the literature pertaining to the present study. Specifically, a review of the literature on the acculturation stress of international students and their career development (i.e., work hope, career adaptability, career aspirations, and job search self-efficacy) will be provided.

International Students' Acculturative Stress and Challenges

Generally, the experience of studying abroad can be an enriching experience, but not always an easy endeavor (Human, Ruane, Timm, & Ndala-Magoro, 2014). The transition usually happens in three stages. First the honeymoon stage, in which students experience excitement about the new academic endeavor. Second the crisis stage, when students find their personal and cultural values being incongruent and incompatible with the host country's values. Third the recovery stage, which involves appreciation for the host culture, adjusting to the host culture, and making friends to avoid isolation and loneliness (Boafo-Arthur, 2014; Human et al., 2014). The literature on international students often focuses on the initial adjustment and acculturation process with little attention paid to additional stages and their subsequent effects on career development (Arthur & Flynn, 2011).

Acculturation is a complicated process that is affected by many variables and is a significant predictor for psychological stress in adjustment to the U.S. cultural contexts (Wadsworth et al., 2008; Wang & Mallinckrodt, 2006). In some cases, acculturation can be manifested by changes in areas such as dressing, eating habits, language usage, consumption of popular culture in attempts to assimilate, and the degree of contact with others from the host and home cultures (Berry, 2003; Zimmerman, 1995). Acculturation is a process of cultural change which results from repeated, direct contact between two or more cultural groups (Berry, Kim, Minde, & Mok, 1987). International students are likely to have fewer resources upon arrival to the host country and experience greater difficulty acculturating when compared to already established ethnic groups (Poyrazli et al., 2004). Overall, it is understood that acculturation impacts daily functioning. This section will address research focused on acculturative stress and its impact on the psychological and career development of international students.

Acculturative stress was a predictor of depressive symptoms for 320 international students from 33 countries (Constantine et al., 2004). The study investigated self-concealment behaviors and social self-efficacy in relationship to acculturative stress and depression. The findings of the study indicated that social self-concealment, not sharing distressing information, and social-efficacy skills did not mitigate the depressive symptoms of African, Asian, and Latin American international students in the face of acculturative stress (Constantine, et al., 2004). The authors suggested that future research should focus on specific contextual factors such as access to cultural networks, and connections with other international students that are more likely to affect the levels of acculturative stress in international students (Constantine et al., 2004).

International students often experience racial discrimination and prejudice. Racism exists in schools and universities in the U.S and negatively influences the healthy acculturation process of international students (Pedersen, 1995). Experiences of cultural, institutional and personal forms of racism and prejudice increase the likelihood of negatively impacting an individual's self-esteem and self-confidence sometimes leading to internalized and externalized, helplessness and anger (Chen, 1999). Perceived discrimination has shown to be a particular impediment in the psychosocial adjustment of international students (Chen, 1999; Duru & Poyrazli, 2011).

Given the pervasive trends of prejudice and discrimination towards international students, one may also look at specific research to help gain a better understanding. Students' resilience to adjustment has highlighted that students' ability to adjust does not only depend on the individual alone but also on the physical and social contexts (Burkholder, 2014; Lee & Rice, 2007). International students from Asia, Africa, India, Middle East, and Latin America reported significant perceived discrimination as compared to domestic students or European counterparts. The experiences reported were feelings of inferiority, direct verbal insults, discrimination when seeking employment, and overt acts of discrimination (Hanassab, 2006; Lee & Rice, 2007).

The effects of discrimination have been studied in relation to students from specific countries. A qualitative study, explored the experiences of six international students from Turkey. Findings indicated prejudicial references to religious groups and groups of terror, which led to students feeling disconnected and isolated from the social surrounding in the in the host country (Burkholder, 2014). Similar discrimination was reported by Black-African international students (Boafo-Arthur, 2014). The common

adjustment issues experienced by Black-African international students were prejudice and discrimination, social isolation, separation from family and friends, and financial concerns. They are likely to be evaluated with the same stereotypes that are ascribed to African-Americans by the dominant culture and are sometimes also stereotyped negatively as less civilized by African-Americans (Boafo-Arthur).

More recently, the racial microaggressions experienced by 12 Asian international students in Canada were investigated by Houshmand, Spanierman, and Tafarodi (2014). Findings highlighted a common theme of feeling excluded and avoided. Often students cope by engaging with their own racial cultural groups and withdraw from academic activities/spheres. Language barriers, being ridiculed for accent, and disregarding international values and needs were concerns reported by students in this study.

Recent tragic incidents in Australia where Indian students were assaulted and attacked by members of the host community is one such example of prejudices and hostility experienced by international students (O'Loughlin, 2010). Such events highlight that discrimination can take severe forms and result in fear amongst international students. The above-mentioned studies highlight harmful effects of acculturative stress, discrimination on psychological and emotional levels with relation to specific populations. Despite evidence of several such negative student experiences of subtle forms of racism and perceived discrimination, the relationship of these to career development is under-researched and under-represented.

Acculturation impacts career decision-making processes and therefore cross-cultural adjustment may similarly impact career decision-making (Zhou & Santos, 2007). International students expressed fears about cultural barriers to their successful

integration into the workplace and general living (Arthur & Flynn, 2001). In a study by

Mau (2004), perceptions regarding cultural difference related to career decision-making

were examined. Findings indicated that Asian American students perceived more

decision-making difficulties, while white American students perceived the fewest

difficulties. Taiwanese international students ($n = 112$) who maintained an Asian identity

(low acculturation) were more likely to have higher vocational identity and a clearer

understanding of their vocational interests and abilities (Shih & Brown, 2000). The

conclusions of this study found an inverse relationship between acculturation and

vocational identity with relation to Taiwanese international students. Those who reported

a more Asian identity were more likely to experience higher vocational identity, clearer

interests, abilities, and aspirations. Not quickly adopting the behaviors and values of the

host culture may allow Taiwanese international students to feel a greater sense of

maturity and confidence, especially in career interests and goals. This cohesive identity

in case of the Taiwanese international students in the study may allow a supportive and

encouraging environment in understanding one's career interests and aspirations. These

findings may assist in understanding the level of acculturation, duration of stay in the

U.S., their effects on stressors and barriers, and shed some light onto the career

development processes of a specific sample of international students (Shih & Brown,

2000).

Available research focusing on acculturation and career beliefs of 341

international students (Indians, Chinese, and Koreans) indicated that approval from

others, influence of others, and comparison with others play important roles, underlining

the emphasis on collectivist values in Asian cultures (Mahadevan, 2010). Low

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correlations existed between acculturation levels and career beliefs of Chinese and Indian international students, which could be a result of the lack of cultural appropriateness of the measure implemented in the study (Mahadevan, 2010). Inherent in the correlational study, Mahadevan reported that causal relationships of the variables could not be established. Research on a convenience sample of 264 Chinese international students at three public universities investigated acculturation difficulties, academic self-efficacy, language abilities, and procrastination behaviors (Lowinger et al., 2014). For the male participants, perceived discrimination and homesickness were significant predictors of procrastination. Whereas, for the female participants, English language ability, academic self-efficacy, and culture shock and/or stress were significant predictors of procrastination (Lowinger et al., 2014). From this finding, it is possible to conclude that there may be a relationship between levels of support and language difficulties, which in turn may affect academic performance. Limitations to these studies were the use of a convenience sample, which is not randomized (Mahadevan, 2010) and not representative of the larger Chinese student population demographic or a specific university, making the results difficult to generalize (Houshmand et al., 2014; Lowinger et al., 2014).

Language-related stress is consistently marked in existing research regarding international students and is listed as a primary concern affecting the interpersonal communication and educational success of international students (Arthur & Flynn, 2012; Chen, 1999; Pederson, 1991). Language-related difficulties can lead to psychological harm and have strong, sometimes permanent effects on an international students' self-concept and related cognitive, emotional, and behavioral aspects which amplify difficulties in the adjustment processes to the new host culture. Though language

proficiency is a necessary requirement for daily living, there is also a complex technical aspect for academic activities (Chen, 1999; Redmond & Bunyi, 1993). These difficulties in daily life can inhibit social interaction and lead to feelings of inferiority, insecurity, confusion, and a decreased willingness to communicate with others (Ishiyama, 1989). Frustrations are commonly experienced when employers are intolerant of language differences, especially accents (Nunes & Arthur, 2013).

Career Development of International Students

The facilitation of career development can be divided into three phases for international students: the first phase entails the exploration of studying in a foreign country, the second phase focuses on studying in a foreign country, and the third phase emphasizes the importance of transferring acquired skills into the work context (Human et al., 2014; Shen & Herr, 2004).

International students' barriers do not end with the completion of the degree. The barriers and challenges are also present in career development (Nunes & Arthur, 2013). After graduating international students could decide to stay in the U.S., return to their home country or another country for job search and employment (Nunes & Arthur, 2013; Shen & Herr, 2004). International students often take huge educational loans to pursue education in the U.S., therefore financial stressors and salary estimates are often a major deciding factor in job and location selection (Musumba et al., 2011; Smith & Khawaja, 2011). International graduate students constitute highly educated individuals; therefore, their decision to stay and where to start their professional careers have socio-economic impacts on both the U.S. and their home countries (Musumba et al.). These diverse factors stimulate various career plans (Shen & Herr, 2004). It is important that

international students make informed academic and career choices so as to maximize the opportunity of studying and working in a foreign country (Human et al., 2014).

Language barriers, job application and networking factors, and visa status were considered to be barriers to career development in a semi-structured interview employing a critical incident technique of 19 undergraduate and graduate students (Arthur & Flynn, 2011). These students reported fear related to the presence of cultural barriers for their successful integration into the workplace (Arthur & Flynn, 2011). Struggles and discrimination were experienced when students had to explain and discuss visa sponsorship with human resources at workplace. There was a lack of knowledge about immigrant problems and employers did not value international experience (Arthur & Flynn, 2011; Nunes & Arthur, 2013).

Discrimination based on language, ethnicity, race, religion, country of origin appears to be the most common experiences and frequently researched areas. Barriers can be internal conflicts or external frustrations which affect educational and vocational plans (Metz, Fouad, & Ihle-Helledy, 2009). Ethnic minorities expected fewer career opportunities and more career barriers than nonminority counterparts resulting in greater work and occupational inequity (Metz et al., 2009) as a result of such discrimination. As revealed by research, focus groups consisting of 15 international students revealed experiences of multiple barriers in participation in their academic and social communities. Initially, concerns focused on housing, transportation, and getting the required documents to stay. With time, the nature of barriers changed and academic and social relationship concerns were experienced. Students of color experienced discriminatory treatment due to after effects of 9/11 (Poyrazli & Grahame, 2007).

Perceptions of discrimination may influence self-concept and career aspirations (Evans & Herr, 1994). Career development study of Asian international, non-Asian international, and domestic students attributed the lack of difference between career certainty to the small sample size ($n = 144$ international and 70 domestic students) (Singaravelu, White, & Bringaze, 2005). Economic development of the countries has an effect on the career exploration of international students. Their study also provides information indicating that there is more family influence among non-Asian international students than among Asian international students. However, the authors in the study emphasized that sample and the country of origin of the Asian international students (Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, and Malaysia), could have affected the results as, these countries have greater economic development and resemble U.S.A. than other Asian countries and non-Asian students. The study points to the prominent family influence in career preference for non-Asian countries; such as Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East where economic development is at a slower rate. It highlighted that Asian international students were more satisfied with the college experience than non-Asian international students, perhaps due to more career certainty. Non-Asian international students reported that the faculty and staff had no interest in their welfare suggesting the lack of support and connection in this particular study (Singaravelu et al., 2005). International medical graduates ($n = 1890$) reported statistically significantly less career satisfaction than U.S. medical graduates, were likely to report lower income and less likely to be board certified (Chen et al., 2012). Overall dissatisfaction with career development was apparent in international students' experiences.

Instead of using career services, students use help sources that were primarily from their own academic fields and personal sources (Shen & Herr, 2004). Through 18 interviews, it was clear that international students made their career decision to stay in the host culture by discussing and consulting with people in both home and host culture, preferring the relational decision-making process. Findings emphasized support from the professor, from advanced international peers and valued career discussion and planning. Support from advanced international peers who were already in the field was also necessary support. The availability of mentors, such as faculty members and academic supervisors, to facilitate contact with employers appears as a key relational support for international student success (Popadiuk & Arthur, 2014). Qualitative inquiry with 16 undergraduate and graduate international students suggested that career services must be proactive and help students market themselves and meet prospective employers, and acquire pre-graduation work experience or internships (Nunes & Arthur, 2013)

Given that support, mentoring, and family influence were common findings in decision making variables for international students, it is important to focus on cultural variables in international students concerns and counseling. Some of the limitations to these studies highlighted a lack of appropriate tools to study international students' concerns, small sample size, and region-specific studies reducing generalizability. The measures used were not substantial, and more sensitive instruments could be used in future studies (Lowinger et al., 2014; Mahadevan, 2010). Other aspects of career development such as career self-efficacy, career maturity, and career attitudes can be studied with relation to multi-ethnic samples of international students (Mahadevan, 2010). More studies that include multi-ethnic samples need to be conducted

(Mahadevan) and studying undergraduate and graduate students separately will

contribute more information about the educational experiences of these students

(Wadsworth et al., 2008). An investigation of undergraduate students is deemed

necessary as they were underrepresented and may share different or unexamined

influences than students pursuing graduate studies (Arthur & Flynn, 2013). The sample

sizes are small and representative of a few countries (Nunes & Arthur, 2013). Studies

have also focused on the diversity and generalizability issue of present research (Arthur

& Flynn, 2013). A need to investigate the ways to assist international students' in

bridging the gap between their career desires and actual experiences is considered the

next step in understanding the career development of these students (Arthur & Flynn,

2013).

International students bring diversity and multilingual ability to the workplace,

contributing to today's competitive job market (Sangganjanavanich et al., 2011). With an

increase in the multicultural nature of the U.S. workforce, it is imperative to effectively

address the unique career development needs of clients from different ethnicities

(Mahadevan, 2010). It is critical to understand the literature focusing on discrimination

in international students learning experiences as aforementioned studies report its high

presence in the everyday life of international students.

Hope Theory and Work Hope

Hope has been studied across disciplines and has been demonstrated to be

relevant to a number of outcomes, such as academic achievement (e.g. Onwuegbuzie,

1998; Snyder, et al., 2000), athletic performance (Curry, Snyder, Cook, Ruby, & Rehm,

1997), social competence and adjustment (Barnum, Snyder, Rapoff, Mani, & Thompson,

1998), and psychological adjustment (Chang & DeSimone, 2001). Hope is related to health and work outcomes, where, hopeful people are able to cope with more difficult life events and are less vulnerable (Santilli et al., 2014). Systemic inequities can negatively affect student learning by decreasing motivation. Thus, students who experience inequality in educational and other opportunities may not believe that their efforts will pay off or that school achievement matters to themselves or others (Kenny, et al., 2010).

Goals will be unimportant if the necessity to meet them is not clear. People create usable routes to approach these goals, often thinking about ways to travel from point A to point B (Snyder, 2002). A high-hope person is likely to have established a plausible route towards the goal, with a concomitant sense of confidence in the route. High-hope individuals as compared to those with low-hope, are likely to be more decisive and certain in the pathways to their goals, a premise that has been suggested for career goals as well. The pathways thinking of a low hope person is more tenuous and the route is not well articulated. Laboratory experiments including listening preferences, memory tasks, self-report and self-talk measures have supported the process affirming positive internal pathways messages for high-hope as compared to low-hope persons (Snyder, Lapointe, Crowson, & Early, 1998). A high-hope person is also likely to provide an alternate route, describe themselves as being flexible thinkers as compared to low-hope persons. Pathway thinking should become more precise as the goal pursuit sequence progresses towards attainment.

Use of a hope centered approach to career development creates positive momentum in the career self-management process, which is especially useful in the current context of increased stress and challenges. It plays a crucial role for international

students as well, especially due to the already present challenges of acculturation, discrimination, and work permit related stressors. Developing literature suggests that work hope may be an important factor in achievement motivation, especially for minority populations (Park-Taylor & Vargas, 2012). Given the early state of research on hope as it relates to the career development of college students, the present study will explore work hope as a career outcome.

Being hopeful is important to one's career development (Niles, Yoon, Balm, & Amundson, 2010). It relates to being able to envision a meaningful goal and believing in the positive outcomes are likely to follow if specific action is taken. A sense of hope allows the person to take into consideration the possibilities or options in a situation and drives the person to act (Niles et al., 2010). Various types of hope specific to career are: Role specific goals explain the belief that goals specific to one role are more likely achievable as compared to another life role. Global hope believers are often individuals that sense that they can achieve his or her goals. Goal-specific hope is the belief of an individual about the specific goal and whether it can be achieved (Niles et al.). Hope is a positive motivational state where people see a sense of willpower to meet the goals (Santilli et al., 2014).

The vocational hope construct integrates activities that encourage youth not only to explore career options, but also to gather an understanding of the process of reaching the occupations and then setting long or short-term goals (Park-Taylor & Vargas, 2012). Hope correlates reliably with superior academic performance, higher test scores, and overall GPA (Snyder, 2002). It appears that agency, but not pathway thinking, significantly related to past, current, and future feelings of hope (Tong, Fredrickson,

Chang, & Lin, 2010). College students with a high agency component of hope, had higher levels of educational and career development skills and outcomes (Sung, Turner, & Kaewchinda, 2011). High hope scores correlate significantly with scales measuring teacher encouragement focusing on the need for support and mentoring to increase hope and goal attainment for students (Snyder et al., 2002). Students with a higher level of hope were less likely to postpose and procrastinate school related tasks such as writing papers, studying, and completing assignments as compared to students with lower levels of hope (Alexander & Onwuegbuzie, 2007). These studies are a reminder of the pervasive importance of hope in all aspects of career development.

Research on college athletes ($n = 370$) examined the role of hope on academic achievement and goal-oriented behavior. Hope correlated positively with self-worth and with grades (Curry, et al., 1997). The Integrative contextual model (ICM) of career development was examined with relation to undergraduate college students (Sung et al., 2011). A combination of ICM skills such as career exploration, goal setting, work readiness, and utilization of support was studied to predict outcomes such as: academic achievement, self-efficacy, positive self-attributions, vocational identity, interests, and proactivity. Findings suggested that the agency component of hope is a motivational, contextual variable surrounding the career development of college students. Individuals with higher agency had higher levels of educational and career development skills and outcomes. Pathways were not predictive of ICM skills and outcomes (Sung et al., 2011).

Work hope refers to a positive motivational state that is directed at work and work-related goals and is composed of the presence of work related goals and both the agency and pathways for achieving pre-decided goals (Juntunen & Wetterson, 2006).

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College students from underrepresented backgrounds were studied to explore the

relationships among personal and environmental variables and work hope. Results

indicated that increased levels of reported psychological distress, experience with

classism and racism related negatively to work hope and perceived social support related

positively to work hope. This indicated that a higher level of stress and more experience

with racism relates to the lower work hope. These results demonstrate that psychological

symptomology related negatively to measures of hope. They also explain that individuals

from diverse backgrounds experience more discrimination that acts as a barrier to pursuit

of educational and career-related goals/outcomes (Thompson et al., 2014). Work-based

and career experiences may enhance the development of hope by encouraging the

identification of work goals, increasing and expanding the understanding of how to meet

work goals, and increasing confidence in one's ability to achieve goals. Work hope,

career planning, and autonomy were studied and accounted for 37.5% of the variance in

achievement-related beliefs for urban high school students (Kenny et al., 2010).

Career Adaptability

Due to the changing employment environment, proactive career-related behaviors

(e.g., exploring options, setting goals, developing skills) serve as important antecedents

for important career outcomes, promotions, and salary growth (Guan et al., 2014;

Rottinghaus, et al., 2012). Career adaptability refers to work tasks, challenges, and

transitions that an individual has to manage the available resources (Santilli et al., 2014).

It includes career optimism, coping with developmental tasks, participating in work,

coping with unemployment, and adapting to the expectations of the job market (Santilli et

al., 2014). It is composed of four resources. The first resource, career concerns,

represents a future orientation. Students who display a higher level of concern are likely to be more ready for tasks related to job search and may have a better chance of becoming employed. Individuals who lack career concern are likely to exhibit career indifference. The second resource, career control, denotes intrapersonal processes that foster self-regulation, being deliberate, organized, conscientious, decisive, and an approach to see the future as manageable and not give up. Absence of career control leads to career indecision. The third resource, career curiosity, refers to persons' strength of exploring various situations, environments, and roles to gather information about self and others. Inaccurate self-understanding often results from a lack of career curiosity. The final resource, career confidence, represents individuals, stronger efficacy beliefs to exert efforts and show persistence in situations that are difficult, and ability to handle barriers and challenges (Duffy, 2010). Lack of career confidence may result in career inhibition and compromises towards goals (Guan et al., 2013; Santilli et al., 2014; Savickas, 2003; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). All these factors together are likely to relate positively to international students' employment status (Guan et al., 2013) therefore, future research of these will help to inform career interventions to support these students.

In today's economy, being able to adapt to the working world is a necessary skill (Duffy, 2010). Despite the importance of this construct, very little research has been done, particularly with college students (Duffy, 2010). Career adaptability has been studied in relation to employees' well-being and its propensity to can mediate the relationship between job insecurity and job strain and satisfaction for a sample of Swiss employed and unemployed adults (Maggiori, Johnston, Krings, Massoudi, & Rossier, 2013. Research showed higher levels of optimism, hope, and life satisfaction for young

unemployed adults (Santili et al., 2014). Research suggests that career adaptability

mediated the future work self and job search self-efficacy for those with higher levels of

career adaptability in a sample of 270 Chinese university graduates (Guan et al., 2014).

These findings carry implications for job search behavior and career counseling.

Career adaptability is an important variable related to the readiness to cope and

adjust to unpredictable work-related tasks (Duffy, 2010). It also addresses the sense of

control individuals experience in their vocational development. However, many people

do not always have the privilege of working within their area of interest and may not feel

able to adapt to their career due to little control in their lives (Blustein, 2006; Duffy,

2010). In light of the importance of career adaptability, it is essential to gain further

knowledge of the construct through continued empirical inquiry. Understanding the role

of career adaptability for international students, who are often in a disadvantaged position

due to aforementioned barriers, represents a key step toward developing precise career

interventions to support employment success. Despite our knowledge of career

adaptability as an important resource, many gaps exist.

Career Aspirations

Vocational behavior, including the development of career aspirations occurs

within a cultural context, and therefore may be influenced by gender, age, race, ethnicity,

SES, and other factors (Metz et al., 2009). Research suggests that ethnicity influences the

development of career aspirations, and ethnic minorities are likely to face higher barriers

in career development (Watts, et al., 2015). Ethnic identity influences the ways in which

individuals develop career interest and respond to barriers in career development (Kirton,

2009). Studies focusing on the cultural context impacting career aspirations, report that

some Asian Americans focus on considering occupational alternatives that could give them the greatest survival in the U.S. social structure and avoid occupations that could bring racial and cultural discrimination (Leung, Ivey, Suzuki, 1994). For Black and minority business graduates, a sense of self-worth and social status was associated with career aspirations (Kirton, 2009). With research highlighting the cultural and ethnic role on career aspirations, it is essential to understand how these factors, relate to the career development of international students.

Language difficulties, fewer supports and friendships, visa concerns and sponsorship were barriers to career- related decision making for international students in Canada (Arthur & Flynn, 2013). Factors that impact career aspirations could also be self-efficacy beliefs, support, perception of available opportunities, and barriers due to societal influence (Metz et al., 2009; Rojewski, 2005). Studies have also focused on cultural adjustment difficulties and the career development of internationals students. One such study, focused on career aspirations and outcome expectations of students in relation to adjustment difficulties and intercultural competence concerns. In the sample of 261 international college students (African, Asian, and Latin American), distress and difficulties of acculturative stress distracted the students from focusing on career development and planning. International students face difficulties in prioritizing career development, thus inadequately focusing on career aspirations and plans. The authors also found that the concerns students face about their competence in social, academic, and career contexts were foretelling of the hardships and difficulties in determining career aspirations and positive career outcomes (Reynolds and Constantine, 2007). This emphasizes the deep effects on the future career goals, as a result of a lack of confidence

and insecurity international students may experience. Because international students experience more anxiety in a new and unfamiliar cultural environment, their ability to succeed socially is limited, often affecting academic and career growth (Hayes & Lin, 1994). Findings emphasized the need for more research examining the career attitudes, values and behaviors of international students in order to build clearer meaning and values of career constructs for international students (Reynolds and Constantine, 2007). Their study also focused on one region of the U.S., which may affect the generalizability of the results for international students (Reynolds and Constantine, 2007).

Despite this understanding, there are few studies that consider the relationship of race and immigration status to career aspirations with international students (Kirton, 2009). An understanding of career aspirations would help in identifying factors related to individuals compromising or take action to fully realize their aspirations (Metz et al., 2009).

Job Search Self-Efficacy

Job search self-efficacy refers to the belief that one can successfully perform specific job search behaviors and obtain work (Saks & Ashforth, 1999). Job search self-efficacy is a predictor of job search intention, behavior, and outcomes and therefore an important variable in job search interventions (Saks et al., 2015). Employment exploration involves the investigation of career options by collecting information on jobs and making informed career decisions. Self-exploration includes exploring one's interests, values, and experiences to understand oneself better. With more knowledge of self, and environment, job search self-efficacy will be strengthened (Saks et al., 2015).

Job search goals are performance goals or behaviors such as number of applications sent each week, and hours spent searching for a job (Fort et al., 2011). Job search self-efficacy has direct effects on such behaviors, thus effecting career planning (Fort et al., 2011). Barriers to international students' job search process include language proficiency, poor networking and interview expectations, and doubts of one's value in the workplace (Arthur & Flynn, 2011; Nunes & Arthur, 2013; Sangganjanavanich et al., 2011).

Financial strain is one of the many stressors and barriers experienced by international students (Smith & Khawaja, 2011). It is the perception that one's financial resources are diminished and threatened (Dahling, Melloy, & Thompson, 2013). Research with individuals who were unemployed suggested that financial hardship was negatively associated with job search efficacy (Wanberg, Kanfer, & Rotundo, 1999). Financial strain also serves as a barrier as it creates pressure and strain to find employment, and may reduce engagement in the job search process, and result in less time to prepare for job search and interview (Dahling et al., 2013).

The job search process varies between countries and occupations (Nunes & Arthur, 2013). Career goals and steps towards those goals are an integral part of educational experience (Nunes & Arthur, 2013). Cultural habits and differences can present in job search processes. For example, bowing to show respect in certain cultures is not a part of the American culture. Students have to refrain from engaging in behaviors that are not specific to the host culture (Sangganjanavanich et al., 2011), thus being more self-critical and cautious.

Changes in major selection also impact job search related behaviors. Previously, international students often choose mathematics and science fields; however, the data reveals that international students also choose liberal arts, business, and mass communication as career majors. The shift in the data is consistent with changes in economic trends (Singaravelu, et al., 2005). A specific area of study/job search would need different job search activities. Job search self-efficacy research will help shed light on the self-efficacy of several majors studied by international students. Job search is an important factor in the present day economy as compared to previous years especially due to the instability in careers and increased periods of unemployment impacting physical and mental health (Saks et al., 2015).

During the employment seeking process internationals students report a lack of help or resources available to assist them in the job search process, they note poor knowledge of employment rules, regulations, restrictions, and public policies (Sangganjanavanich et al., 2011) increasing the difficulties and barriers in job search. Spencer-Rodgers (2000) assessed the career development needs of 227 non-immigrant international students nationwide. Their study pointed to the career needs of international students focusing on learning about Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS) rules that regulate international student employment, preparing an American-style resume and reduce interview barriers, and obtaining work experience in the U.S.A. The highest ranked career planning needs centered on learning about the INS rules that regulate international student employment, the need to speak to an advisor about career plans, and to learn about the American job market. This study does not shed light into the process of developing support, approaching others for help, and effects of acculturation process

on the needs of career development. The present study will help bridge the gap between the two.

Job search clubs are a rarely researched with international student populations (Bikos & Furry, 1999). Jobs search clubs were introduced by Azrin (1975) to assist individuals in gaining access into the workforce. Due to the complexity of the issues including concerns such as will the student work after graduation, return to his/her home country, students' lack of readiness to approach counseling services, work experience needs of international students are unclear and are not met. The program including 15 international students met for 90 minutes and participated in job search pertinent topics, practiced and devoted time to the topic, and shared personal experiences and ideas. Participants who completed the program showed an increase in the job search behaviors and activities. Participants discussed the increase in confidence, skill level and tangible progress in the job search. This highlights the importance of support from the university, cultural appropriate formulation of the program and implementation for the success of international students. An evaluation of the job-search self-efficacy of international students will help create better, comprehensive programs for international students.

More recently, job search self-efficacy for 86 East Asian international students identified the critical antecedents of job-search behaviors (Lin & Flores, 2013). In their study, Lin and Flores found that participants who possessed more experiences in job search-related tasks and received more verbal encouragement from their family, friends, faculty, and colleagues regarding their capacity to find a job in the U.S. were more likely to report higher confidence in their capabilities to perform job-search related activities. These findings highlight the importance of support in job-search and career outcomes for

international students. Performance accomplishments have been found to be a significant

predictor of self-efficacy in their study. When East Asian international students

possessed a higher sense of mastery of job search tasks, they are more likely to develop

high levels of job search self-efficacy. Another important predictor was verbal

persuasion by family, faculty, and colleagues/friends. Job search self-efficacy is an

important variable to explore as it relates not only to job search behaviors but also to the

judgment one holds about oneself (Lin & Flores, 2013). For international students in the

U.S., job search self-efficacy and behaviors hold higher significance due to the timeline

of OPT application and the need to secure a job within the timeline. As job search self-

efficacy positively contributes to career planning and job search behaviors, it is important

to focus on interventions for international students.

The purpose of the present study is to assess the relationship between

acculturative stress and career outcomes for international students. Specifically, it is

hypothesized that acculturative stress will be negatively related to work hope, career

adaptability, career aspirations, and job search self-efficacy.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

Participants

Participants were recruited by posting a call for participation by contacting
offices for international students at universities with 5% or more international student
population, as listed on the International Institute of Education (2015) and U.S. News &
World Report Education (2015). Participation was also solicited by posting on social
media sites. To achieve a larger sample size, additional universities were contacted. In
total, participants were solicited from approximately 100 universities. The total number
of participants were 172 (103 males (59.88%), 69 females (40.12%). Participants
averaged 25.53 years of age ($SD = 4.15$). Among the participants, 168 (97.67%)
participants held an F1 visa and 4 (2.33%) participants held a J1 visa. In terms of racial
and ethnic background, 10 participants (5.81%) identified as White/Caucasian, 4 (2.33%)
Black/African, 147 (85.47%) Asian, 1 (0.58%) Biracial (Asian and Hispanic), and 10
(5.81%) identified as other (Hispanic, Latin, Middle Eastern, Native South American, and
Phoenician). Five (2.91%) participants attended a college or university in the Northeast,
59 (34.30%) in the Midwest, 105 (61.05%) in the South, and 3 (1.74%) in the West. In
terms of degree seeking, 14 (8.13%) were seeking a bachelor's degree, 128 (74.42%)

were seeking a master's degree, 26 (15.17%) were seeking a doctoral degree, and 4 (2.33%) were completing Optional Practical Training (OPT). Of those who were attending graduate school, 65 (37.8%) participants were in the first year of graduate school, 64 (37.21%) second year, 5 (2.91%) third year, 5 (2.91%) fourth year, 4 (2.33%) fifth year, and 8 (4.65%) reported being in graduate school for more than five years. With regard to undergraduate major and area of graduate study, 111 (64.53%) participants majored in Engineering, 12 (7.0%) Psychology, 2 (1.16%) Health Sciences, 10 (5.81%) Business and Management, 3 (1.74%) Physical Sciences, 6 (3.49%) Education, and 25 (14.53%) other (Architecture, Bioinformatics, Construction Management, Data Science, Business Analytics, Geography, Human Resources, Latin American Studies, Urban Studies, Law). Three (1.74%) did not report their major. The majority of the participants were born in India, 117 (68.02%), 40 (23.26%) were born in Asia, 1 (0.58%) Oceania, 5 (2.91%) South America, 4 (2.33%) Europe, 1 (0.58%) Central America, and 2 (1.16%) Africa. Two (1.16%) participants did not report their country of birth. Participants averaged 25.86 ($SD = 29.13$) months of stay in the US. Among the sample, 87 (50.6 %) were currently employed (held Curricular Practical Training (CPT), OPT, or on-campus jobs), 51 (29.65%) had a graduate assistantship, 16 (9.30%) were on CPT Training, and 14 (8.14%) were on their OPT.

On a scale of 1 (very poor) to 7 (extremely good), participants generally reported good English reading ability (Mean = 6.20, $SD = .95$), English spoken/conversation ability (Mean = 5.92, $SD = 1.00$), and English writing ability (Mean = 5.84, $SD = 1.10$). In terms of relationship status, 125 (72.67%) participants reported being single, 23 (13.37%) married, and 23 (13.37%) in a committed relationship. One (0.58%) participant

did not report their relationship status. In terms of participants' social class growing up, 4 (2.33%) identified lower class, 18 (10.47%) lower middle class, 89 (51.74%) middle class, 54 (31.4%) upper middle class, 6 (3.49%) upper class. In terms of participants' current social class, 10 (5.81%) identified lower class, 21 (12.21%) lower middle class, 89 (51.74%) middle class, 48 (27.91%) upper middle class, 3 (1.74%) upper class. One (0.58%) participant did not complete the item.

Measures

Demographic information questionnaire. This questionnaire requested participants to report age, gender, race/ethnicity, relationship status, visa status, country of origin, citizenship, country of residence before coming to the U.S., length of stay in the U.S., English language ability, employment status, degree being sought, college major, year in college, academic standing, CPT and OPT status, and social class status.

Acculturative stress scale for international students *(ASSIS)*. The ASSIS (Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994) is a 36-item Likert-type scale that assesses the acculturative stress of international students. ASSIS is a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*); higher scores on each item indicate higher acculturative stress. The total scale scores range from 36 to 180 on this scale. The scale consists of six subscales: Perceived Discrimination, Homesickness, Perceived Hate, Fear, Stress due to Change/Culture Shock, Guilt, and a seventh scale of Miscellaneous items.

The Acculturative Stress Scale for International Students was developed by Sandhu and Asrabadi (1994) to comprehensively assess the acculturative stress of international students. Initially, 125 items were developed to represent 12 themes, namely (Perceived Discrimination (14 items), Social Isolation (9 items), Threat to

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Cultural Identity (10 items), Inferiority (15 items), Homesickness (8 items), Fear (14 items), Anger/Disappointments (15 items), Mistrust (6 items), Communication Problems (7 items), Culture Shock (9 items), Perceived Hatred (13 items), and Guilt (5 items). These items were based on interviews with 13 international students, eight males and five females, taking into consideration their personal experiences and perspectives. Items comprise themes of adjustment difficulties, with high face validity from prevalent counseling literature related to international students (e.g., Allen & Cole, 1987; Altbach & Wang, 1989; Anderson & Myer, 1985; Berry, 1984; Dillard & Chisolm, 1983; Heikinheimo & Shute, 1986; Manese, Sedlacek, & Leong, 1988; Pedersen, 1991; Spaulding & Flack, 1976; and Zikopoulos, 1991). The items were reviewed by three university professors who taught multicultural counseling at two different universities and were familiar with the literature on international student issues. Participants (17 undergraduate and 9 graduate international students) in the pilot study also provided feedback on the items. A number of items were removed or revised to avoid confusion, repetition, and ambiguity. This resulted in 78 items, with six to nine items for each theme. The resulting 78-item measure was sent to international students in ten regions of United States. Component analysis was performed on the data gathered. Principal components analysis extracted six components (36 items) that accounted for 70.6 % of the variance. Ten items did not fall under any one of the six components factors but grouped together in a seventh subscale that was named Miscellaneous. The factor named Perceived Discrimination accounted for 38.3% of the total variance, the highest of all the factors. In the current study, subscales with an alpha of .50 and higher were used (Tavakoli et al, 2009). Data are available for total score concurrent validity. Significant

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relationships are reported for total score ASSIS and social connectedness ($r = .48$) and social support ($r = .28$) (Yeh & Inose, 2003), and psychological adjustment ($r = -.40$), planfulness ($r = -.17$), readiness for change ($r = -.13$) (Yakinina, Weigold, & Weigold, 2013).

     Perceived discrimination subscale. Perceived Discrimination includes 8 items that assess the level of perceived discrimination experienced by international students. Items address unequal opportunity and treatment, bias, and unfriendliness. A sample item is "Many opportunities are denied to me." The subscale has demonstrated good internal consistency with graduate and undergraduate international students ($\alpha = .90$) (Jung et al., 2007, Wadsworth, Hecht, & Jung, 2008), with Turkish undergraduate and graduate international students ($\alpha = .84$) (Wei et al., 2008), with Asian undergraduate and graduate international students ($\alpha = .92$) (Duru & Poyrazli, 2011). Evidence for concurrent validity was provided by significant predictable relationships with adjustment difficulties ($r = .24$) (Duru & Poyrazli, 2011); suppressive coping ($r = .20$), reactive coping ($r = .20$), and depressive symptoms ($r = .29$) (Wei et al., 2008, Jung et al., 2007). The Cronbach's alpha for the current sample was .91.

     Perceived hate subscale. Perceived hate measures the perceived rejection in verbal and nonverbal communication and behaviors. PH includes 5 items. A sample item is "People show hatred towards me nonverbally". The subscale has demonstrated good internal consistency with international students ($\alpha = .70$ and .79) (Tavakoli et al, 2009). The Cronbach's alpha for the current sample was .91.

     Fear subscale. Fear measures the insecurity in unfamiliar surroundings. Fe includes 4 items. A sample items is "I feel insecure here". Fe accounted for 6.10% to the

total variance in the validation study. The subscale has demonstrated good internal

consistency with international students (α = .71 and .69) (Tavakoli et. al., 2009). The

Cronbach's alpha for the current sample was .86.

Homesickness subscale. Homesickness measures the degree of homesickness

experienced by participants. HS includes 4 items. A sample item is "I miss the people

and country of my origin". HS accounted for 9.0% of the total variance in the validation

study. The subscale has demonstrated good internal consistency with graduate and

undergraduate international students (α = .62 and .52) (Tavakoli, et al., 2009). The

Cronbach's alpha for the current sample was .79.

The career futures inventory-revised *(CFI-R)*. The CFI-R (Rottinghaus,

Buelow, Matyja, & Schneider, 2012) includes 28 Likert-type items that assess aspects of

career adaptability, including positive career planning attitudes, general outcome

expectations, and components of Parson's tripartite model (1909) (as cited in McMahon

& Patton, 2015) and Bandura's (2006) personal agency across a 5-point scale ranging

from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). The CFI-R consists of five subscales:

Career Agency (CA, 10 items), Occupational Awareness (OA, 6 items), Support (4

items), Work-Life Balance (WLB, 4 items), and Negative Career Outlook (NCA, 4

items). For the purpose of the present study only Career Agency, Occupational

Awareness, and Negative Career Outlook subscales were used as they are the ones of

interest (Rottinghaus et al., 2012).

The CFI-R is a revised version of the Career Futures Inventory (CFI) assesses

career adaptability, career optimism, and perceived knowledge of the job market

(Rottinghaus et al., 2005). The original CFI was developed with 64 Likert-type items

that assessed the attitudes, expectations, and emotions related to one's career. An extension of Super and Knasel's (1981) career adaptability construct and Scheier and Carver's (1985) dispositional optimism construct provided theoretical context for the development of the measure (Savickas, 1997). Insights from clinical experiences also guided item construction (Rottinghaus et al., 2005). Results from the pilot study of 1,195 college students indicated the presence of two to four factors and addressed facets of career optimism, pessimism, and adaptability. However, many items did not directly address career- related concerns. To directly address career- related concerns, reduce overlap with general optimism, and increase the theoretical connection with career adaptability, the initial version of CFI was modified slightly and more items were added. A total of 611 participants then completed a 69-item of this version of the CFI. Exploratory factor analysis was conducted and revealed three factors (Career Adaptability, Career Optimism, and Perceived Knowledge of Job Market) accounting for 40% of the variance resulting in the final 25-item version of the CFI.

For the development of Career Futures Inventory-Revised, Rottinghaus, Buelow, Matyja, & Schneider (2012) generated 165 new items to expand on the existing CFI and create more specific scales. The 165 items were based on theoretical perspectives focusing on career adaptability based on the works of Super & Kidd (1979), Super & Knasel (1979), and Savickas (2005). Items were also generated based on relevant literature suggesting that career adaptability helps structure career decision making and is a dynamic mechanism for fit and development (Rottinghaus & Van Esbroeck, 2011), has potential benefits for support and work life balance (Blustein, 2001; 2011), includes the person's beliefs in their ability to perform specific tasks in the process of career

decisions, and a person's intentional influences in the life circumstances through one's reflective actions (Bandura, 1977; 2006). Following a content analysis by a team of three vocational psychologists, three career counseling practitioners, and two counseling psychology doctoral students, 42 items were removed due to redundancies and limited connections to the measured constructs. The item analyses helped to eliminate those items with extremely low ($<$ 1.0) and high ($>$ 4.2) means, and items with low item-total correlations ($<$ .40) within each construct. In a series of exploratory factor analyses with promax rotation with the remaining 65 items, the presence of three to six factors was indicated. Sixteen items were removed due to low item-factor loadings. The remaining 49 items were subjected to a principal factor analysis with promax rotation, and further scree plot and factor interpretability revealed a five-factor solution. Items were further reduced based on low correlations with crucial content and/or high cross-factor loadings. Following the item development process, involving rational method and empirical item analyses based on additional exploratory factor analyses, the final 28-item instrument was developed with five internally consistent scales. Moderate correlations between each subscale ranged from -.30 to .65 for the developmental sample, indicating that each construct measured something unique (Rottinghaus, Buelow, Matyja, & Schneider, 2012).

Career agency subscale. The career agency subscale includes 10 items that measure the perceived capacity for self-reflection and forethought to intentionally initiate, control, and manage career transitions. A sample item is "I am in control of my career." A higher score on this subscale indicates a higher degree of career agency. The subscale has demonstrated good internal consistency with undergraduate and graduate

college students (α = .90) (Rottinghaus et al., 2012) and with high school students (α = .80) (Eshelman, 2013). Concurrent validity evidence is provided by statistically significant relationships with career decision making self-efficacy beliefs (r = .58), career decision making difficulties (r = -.50), career decision status of decidedness (r =.38), career decision status of comfort (r =.46), career decision status of reasons (r =.47) (Rottinghaus et al., 2012). Career agency was also statistically significantly correlated with educational aspirations (r = .22), educational expectations (r = .25), occupational expectations (r = .22), career maturity concern (r = .21), career curiosity (r = .42), career maturity confidence (r = .40), and career maturity readiness (r = .46) (Eshelman, 2013). The Cronbach's alpha for the current sample was .92.

The occupational awareness subscale. Occupational Awareness includes 6 items that assess perceptions of how well an individual understands job market and employment needs. A sample item is "I keep current with changes in technology." A higher score on this subscale indicates a high degree of occupational awareness. The subscale demonstrated good internal consistency with 250 undergraduate and graduate college students (α = .80) (Rottinghaus, et al., 2012) and with high school students (α = .70) (Eshelman, 2013). Concurrent validity evidence is provided by statistically significant relationships with career decision making self-efficacy beliefs (r =.42), career decision making difficulties (r =-.30), career decision status of decidedness (r =.19), career decision status of comfort (r =.34), and career decision status of reasons (r =.39) (Rottinghaus et al., 2012). Occupational Awareness was also statistically significantly correlated with career maturity concern (r = .24), career curiosity (r = .29), career

maturity confidence ($r = .34$), career maturity readiness ($r = .37$) (Eshelman, 2013). The Cronbach's alpha for the current sample was .85.

  Negative career outlook. Negative Career Outlook measures negative thoughts about career decisions and belief that one will not achieve favorable career outcomes. Negative Career Outlook includes 4 items. A sample item is "I lack the energy to pursue my career goals". Cronbach's alpha indicated internal consistency of $r = .89, .77, .47,$ and .92 for $n = 250, n = 348, n = 100,$ and $n = 254$ respectively. Concurrent validity evidence among post graduate management students in India, is suggested by predictable relationship of negative career outlook and efficacy beliefs (-.55), career decision making (.58), problem-focused coping (-.21), emotion-focused coping (-.16), avoidant-focused coping (.41), career decision status decidedness (-.41), career decision status of comfort (-.48), career decision status of reasons (-.56), and LOT-R (-.37) (Chatterjee, Afshan, & Chhetri, 2015; Eshelman, 2013; Rottinghaus, Buelow, Matyja, & Schneider, 2012). The Cronbach's alpha for the current sample was .86.

  Work hope scale *(WHS).* The WHS (Juntunen & Wettersten, 2006) was developed to measure the positive motivational state that is directed at work and work-related goals, the presence of work-related goals, agency, and the pathways for achieving those goals. The WHS is a 24-item Likert-type scale that measures three components of hope: goals, pathways, and agency pertaining to work and work-related issues. The Work Hope Scale is a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Nine of the 24 items are reverse scored. Sample items include "I expect to do what I really want to do at work," "There are many ways to succeed at work," and "I am uncertain about my ability to reach my life goals."

The Work Hope Scale was developed to measure the construct of work hope as it contributes to the pursuit and attainment of meaningful work (Juntunen & Wettersten, 2006). Initial items were generated to represent the three components of hope theory: goals, agency, and pathways with career decision making and work-related concerns. Items were developed independently by the authors who then met and evaluated each other's items. Experts then reviewed items to assess if they were theoretically consistent with each component and to ensure that items did not have structural concerns, ambiguity, or any other problems. Twenty-eight items were selected for the initial item pool and were then tested using a pilot sample from a northern Midwestern community. Following the pilot study, 4 items were removed from the scale due to item scale and item-total subscale correlations of < .40. Items were also modified to be more precise and more directly related to the aspects of hope. A total of 24-items were then sent to the 3 expert reviewers (counseling psychologists who had both scholarly and clinical experience with issues related to work and career counseling) who evaluated items to address whether the item was essential, necessary, and useful; whether the items reflected the pathways, goals, and agency components of hope theory; any concerns of bias apparent in the items; and other items that should be considered. The reviewers agreed on 14 items of the 24 items which were maintained with reviewers' suggestions. The remaining ten items, which were not rated consistently by the reviewers, were reviewed by the authors independently. Of those ten, five were retained as written, based on discussion among the authors and one reviewer. Four items were modified to reflect a single component of the theory of hope and one item was dropped and replaced with a new item to maintain balance across the three components (Juntunen & Wettersten,

2006). Exploratory factor analysis did not support the proposed three-factor model. One factor accounted for approximately 41% of the variance and the second factor did not account for a significant portion of the variance. Although there are indications that three components may underlie the structure of WHS, the authors used the total scores of WHS for further analyses. The validation sample was recruited from a community event that attracts American Indian and European American populations, women receiving temporary aid for needy families, upper bound program for adolescents, and college students (Juntunen & Wettersten, 2006).

Test- retest reliability estimates from Juntunen and Wettersten, (2006) were calculated to be $r = .90$ conducted on two occasions 2 weeks apart on a sample of undergraduate students. Cronbach alpha scores indicated good internal consistency, $\alpha = .95$ among undergraduate students (Duffy, Allan, & Dik, 2011); $\alpha = .88$ among high school students (Kenny et al., 2010); $\alpha = .94$ among undergraduate students (Thompson et al., 2014); and $\alpha = .90$ among Ukrainian college students (Yakushko & Sokolova, 2010).

Concurrent validity evidence is provided by statistically significant relationships with career decision making self-efficacy ($r = .75$), vocational identity ($r = .65$), work goals ($r = .62$), optimism ($r = .53$) for a sample of participants from a community college, midwestern university, a large university, a program for adolescents, state job search agency, and a regional event (Juntunen & Wettersten, 2006). Concurrent validity was also supported by relationships with career planning ($r = .63$), academic efficacy ($r = .43$), skepticism ($r = -.49$), and mastery goal orientation ($r = .40$) (Kenny et al., 2010). Higher levels of psychological distress were associated with less work hope ($r = -.40$);

and higher levels of perceived social status ($r = .30$) (Thompson et al., 2014). Work Hope has also been statistically significantly correlated with academic satisfaction ($r = .59$), career decision making self-efficacy ($r = .63$), and meaning of life ($r = .58$) (Duffy et al., 2011); (Yakushko & Sokolova, 2010). The Cronbach's alpha for the current sample was .96.

Career aspiration scale – revised *(CAS-R).* The CAS-R (Gregor & O'Brien, 2016) includes 24 Likert-type items of career aspiration including leadership aspiration, educational aspiration, and achievement aspiration across a 5-point scale ranging from 0 (not at all true to me) to 4 (very true to me). Five items are reverse scored. The CAS-R consists of three subscales: leadership aspiration (leadership roles and training/managing others in one's career), educational aspiration (advanced education, training and competency in one's career), and achievement aspiration (recognition, responsibility and promotion in one's career) (Gregor & O'Brien, 2016).

The original Career Aspiration Scale (O'Brien, 1996) included a 10-item Likert-type scale that assessed the degree to which individuals not only valued their careers, but also aspired to leadership positions within their careers. Items were rated on 5-point Likert-type scale from 0 (not at all true of me) to 4 (very true of me). The original CAS consisted of two subscales, The Leadership and Achievement Aspirations subscale (CASL), had six items that measured the degree to which a woman aspires to obtain promotions, train others, and become a leader in her field. The second subscale, The Educational Aspirations had two items which measured the extent to which a woman intends to obtain additional education in her given field. The CAS was developed to measure career and leadership aspirations and the degree to which women aspire to

leadership positions and continued education within their careers. The research in the area of women's career development has focused on career commitment, but has not addressed the levels of individual's aspirations within a job. Thus, O'Brien stated that a measure of career aspiration should be developed including themes: aspiring to leadership and promotions, training and managing others, and pursuing further education. For the development of the scale, ten items were written in reverse direction to reduce a positive response set. These items reflected the three themes mentioned above. Two counseling psychologists and two educational psychologists reviewed the items and provided feedback, helpful for revision of the measure. A preliminary factor analysis suggested that two items should be deleted; however, the authors do not emphasize this and research has used all 10 items in research (Gray & O'Brien, 2007).

The CAS-R was developed to improve the psychometric properties of the CAS, enhance reliability and operationalization of career aspiration, and include a new subscale, achievement aspirations, which is an important variable in career aspiration. To revise the CAS authors, and graduate and undergraduate students in psychology independently generated new items for all three subscales comprising study 1 (328 female undergraduate participants). The items were reviewed by the authors. Conceptually redundant and confusing items were removed. Seven of the items from the original CAS were retained (five from leadership aspiration, and one from educational aspiration). An additional 26 items were developed, which resulted in 33 items on the total scale. The authors, two psychologists, and an undergraduate student independently arranged these items into their respective domains and studied the items for clarity and representativeness of the domains. Items were reviewed for face validity and two items

were considered to have poor face validity based on feedback from a professor of education. Three items were removed as they loaded < .4. Additional items were removed to shorten the scale for usability based on the lowest loadings on each factor. The final scale consisted of 24-items with 8 items representing each subscale. The revised version retained only four of the original scale items. The correlations between the factors were moderate to high (ranging from .61 to .71). Study 2 (202 female graduate participants) was conducted to gather stability of the factor structure and the psychometric properties. The correlations among factors in study 3 ranged from .49 to .70. Study 3 (56 female undergraduate participants) was conducted to assess the test-retest reliability. The study exhibited adequate test-retest reliability (Time 1: Achievement = .74, Leadership = .79, Education Time 1 = .87; Time 2: Achievement = .80, Leadership = .82, Education = .84).

Leadership aspiration. The leadership aspiration subscale assesses leadership roles and training/managing others in one's career. A sample item is "When I am established in my career, I would like to manage other employees." The subscale demonstrated good internal consistency, α = .87. The two-week test-retest reliability estimate was r = .81. Concurrent validity evidence is provided by statistically significant relationships with work role salience (r = .39 and .40, study 1 and 2), competitiveness (r = .24), work mastery (r = .41) (Gregor & O'Brien, 2016). The Cronbach's alpha for the current sample was .87.

Achievement aspiration. The achievement aspiration subscale assesses recognition, responsibility and promotion in one's career. Sample items include "I want to be among the very best in my field." The subscale demonstrated good internal

consistency, α = .81. The two-week test-retest reliability estimate was r = .68.

Concurrent validity evidence is provided by statistically significant relationships with

work role salience (r = .50 and .51; study 1 and 2), competitiveness (r = .34), work

mastery (r = .42) (Gregor & O'Brien, 2016). The Cronbach's alpha for the current

sample was .84.

  Educational aspiration. The educational aspiration subscale assesses plans to

pursue advanced education related to individual's career. A sample item is "I plan to

reach the highest level of education in my field." The subscale demonstrated good

internal consistency, α = .90. The two-week test-retest reliability estimate was r = .81.

Concurrent validity evidence is provided by statistically significant relationships with

work role salience (r = .56 and .47, study 1 and 2), competitiveness (r = .15), work

mastery (r = .40) in Study 2 (Gregor & O'Brien, 2016). The Cronbach's alpha for the

current sample was .88.

  Getting ready for your next job *(YNJ).* The YNJ (Wanberg, Zhang, & Diehn,

2010) was developed to provide unemployed job seekers of varying education levels and

backgrounds with insight into their job search. The measure includes subscales, such as

job-search methods, job search skills and confidence, stress and support, skills, barriers,

and qualitative potion "your action plan". For the current study, the subscale job-search

skills and confidence is used to measure job search self-efficacy. The JSSE subscale is

named as "your job search skill and confidence". The JSSE is a subscale which includes

11 items that assess one's beliefs to perform well in job search tasks, such as writing a

good resume, finding information about organizations before an interview, and presenting

oneself in an interview. The JSSE Scale is a 3-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (not at all confident) to 3 (highly confident).

The Getting Ready for Your Next Job Inventory (YNJ) includes 42 items that assess unemployed job seekers of varying education levels and backgrounds with insight into their job search. The inventory was developed to assist counselors in Minnesota help job seekers find jobs. This inventory was refined in several phases with multiple samples. The first draft of the inventory included 98 items representing 17 variable categories (job-search intensity, job-search persistence, job-search confidence, reemployment confidence, job-search clarity, job-search support, job networks, skills and qualifications, financial hardship, job-search barriers, stress and worry, conscientiousness, extraversion, job-search experience, last wage – wage desired, job-search hours, and number of job interviews in the last two weeks) that supported relevant reemployment success outcomes and were based on Wanberg et al.'s (2002) theoretical model of reemployment success and Kanfer, Wanberg, and Kantrowitz's (2001) major correlates of employment outcomes. Present measures of job-search behaviors and career change adjustment were also referred during inventory development. This draft was used for several months across the state of Minnesota by 30 Work Force center counselors 1:1 as well as in group interactions with potential job seekers. Opinions of counselors, job seekers SMEs were gathered about the item pool and inventory. Two focus groups of job seekers, an advisory board of 10 workforce center staff members and all the counselors were conducted to evaluate the inventory with relation to item content, readability, reading level, clarity, and grammar. With this pilot investigation attention was paid to the length, total number of items, and reading levels of the inventory; especially for lower

reading level skills and for English as second language participants. Several words were replaced to make it simpler to read. Based upon the need for the inventory to be simple for all job seekers, items with the yes/no were used wherever possible in the inventory, based on a pilot study focusing on comparing the items with dichotomous and Likert-type ratings. Exploratory factor analysis was performed to examine the extent to which items loaded on the construct category, resulted in item loadings for seven factors. Confirmatory factor analysis was conducted on the seven factors (29 items) that were identified. This seven-factor model was compared with alternative models, which resulted in deciding that the 7-factor model more accurately represents the data than other alternative models. The 7 factors are: job-search intensity, internet use, job-search confidence, job-search clarity, job-search support, stress and worry, and skills. The total scale items included items in the seven factors, the barriers scale, and four one-item focusing on job-search experience, last wage-wage desired, job-search hours, and number of interviews in the last two weeks. Items were added to help the counselor get a sense of what job the client has previously held and what his/her present job needs are.

A sample item is "Using networking or personal contacts in your job search." One item was modified, namely "explaining why you no longer work for your last employer" into "explaining why you want to work for the current employer" to fit the job search context of new entrants (Guan et al., 2013). For the present study, the same item modification was used. The subscale has demonstrated good internal consistency with 270 undergraduate and graduate Chinese students ($\alpha = .93$) (Guan et al., 2013; 2014). The Cronbach's alpha for the current sample was .84.

Concurrent validity evidence was provided by statistically significant relationships with employment status ($r = .24$), person-organization fit ($r = .46$), perceived demand- ability ($r = .31$), perceived needs-supply ($r = .32$), career concern and control ($r = .39$), career curiosity ($r = .38$), career confidence ($r = .32$), career adaptability ($r = .44$) for Chinese students (Guan et al., 2013); and future work self ($r = .42$) (Guan et al., 2014) among Chinese university graduates.

Procedures

The international student office and international student organizations of these universities were contacted and data was collected via the student listserv and social media pages. All the questionnaires were uploaded to the Survey Monkey website and the hyperlink was included in the recruitment emails sent. Participants first completed the informed consent and once they consented to participated in the study, completed demographic questionnaire and other questionnaires. Other questionnaires were randomized during data collection. In exchange for participating in the study, participants, if interested, were asked to enter into a drawing for a chance to win one of 20 Amazon gift cards of $25.00 each. Forty participants won Amazon gift card of $25.00 each. They were contacted via email. Total 172 participants comprised the final sample.

Hypothesis

It is hypothesized that acculturative stress will be negatively associated with work hope, career agency, occupational awareness, career aspirations (leadership, achievement, and educational), job search self-efficacy; and positively associated with negative career outlook.

Data Analysis

Preliminary analyses (mean, standard deviation, correlation coefficients) were performed on the data. A canonical correlation was used to assess the proposed hypotheses in this study. This type of correlation allows for exploration of simultaneous multivariate relationships among the data (Thompson, 2000). Sets of variables on each side are combined to produce, for each side, a predicted value that has the highest correlation with the predicted value on the other side (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2014). Canonical correlation analysis proves useful when the underlying dimensions representing the combinations of variables are not known (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2014). This method provides a way to study the relationship between the independent variables (perceived discrimination, perceived hate, fear, and homesickness) and the dependent variables (work hope, job search self-efficacy, leadership aspirations, educational aspirations, achievement aspirations, career agency, negative career outlook and occupational awareness). With regards to the assumption of canonical correlation, about 10 cases are needed for every variable for social sciences research (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2014). Canonical correlation also assumes multivariate normality, i.e. requires that all variables and all linear combinations of variables are normally distributed (Sherry & Henson, 2005). However, there is no requirement that the variables be normally distributed when canonical correlation is used descriptively, the analysis is enhanced if they are distributed normally (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2014). Use of canonical correlation has many advantages. Using a multivariate method of analysis decreases the likelihood of experiment wise (Type I) errors which can occur when running several univariate tests with a single sample (Sherry & Henson, 2005). Use of canonical correlation is also a

good way to honor the reality of psychological research as most human behavior research

typically investigates variables which may have multiple causes and effects (Sherry &

Henson, 2005).

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Preliminary Analysis

Initially, 282 participants completed the research measures. After careful review of participants' missing data and the selection criteria for the study, 110 participants were excluded from the data analysis. The majority of these participants did not complete one or more measures, others missed >1 item on a subscale, and eight participants did not meet the selection criteria for inclusion in the study. When only one item was missing from a subscale, missing values were replaced using mean substitution. This resulted in the following mean score substitutions: CA (two missing values replaced), OA (four missing values replaced), NCO (three missing values replaced), LA (two missing values replaced) and EA (five missing values replaced). The final sample was comprised of 172 participants.

The results of the preliminary analysis including the means, standard deviations, correlation coefficients and Cronbach's Alpha for each of the predictor and criterion variables for all of the scales are reported in Table 1. Cronbach's alpha ranged from .75 to .93 indicating good reliability.

Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations, Correlations, and Reliability Coefficients

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. PD	____											
2. PH	.83**	___										
3. FEAR	.80**	.80**	__									
4. HS	.55**	.53**	.65**	__								
5. JSSE	-.13	-.18*	-.25**	-.07	__							
6. WHS	-.34**	-.42**	-.42**	-.24**	.48**	__						
7. CA	-.23**	-.26**	-.28**	-.16*	.46**	.71**	__					
8. NCO	.41**	.50**	.46**	.26**	-.27**	-.70**	-.49**	__				
9. OA	-.10	-.10	-.14	-.10	.40**	.54**	.65**	-30**	__			
10. LA	-.24**	-.32**	-.30**	-.22**	.23**	.49**	.43**	-.40**	.40**	__		
11. AA	-.22**	-.34**	-.30**	-.11	.26**	.57**	.50**	-.53**	.40**	.72**	__	
12. EA	-.10	-.18*	-.22**	-.13	.25**	.50**	.49**	-.29**	.47**	.52**	.68**	
M	20.30	10.73	8.92	11.47	26.97	127.89	40.07	9.38	22.12	23.65	25.46	23.83
SD	7.38	4.26	3.57	3.71	4.07	20.52	6.16	3.91	4.22	6.56	5.89	5.90
Cronbach's Alpha	.91	.91	.86	.75	.84	.93	.92	.86	.85	.87	.84	.88

PD = Perceived Discrimination, PH = Perceived Hate, Fear, HS = Homesickness, JSSE = Job Search Self-Efficacy, WHS = Work Hope, CA = Career Agency, NCO = Negative Career Outlook, OA = Occupational Awareness, LA = Leadership Awareness, AA = Achievement Awareness, and EA = Educational Aspirations, * = $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Multivariate Analysis

A canonical correlation was used to determine the relationship between the predictor and criterion variables. The measures of acculturative stress (i.e., perceived discrimination, homesickness, perceived hate, and fear) formed the set of predictor variables, and the measures of career outcomes (i.e., job search self-efficacy, work hope, career agency, occupational awareness, negative career outlook, leadership aspirations, achievement aspirations, and educational aspirations) formed the criterion set. To assess the relationships among these variables, acculturative stress variables were determined to the degree to which they shared variability with the career outcome variables. The full canonical model was significant Wilks's $\lambda = .60$, $F(32, 592) = 2.77$, $p < .001$ and accounted for 40% ($1 - \text{Wilks } \lambda (.60)$) of the variance between canonical composites (Meyers, Gamst, & Guarino, 2017; Sherry & Henson, 2005; Tabachnick and Fidell, 2014).

To assess the precise nature of the relationships between the predictor variables and the career outcome variables, a dimension reduction analysis was performed. One significant canonical root emerged, and accounted for 31% of the shared variance. The structure coefficients, which represent the correlations between the dependent and independent variables and canonical variables, are presented in Table 2. Loadings of .40 and greater would be considered substantial (Sherry & Henson, 2005).

As presented in Table 2, this root was characterized by heavy positive loadings of Perceived Discrimination, Perceived Hate, and Fear along with a moderate positive loading of Homesickness. The other side of the model was characterized by a heavy positive loading of Negative Career Outlook, a heavy negative loading of Work Hope,

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and moderate negative loadings of Achievement Aspirations, Leadership Aspirations, Career Agency, and Job Search Self-Efficacy. These loadings suggest that those international students who report more Perceived Discrimination, Perceived Hate and Fear, and to a lesser extent Homesickness, also tend to report less Work Hope, a more Negative Career Outlook, and to a lesser extent lower Achievement Aspirations, Leadership Aspirations, Educational Aspirations, Career Agency, and Job Search Self-Efficacy.

Table 2

Structure Coefficients for Significant Canonical Root

Variables	Structure Coefficients
	Root 1
Predictor Set	
Perceived Discrimination	**.74**
Homesickness	**.48**
Perceived Hate	**.94**
Fear	**.90**
Criterion Variables	
Job Search Self-Efficacy	**-.44**
Work Hope	**-.80**
Career Agency	**-.50**
Occupational Awareness	-.22
Negative Career Outlook	**.92**
Leadership Aspirations	**-.58**
Achievement Aspirations	**-.67**
Educational Aspirations	**-.42**

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The main purpose of this study was to assess the relationship between acculturative stress and the career outcomes of international students. It was hypothesized that acculturative stress would be negatively associated with work hope, career agency, occupational awareness, career aspirations (leadership, achievement, and educational), and job search self-efficacy; and positively associated with negative career outlook. As there is limited knowledge and understanding of international students' career concerns, there is a major need for information to facilitate the career progress of international students. The current study contributes much understanding to the literature on international students' career outcomes.

The findings from this investigation suggested that international students who reported more acculturation difficulties associated with Perceived Discrimination, Perceived Hate and Fear, and to a lesser extent Homesickness; also tended to report less Work Hope, a more Negative Career Outlook, lower Achievement Aspirations, Leadership Aspirations, Educational Aspirations, Career Agency, and Job Search Self-Efficacy. Perceived discrimination included experiences of racial

discrimination, different treatment as a foreigner, social alienation, loss of social support, and barriers due to language and cultural differences. As studied in the present research, perceived discrimination highlighted experiences of being treated differently, receiving an unequal treatment, and being denied of opportunities and what one deserves based on color and race (Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994). This sense of alienation and lack of support can be related to severe consequences for international students, including experiences of powerlessness, meaninglessness, and social estrangement (Burbach, 1972; Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994). Together, these findings suggest that discrimination experiences are also related to the career outcomes of international students.

Consistent with existing research, findings suggest that international students who perceive rejection through the verbal and nonverbal communication, actions, and behaviors of domestic nationals, also report experiencing low self-esteem, loss of status, and culture shock (Pedersen, 1991; Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994). International students experience lower family social support, which may affect experiences of rejection and hate when interacting with host nationals. Internationals students' perceptions are often confirmed with lack of acceptance and lack of sensitivity to the different values of other cultures by host nationals (Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994). The current findings showed that hate experiences are also associated with the career outcomes of international students.

Fear as experienced by international students in the current investigation suggested that those international students who reported more acculturation difficulties associated with fear also show weaker career outcomes. International students could experience fear related to feeling insecure in new surroundings, experiencing high crime rates in United States society, racial discrimination, and feeling scared due to the socio-

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political relationships between their home country and the U.S. (Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994). These fears can be associated with concern for personal safety due to different cultural background, and thus they tend to keep a low profile, feel insecure, and relocate due to fearing others (Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994).

Combined experiences of acculturative stress are also often accompanied by emotional pain, alienation, inferiority, loneliness, and dissemination (Yeh & Inose, 2003). Thus, the current study expands on existing literature by contributing to understanding the association of acculturative stress and career outcomes for international student populations. Career outcomes with relation to acculturative stress were investigated in this study. Work hope, career agency, occupational awareness, and career outlook were explored for the first time with an international student population, which adds significantly to the career literature on international students. This section discusses significant career outcomes as studied in the present analysis.

International students who reported lower career outcomes reported negative career outlook associated with experiences of acculturative stress. A negative career outlook includes negative thoughts about career decisions and the belief that one will not achieve favorable career outcomes (Rottinghaus et al., 2012). Optimism refers to a generalized tendency to maintain a positive outlook, which results in expecting good events to happen with one's career. Having a positive career related outlook is likely to result in strategic planning for the future, prevent depression and unemployment, and increased work productivity (Aspinwall, 2005). Positive outlook also is associated with higher levels of self-esteem, embrace problem-solving (career planning and exploration), confidence about career choices, and lower levels of psychological distress (Creed,

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Patton, & Bartrun, 2002; Strutton & Lumpkin, 1992). The results highlighted that international students hold low positive career outlook which is associated with lowered career outcomes and contribute knowledge to the association of acculturative stress and career outlook.

Work hope as found in this study strongly contributed to the career outcomes and was negatively correlated with the acculturative stress variables, indicating that increased acculturative stress negatively impacts work hope for international students. Hopelessness, or the lack of hope, can have serious detrimental effects on one's health and well-being (Chang, 1998). Implicit to hope theory (Snyder, 2000) is the notion that hope represents a general disposition to engage in conscious efforts to obtain an end or a goal (Snyder, 1995). Thus, hope can be significantly related to problem-solving activity (Chang, 1998). Being hopeful about one's work increases possibilities, options, and drives the individual for action. Work hope is the positive state of motivation (Juntunen & Wetterson, 2006) and is an important factor for international students to succeed academically and during the job search process. Work hope is also a protective factor, which can help in coping with experiences of discrimination, hate, and fear. The current study highlights that increased acculturative stress experiences are negatively associated with work hope resulting in reduced sense of control, confidence in personal goals, and reduced clarity in one's approach to career related goals. It is possible that for international students, the personal sense of agency in deciding about careers and in developing attitudes and skills necessary for hopeful future work may be reduced by high experiences of discrimination, fear, and hate. Work hope may have particular importance for better understanding the vocational needs of disfranchised individuals (Juntunen &

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Wetterson, 2006). In relation to international students, limited resources (financial limitations, social support, emotional support, geographically frequent relocation, visa restrictions, work related limitations) are likely to be associated with their work hope related goals and identification of career goals (Juntunen & Wetterson, 2006). International students in the current study experienced increased doubts in the ability to find, succeed, and maintain a good career, reduced confidence in their career related future, meeting work related goals, reduced understanding of being successful at work, and lowered expectations of finding a satisfying job.

Career aspirations (leadership, educational, and achievement) highlighted that leadership and achievement aspirations significantly contributed to career outcomes and were negatively correlated with the acculturative stress variables. This finding indicated that increased acculturative stress is negatively related to leadership and achievement aspirations for international students. Career aspirations are likely to be impacted by socioeconomic status, ethnicity, community, and school experiences, ethnicity, and family support (Ali & Saunders, 2009). In the current study, achievement aspirations, followed by leadership aspirations, strongly contributed to career outcomes. Leadership aspirations suggest the international students' aspirations to hold leadership roles, train and manage others in one's career (Gregor & O'Brien, 2016). This information indicated that international students can experience lowered career success and vocational achievement, impacting how individuals dream and envision their work future. These results are similar to previous studies focusing on international students suggesting that the lack of confidence and security that some international students experience as a result of entering a new culture might have a profound effect on their future career goals and

planning (Reynolds & Constantine, 2007). The achievement aspiration highlighted international students' lowered recognition, responsibility and promotion in one's career (Gregor & O'Brien, 2016). In light of this finding, it is plausible to consider that the acculturative distress concerns distract international students from focusing on their career related aspirations and also may lower their aspirations. International students struggle to adjust to the United States culture and norms, resulting in difficulties prioritizing, reflection, and planning their career path. International students may have given thought to their career interests and goals, which have led them to seek out educational and training opportunities in the United States; however, experiences of acculturative stress may hinder them in focusing on career aspirations (Reynolds & Constantine, 2007). These could impact students' wish to pursue further education or aspire to be in leadership positions.

Career agency contributed moderately towards the career outcomes and was negatively correlated with acculturative stress. Career agency is one's perceived capacity for self-reflection and to initiate, control, and manage career transitions (Rottinghaus et al., 2012). Career agency contributes to career adaptability, which refers to individual's readiness and resources of coping with the job tasks, occupation transitions, and personal difficulties. It also the need for autonomy that offers insights into career-related behaviors, including options available, career transition, career choice, and success (Rottinghaus et al., 2012; Savickas et al., 2005). It refers to how individuals adjust to the challenges of a changing world of work and contexts in career decision making (Savickas, 1997, 2003). Increased experiences of acculturative stress lower the sense of control, as these experiences are external. Career agency is important for international

students' career development keeping in mind the external barriers that impact job search. These external stressors include visa requirements, restrictions about the number of jobs one can hold, increased need of mobility for acquiring a job, less flexibility with salary negotiation, fewer jobs, and other contextual factors. These factors lower students' capacity to perform job searches, adapt to the changing world of work, career related plan for future, and diminished ability in career transitions and managing barriers.

Educational aspirations highlighted that international students' plans to pursue advanced education are lowered (Gregor & O'Brien, 2016). In light of this finding, it is plausible to consider that the acculturative distress concerns are associated with lowered aspirations of continuing further education. It is also important to understand these results in the context of visa regulations that exist and the financial resources that are needed to continue further education.

Job search self-efficacy predicts job search behaviors, career planning, interview skills and confidence, job search skills, and networking ability (Lin & Flores, 2013). In the current study, job search self-efficacy moderately contributed to the career outcomes and was negatively correlated with the acculturative stress variables. Similar to previous research, experiences of discrimination and stress are related to job search self-efficacy (Lowinger et al., 2014). Factors contributing to this stress could be visa regulations, cultural differences, job etiquette and expectations, and language difficulties. Because of these difficulties, international students have a heightened need for guidance and support in vocational tasks (Crockett & Hays, 2011). International students may not be able enhance their job search skills due to cultural barriers and misunderstandings, such as the use of networking being misunderstood as nepotism. The lack of previous work

experience, being a non-citizen, poor connections/networks increases difficulties

encountered in the job search process (Nunes & Arthur, 2013) impact the career

outcomes.

The results of this research are consistent with previous research that has

identified relationships between barriers and career outcomes for underrepresented

groups in the U.S. (Koen, et al., 2012; Feldman & Ng, 2007; Lent, Brown, & Hackett,

1994; Lin & Flores, 2013; Mahadevan, 2010; Shen & Herr, 2004; Reynolds &

Constantine, 2007). The results of this study highlight the challenges concerning

employment, the job search, asserting control in a less controllable environment, and

difficulties pursuing career goals among international students. These results can be

understood better in the socio-political context during the data collection time period; the

fall of 2016 and spring 2017. The political environment and 2017 US political elections

highlighted discrimination towards immigrants, international students, and refuges, which

may have contributed to a higher negative career outlook for participants in the study.

International students' career planning and career related decisions may have been more

uncertain. Thus, the current results linking acculturative stress to negative career

outcomes highlight the vulnerability of international students.

Implications for Theory

Theories of acculturation (Berry et al., 1997, 2005; Bochner, Furnham, & Ward,

2001), suggest that acculturation studies are often within stress and coping framework,

the cultural learning approach, and the social identification approach (Smith & Khawaja,

2011). Each of these approaches highlights the affective, behavioral, or cognitive

changes that occur as a result of acculturation (Smith & Khawaja, 2011). Findings of the

current study support the acculturative stress model, highlighting increased perceived discrimination, perceived hate, and homesickness contributing to the difficulties in acculturation for international students in the United States. The ongoing pressure to acculturate and to adapt, negatively impact the daily functioning of international students. The current research contributes to Berry's model of acculturation, which focuses on the psychological acculturation experience as a significant life event that changes many things in life by exploring career outcomes as a result of the acculturative stress (Smith & Khawaja, 2011). The present research focuses on discrimination, sociocultural stressors, and educational stressors as a significant contributor towards acculturative stress. Though educational stress may not be unique to international students, academic stress is likely to be intensified due to the added stressor of anxiety speaking a second language and the process of adapting to a new educational environment (Smith & Khawaja, 2011). The current findings support previous literature about experiences of acculturative stress for international students, framed within an acculturation model.

As implied by the hope theory (Snyder, 2000, 2002), hope is related to health and work outcomes, where hopeful people are able to cope with more difficult life events and are less vulnerable (Santilli et al., 2014). Building on Snyder's (2000, 2002) hope theory, work hope refers to a positive state of motivation which involves work and work-related goals and may have particular relevance to understanding the needs of disenfranchised individuals (Juntunen & Wettersten, 2006). Though work hope is a new construct with limited support currently, it represents an innovative and refreshing theoretical approach (Park-Taylor & Vargas, 2012). The present study has contributed to the work hope literature, by providing evidence to support the relationship between experiences of

loneliness, isolation, discrimination, fear, and reduced hope related to work. This study

was the first-time work hope, as an extension of the hope theory, was studied with

international student populations. To expand on the theoretical implications of this

model, future examinations with other international student populations will help to

improve the understanding of international student concerns and strengthen the model.

Implications for Research

No one theoretical model best describes acculturation process (Meghani &

Harvey, 2016; Smith & Khawaja, 2011), thus ongoing research is needed to study

predictors of acculturation with international student populations. The current study

contributed uniquely to understanding career outcomes of international students. Based

on the current research and understanding of international students' career outcomes,

several implications for research are offered. Social support can have a buffering effect

on acculturative stress and depression, can serve to alleviate life stress, and appears to be

particularly important for the psychological adjustment of international students (Du &

Wei, 2015; Hayes & Lin, 1994; Meghani & Harvey, 2016; Poyrazli, Kavanaugh, Baker,

& Al-Timimi, 2004; Smith & Khawaja, 2011). Emotional support in social interactions

and relationships has been studied to predict mental health outcomes (Atri, Sharma, &

Cottrell, 2007). Thus, future research should focus on exploring support (family, social,

academic) as it might moderate acculturative stress and career outcomes. It is understood

that international students experience acculturative stress that results in negative

outcomes; however, understanding the role of existing support will help inform the

development of coping strategies to manage mental health symptoms when working with

international students. Second, to the knowledge of the researcher, the present study is a

first inquiry in exploring work hope, career agency, career outlook, and occupational awareness with international students. As more research is conducted with international students from many countries, the relationship between acculturative stress variables and career outcomes will likely become stronger and more nuanced. Third, it is possible that work hope may moderate the relationship between acculturation stress and career outcomes. Future research is needed to test this hypothesis. Fourth, the current study only assessed international students' career outcomes. Psychological distress and the impact of acculturative stress on mental health are important findings that eventually impact career outcomes (Lin & Flores, 2013; Mahadevan, 2010). There is little research on the impact of psychological distress on acculturative stress and career outcomes. Future research should explore the relationship between psychological distress, mental health outcomes, and career outcomes as a result of experiencing acculturative stress. Occupational awareness did not emerge as a strong predictor of career outcome in this study. Although the reason for these results is unknown, further research should explore this construct with international students. There could be many reasons hypothesized for these results, based on the understanding of these specific career outcomes, it would benefit to explore these constructs further using other psychological measures.

Implications for Practice

The current study has practical implications for university professionals who provide academic, career, and personal counseling to international students. The high levels of acculturative stress could be detrimental to the overall functioning of international students. Acculturative stress lowers international students' career success, and thus interventions focusing on addressing acculturative stress and career-related

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coping skills can greatly help international students. To reduce acculturative stress, international students may be encouraged to develop ways to expand knowledge and understanding of the host culture. International students could be empowered to take an active role in their adjustment, such as seeking out opportunities towards career goals, establishing cross-cultural friendships, learning more about the host culture, and joining international student groups to receive support (Yakunina, Weigold, & Weigold, 2013). Counseling services should focus on educating and empowering international students to enhance coping skills, advocating for the self, increasing self-efficacy and confidence, and learning specific tools to manage stress levels.

Second, conducting group career counseling sessions can help international students seek support from other international students in a therapeutic environment, with the aim of enhancing the sharing of personal information. International students hold a sense of connection as a result of the shared identity. As a minority population, international students can benefit from increased support on-campus and use group time to address everyday challenges and cope with academic and career expectations. Group counseling sessions should focus on providing psychoeducation and attending to affect and process of international students' experiences. The group spaces will also provide an opportunity to discuss "*cultural maintenance*", the extent to which cultural identity and characteristics are important, and striving for their maintenance (Berry, 1997). This will also help counselors understand the needs of international students and keep up with the changing trends with international students.

Third, counselors, universities and colleges, could focus on making a vigorous effort to have specific programs implemented to promote career counseling and seeking

support among international students. One way to address this effort is to provide

outreach in the university or college to reach out to larger student population

(Singaravelu et al., 2005). Counselors can act as a liaison to the international office and

career services office to create training programs to reduce discrimination on-campus and

create workshops to increase career success of international students. Other topics that

can be focused in workshops for international students are interview skills, resume

writing, job search skills, career adaptability and job-related flexibility, Curriculum

Practical Training (CPT) and Optional Practical Training (OPT) related planning, and

other.

Fourth, it is important to train counselors in assessing acculturative stress and

career outcomes when working with internationals students, which will reduce distress

for international students. There are many international students in the United States. It

may be useful to provide mental health professionals training to increase knowledge and

skills about international student acculturative concerns and its impact on career success.

On-going training about recent socio-political stressors and ways to support international

students will help create safety and increase help-seeking.

Limitations

Despite the strength of the findings in further understanding of acculturative stress

and career outcomes of international students, they must be considered in the light of the

study's limitations. The first limitation is limited diversity of participants in terms of

country of origin. Though an attempt was made to collect a diverse sample

representative of international students from different countries in the world, a more

diversified sample would help in generalization of the results obtained. The current study

had students from 31 countries and majority of the students were from India. The demographic variables of race, ethnicity, and backgrounds of Indian international students could have influenced the results. Indian students are visibly different than the dominant group in the US, white individuals. Indian culture is a collectivistic culture within a patriarchal society. Family pressure, increased expectations of academic excellence, English as a second language, and visa restrictions are unique for international students from India. Many universities in the U.S. have predominantly White campuses. Contextual factors and differences could have resulted in different experiences of acculturative stress and career outcomes for Indian international students and other international students. It would be helpful to collect data on a broader range of international student populations from different countries. A follow-up study comparing responses of students from India and other countries would enhance our understanding of the differences and similarities of cultural contexts on the studied variables.

Second, all the measures and questionnaires were in English language. Students who are more fluent in the English language are likely to have participated in the study and those who find English language challenging, are not fluent in it, or found the items as less culturally sensitive, may have opted out of the study. The current study had a total of 128 items. Participants may have experienced fatigue or boredom and may have opted out of the study. It would be beneficial for future research to conduct research with reduced number of items, to obtain a larger representative sample.

Third, the socio-political climate during data collection could have impacted data collection and total number of participants. The current study was administered during 2017 US presidential elections which may have impacted the results due to increased

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focus on immigrants and international students as a part of the presidential campaign and after the elections. These contextual factors had a direct impact on the safety and well-being of international students. Participation in the study provided a voice for international students; however, it could have also increased stress and worry for the participants. The survey demanded some disclosure from participants, which may have caused them to respond in a constricted manner.

Lastly, method biases can be a major source of measurement error (Podsakoff, et al., 2003). All measures in this study were self-report instruments. Monomethod bias may have impacted the findings, as use of multi-methods allows the researcher to gain information through more than one method. Method bias are likely to impact rater's comprehension, retrieval, judgment, response selection and reporting (Podsakoff, et al., 2003).

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between acculturative stress and the career outcomes of international students. Specifically, this study aimed to assess the relationship between predictor variables of acculturative stress focusing on perceived discrimination, perceived hate, fear, homesickness and criterion variables of career outcomes of work hope, career agency, job search self-efficacy, leadership aspirations, education aspirations, achievement aspirations, occupational awareness, and career outlook of international students. The findings suggested that those international students that international students who reported more acculturation difficulties associated with Perceived Discrimination, Perceived Hate and Fear, and to a lesser extent Homesickness; also tended to report less Work Hope, a more Negative

Career Outlook, lower Achievement Aspirations, Leadership Aspirations, Educational Aspirations, Career Agency, and Job Search Self-Efficacy. The findings highlight the difficulties in adjustment to a new culture, feeling rejected, and the increased levels of stress as a result of the difficulties has serious impact on individual's motivation, aspirations, needs to achieve, and belief in self.

There was no previous study conducted to understand career outcomes such as work hope, career agency, occupational awareness, and career outlook of international students. The present study makes a unique contribution to the literature by studying these variables with international student population. The study also increases knowledge of hope theory and work hope as it relates to another minority population, international students' work-related goals. Given the importance of international students to the social, economic, and political development of the United States, it seems important for the US educational institutions to actively explore and attend to the changing needs of international students and provide relevant support systems.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Please tell us a little about yourself. This information will be used to describe the sample as a group.

Please note that for each of the questions below, we have tried to provide a number of options. However, we recognize that these options will not capture everyone's identities or characteristics. Therefore, for some questions, we have also included an "Other" option for you to describe in your own words your identity if the categories provided do not capture it. Thank you for telling us about yourself!

1.   What is your age? _____

2.   What is your gender?

    ___ Female

    ___ Male

    ___ Transgender

    ___ Other (please describe): _____

3.   What is your race?

    ___White/Caucasian

    ___Black/African

    ___Asian

    ___American Indian/Alaskan Native

    ___Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

    ___Biracial (please list) _____

    ___Other, please describe: _____

4.   What is your current country of residence?

___ United States of America

___ Other, please describe: _____

5.   What is your country of birth?

_____

6.   Which country did you reside in before coming to the U.S.?

_____

7.   What visa do you hold?

_____F1

_____J1

_____Other, please specify: _____

8.   How long have you lived in the U.S.

_____years _____months

9.   Which region is your university/college located? (Select One)

_____ Northeast (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania)

_____ Midwest (Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota)

_____ South (Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, Washington D.C., West Virginia, Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, and Tennessee, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas)

_____ West (Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming, Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, and Washington)

10. What degree are you seeking?

_____Bachelors

_____ Masters

_____ Doctoral

_____Other, please specify: _____

11. What is your academic major?

_____

12. What is your current academic standing?

_____Freshman

_____Sophomore

_____Junior

_____Senior

_____ Graduate Student

_____Other, please specify: _____

13. If you are a Graduate Student, what year are you in graduate school?

_____1

_____2

_____3

_____4

_____5

_____>5

14. What is your current G.P.A. _____

15.   Please rate your English reading ability

1   2   3   4   5   6   7
Very Poor   Extremely Good

16.   Please rate your English spoken/conversation ability

1   2   3   4   5   6   7
Very Poor   Extremely Good

17.   Please rate your English writing ability

1   2   3   4   5   6   7
Very Poor   Extremely Good

18.   How many credits have you completed towards your degree?

_____

19.   Expected date of graduation?

_____ Semester   _____Year

Other, please specify: _____

20.   Have you sought the career services on campus?

_____Yes

_____No

If yes, how many times have you visited the career services center? _____

If yes, please rate how helpful the services were that you received

1   2   3   4   5
Very helpful   Not at all helpful

21.   Have you received any of the following student services on campus?

If yes, please indicate the number of sessions you had and rate how helpful the

services were that you received.

Career counseling

_____Yes

_____No

If Yes, how many sessions did you attend? _____

If Yes, how helpful were the services?

1	2	3	4	5
Very helpful				Not at all helpful

Personal counseling

_____Yes

_____No

If Yes, how many sessions did you attend? _____

If Yes, how helpful were the services?

1	2	3	4	5
Very helpful				Not at all helpful

Academic counseling

_____Yes

_____No

If Yes, how many sessions did you attend? _____

If Yes, how helpful were the services?

1	2	3	4	5
Very helpful				Not at all helpful

22.   Are you currently employed?

____Yes (If yes, number of hours worked per week: _____)

_____No

23.   Do you hold a graduate assistantship?

_____Yes

_____No

24.   Are you currently on Curriculum Practical Training (CPT)?

____ Yes

_____No

25.   Are you currently on Optional Practical Training (OPT)?

_____Yes

_____ No

26.   What is your current relationship status?

_____ Single

_____Married

_____ Committed Relationship

_____ Divorced

_____ Widowed

27.   How would you identify your social class when you were growing up? Please

select the one best descriptor.

a. Lower class

b. Lower middle class

c. Middle class

d. Upper middle class

e. Upper class

28. How would you identify your social class currently? Please select the one best descriptor.

    a. Lower class

    b. Lower middle class

    c. Middle class

    d. Upper middle class

    e. Upper class