CAREER BEHAVIORS OF TOURISM MANAGEMENT STUDENTS
IN CHINA

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        Due to the college application and admission systems in China, college students'

major studies do not always match their career interests.   As a result, students who

major in tourism management may not choose to enter this industry after graduation; and

that leads to increased training costs.   This research investigated the factors that affect

students' career choices and exploration behaviors (i.e., career advancement, income and

welfare, experience accumulation, *etc.*).   The interplay of career variables such as

coping, career exploration, career choice anxiety, and vocational identity were examined.

Regression and ANOVA were used to investigate the relationships and detect the

differences among career variables with regard to gender, academic level, and school

type (university and junior college).   Results revealed that coping behaviors were

significantly related to environmental and self-exploration.   The Internet and mass

media were cited the most frequently used resources by college students in China.

University and junior college students appeared to have differing levels of satisfaction

with information.   Low income, tough jobs, poor working conditions and low social

status are also the reasons why Chinese tourism management students drop out of the tourism industry.   Suggestions are presented for both educators and practitioners in the tourism industry to assist tourism management students with their career planning. Implications and limitations are discussed and will serve as a basis for further studies.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

During the decade from 2001 to 2010, the Chinese Gross Domestic Product (GDP) increased yearly by an average rate of 15.08% (2011 China Statistical Yearbook, 2012), which reflected the development of the Chinese economy.   With economic growth and people's interest in travel, the Chinese tourism and hospitality industries have experienced prosperity at unprecedented rates.   In 2010, domestic and international tourists brought about 185 billion U.S. dollars and 45.81 billion U.S. dollars to the Chinese tourism market (2010 Annual Report of the Tourism Industry in China, 2011). This flourishing market emphasizes the need in the tourism industry to recruit qualified managers and professional talents in order to maintain organizations' sustainable development (Zhao, 2008).   As the demand for workforce in these businesses is rising, a marked high employee turnover rate has been identified (Guo, 2008; Lu & Zhou, 200). In some large cities in China, such as Beijing, Guangzhou, and Shanghai, the average turnover rate in the tourism industry has been 30%, while the highest was 45% (Guo, 2008).   This phenomenon may be attributed to common perceptions in China that those who work in service industries belong in lower social levels and that only young people fit the jobs in such service industries (Zheng, 2008).

In China, the major of tourism management has developed for just over 30 years and is listed as a sub-discipline of business administration in the national discipline category (Wu & Li, 2006).   The study areas of tourism management in China include tourism, hospitality, and convention and exhibition management (Wu & Li, 2006), similar to that of Western countries (Fidgeon, 2010).   According to the 2010 Annual Report of National Tourism Institutions in China (2011), there was a total of 967 universities and junior colleges that offer majors in tourism management with 596,095 full-time tourism-major students in those schools.   With the prosperity of the Chinese tourism market, tourism management education also developed rapidly.   In 2000, there were only 252 schools and 73,600 students in this disciplinary area.   The numbers increased by 384% and 810% respectively within a decade.   Although the enrollment in tourism management programs increased consecutively by an average rate of 26.15% from 2000 to 2010 (2010 Annual Report of National Tourism Institutions in China, 2011), the growth in the number of tourism management graduates still could not compensate for the gap in demand in the tourism job market (Lu & Zhou, 2007).

An important mission of hospitality management programs is to prepare qualified talent for managerial tasks in the hospitality industry (Chuang, 2011).   Tourism graduates are a main source of labor for hotel and tourism management (McMahon & Quinn, 1995).   However, in China, 80% of tourism management

graduates drop out of the industry by two years after graduation (Wang, 2009). The

training and perception gap between education and industry practice has been recognized

and discussed, especially for the tourism industry (Dickerson, 2009; Jenkins, 2001;

Raybould & Wilkins, 2005). In spite of this, many students still choose tourism

management as their major without a thorough knowledge of this industry. In China,

given the college admission standards and major allocation policy, students' test scores

from the annual national college entrance examinations are the only criterion for entering

universities or junior colleges. After graduating from high schools, students are

expected to take the national entrance examination and make school and major choices

concurrently. In order to increase the odds of matriculating in a university, students

select several programs they are qualified to apply for and disregard their own career

interests, preferences, or whether any given programs fit their own career goals. The

scores required for entering junior college are much lower than those for university,

which gives junior college applicants more freedom to choose academic majors

appropriate to their interests. In order to be enrolled to a desired university, a university

applicant may have to accept any academic major the university assigns to on the basis of

the scores and cap of each program. This allocation may happen to both university and

junior college applicants. As a result, it is common for students to enroll in majors they

did not mean to take originally. The conflict between students' interests and what they

are trained for becomes more serious after those students graduate and seek jobs (Wang, 2011).

Dickerson (2009) reported that hospitality management students tend to leave the industry within three years after graduation in the U.S.   Very often, it is because students' perceptions of career barriers outweigh their career interests; and that leads to their turnover intentions or short tenures in the tourism industry (Chuang, 2011).   In China, the situation is even worse due to the general allocation of academic majors among universities and junior colleges.   Tourism management graduates' turnover rate has been as high as 35% upon graduation (Zhao, 2008).   For instance, an employment report from 1997 to 2008 (with 2004 lost), obtained from a university in eastern China, revealed that only 41 out of 333 tourism management graduates (12.31%) chose to work in the tourism industry after graduation.   The number declined steadily every year, except for one year in which it was comparatively higher.   For example, the 1999 graduate employment rate in the tourism industry was highest (25.8%), while none of the 2008 graduates chose to enter this industry.   In another university in eastern China, the average graduate employment rate in the tourism industry was 34.9% from 2008 to 2010 (Zeng, 2010).

Both high demand for workforce and high turnover rates in the tourism industry are also reported in the U.S. (Barron, 2008; Dickerson, 2009).   Meanwhile, a similar

situation regarding low retention rates of tourism management graduates in the tourism industry has also been observed in some countries other than China, such as Australia (Richardson, 2009), the U.K. (Jenkins, 2001) and the U.S. (Chuang, 2011; Dickerson, 2009). Thus, the discrepancy between demand in the job market and graduates' career intentions along with their retention in the tourism industry is not a regional but a universal problem. However, most researchers have analyzed the problem from the tourism management program perspective (Wang & Gao, 2007; Lin, 2005; Song & Wang, 2008), instead of from students' career planning and exploration perspectives and from their perceptions of how schools prepare them for those careers. Students should play the leading roles in their career development processes and attention should thus be laid on the students' initiatives. Furthermore, few studies related to students' career behaviors have been conducted in China, especially among tourism management students.

Career exploration is a crucial stage for college students in career decision-making and subsequent career development and the commitment process (Blustein & Philips, 1988; Super, 1957, cited in Bartley & Robitschek, 2000). However, the results of numerous Chinese college students' career explorations result in leaving major-related jobs. Students' initiatives stimulated by their interests can maximize the outcomes of career exploration processes in the allocation of major study fields. In

view of the imbalance of a large number of enrollments in tourism programs and high turnover rates in the tourism management industry, it will be helpful to understand the details of students' career exploration processes and how their career related behaviors generate their career intentions and choices. This is also an area Chinese researchers seldom set foot into. Once undesirable factors in career exploration processes are identified, some positive interventions can be initiated to improve the retention of tourism management graduates in this industry. For example, adequate career related information is believed to be a helpful incentive toward employee retention in the tourism industry among Chinese higher education graduates.

The proposed research focuses on how tourism management students' career explorations and their perceptions of career assistance and resources provided by schools to prepare them for a career in the tourism industry. Both internal factors (e.g., self-exploration and anxiety caused by making career decisions) and external factors (e.g., environmental exploration and satisfaction with career information provided by schools) that affect students' career identity and choices in the tourism industry are examined in the present study. Considering that students' career behavior patterns may vary from some specific factors and that such factors should be identified and studied, differences of career exploration behaviors and perceptions among students from different school types, academic statuses, and demographic background are examined. Findings of this

study should contribute to the understanding of the quality of students' initiative driven career explorations and the significance of information and resources, especially in Chinese tourism management students' career decision processes.   Suggestions are put forward for both educators and practitioners in the tourism industry to assist tourism management students to explore career related information and to assist in increasing their retention rates in the tourism industry in China.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter first introduces universities and junior colleges in China.   The underlying theories and concepts which have guided this study's research objectives are then discussed.   The literature related to career decision-making processes, coping behaviors, career exploration, career choice anxiety, and vocational identity is reviewed. The conceptual framework and research objectives are also proposed.   The current situation of Chinese tourism management graduates' employment is discussed at the end of this chapter.

Higher Education System in China

In the Chinese education system, higher education includes education for academic qualifications and education for non-academic qualifications as well.   Higher education for academic qualifications includes regular course education and graduate programs in universities and special course education in junior colleges (Higher Education Law of the People's Republic of China, 1999).   Graduates from high schools, who have passed the national college entrance examinations, can be enrolled to higher education institutions such as universities and junior colleges.   Junior colleges are similar to vocational schools or community colleges in the U.S.   The admission

requirements for junior college students are generally much lower than those for universities students. Both university and junior college students receive certificates of graduation when they finish school, but only universities graduates can receive degrees.

The educational objective of both universities and junior colleges is to enable students to grasp the basic theories and knowledge of specialized subjects. Differently, university graduates are expected to gain systematic knowledge of the branches of specialized subjects and to acquire the preliminary abilities of analysis and research in their specialized disciplines or fields of study. Knowledge required for junior college students are planned to be within limited scope and they are expected to acquire basic skills and preliminary abilities for practical work in their fields of specialized employment (Higher Education Law of the People's Republic of China, 1999). University students are prepared for future jobs or graduate programs; but most junior college students work after graduation while a very few of them apply for university programs.

Based on educational objectives, curriculum design in universities focuses more on interdisciplinary integration. The knowledge gained by university students is more theoretical, more in-depth, and more comprehensive than that afforded junior college students. Courses on interdisciplinary fields, such as tourism culture, are provided for university tourism management students. In junior colleges, there are more courses

concerning practical skills such as mixology and service etiquette.

The basic length of schooling for university programs is four years; but it is three years for junior college.   For junior college students, the last year of their schooling (i.e., the third year) is scheduled for practicum in designated organizations; for university students, all the eight semesters are scheduled for academic courses.   Practicum is also compulsory for university students but requires just three to six months in the first or second semester of the senior year, and those schools usually do not designate specific organizations.   In addition, the master's programs in Chinese universities usually take three years in China instead of two years in the U.S.

Theoretical Models

The career decision-making process can be viewed as a model related to vocational behavior.   Blustein and Philips (1988) asserted that the assumptions of a decision-making model are a decision maker (tourism management students in this study), a decision situation (making career choices or seeking jobs after graduation in this study), and relevant information (the knowledge of the industry and job-related information in this study).   Harren (1979) stated that "decision-making models are conceptual frameworks for understanding how decision makers process information and arrive at conclusions" (p. 119).   It is a description of a psychological process "in which one organizes information, deliberates among alternatives, and makes a commitment or a

course of action" (p. 119).   Harren (1979) proposed a model of the stages of career

decision-making for college students considering the impact of many possible factors on

an individual's career decision (see Figure 1).

Constructs	Processes
Awareness	appraisal of self-in-situation
Planning	exploration-crystallization
Commitment	integration with self-concept system; bolstering; action planning
Implementation	success and satisfaction outcomes; Conformity-Autonomy-Interdependence

Figure 1. Harren's (1979) model of career decision making for college students (p. 121)

Individual differences in the characteristics and the context of the decision have

great influence on both the process and the outcome of a decision (Harren, 1979).

Different from many students in the U.S., most Chinese students become aware of a need

to select an occupation only after they enter universities or junior colleges (Zheng, 2008).

That is because all their time before college is occupied by study so as to be admitted to a

"good" university.   During the stage of awareness, students tend to pay more attention to

the present "self-in-situation" (Harren, 1979, p.122).   They try to make connections

between their past experiences and the future (Harren, 1979).   Their reflections on their

previous behaviors may help them to discover their individual interests or what they are

good at.   Meanwhile, students are more sensitive to their feelings about success or

failure and the pressure from the people around them (Harren, 1979).   If they feel

dissatisfied with or anxious about their self-in-situations, a need to explore more

alternatives is then recognized (Harren, 1979).   Such negative feelings can prompt them

to amend their career exploration behaviors in the planning stage.   Chinese college

students try to search for various career options and explore career related information in

school (Wang, 2007).   Three or four years is not a long period of time for Chinese

college students' career exploration.   However, students' vocational commitments

cannot be developed or assessed until they initiate action on what they have planned

(Harren, 1979).   Chinese college students' career development processes are in line with

the first two stages of Harren's model (1979), awareness ("appraisal of self-in-situation",

p. 121) and planning ("exploration-crystallization", p. 121).   Thus, these two stages are

the foci of this study.

    Career planning and decision-making is a process which proceeds from

vagueness to awareness and to crystallization of future careers.   Students make crucial

career decisions during their studies, such as seeking employment or pursuit of further

education, both of which inevitably influence their career aspirations, plans, and goals.

A rational decision-making process, according to Robitschek and Cook (1999), impels

students to "realize the need to select an occupation, explore the environment and

themselves, locate and narrow their options, all of which result the crystallization of

vocational identity" (p. 127).   In expanding on Harren's process model (1979),

Robitschek and Cook proposed that personal characteristics such as personal growth initiative and coping styles may influence career exploration and vocational identity. They pointed out that personal growth is an inner mechanism related to career exploration and ways of coping with decision making influences on career exploration. In Robitschek and Cook's study (1999), the classification of coping styles adopted from Heppner, Cook, Wright, and Johnson (1995) provides a three-factor structure of problem-focused coping. Reflective coping emphasizes approaching activities such as "planning, reflection, and causal analysis" (p. 291). Reactive coping emphasizes emotional and cognitive activities that "distort problem-solving activities" (p. 291). Suppressive coping indicates an avoidance or denial of problem-solving activities and is related to "disengagement activities" (Heppener *et al.*, 1995, p. 291). Exploration involves tasks of gathering information about oneself and the environment; and thus, career exploration is categorized into environmental exploration and self-exploration.

Path analysis proved that the students who performed well in reactive coping were likely to engage in more self-exploration. As noted, weak correlation between coping styles and environmental exploration may be perceptible because this study was conducted mainly among first-year college students who were engaged in just the beginning of their career exploration. However, personal growth initiative was not a moderator between reactive coping and both career exploration and vocational identity.

Personal growth initiative is thus excluded in the present study. The original framework

proposed by Robitschek and Cook (1999) is shown in Figure 2.
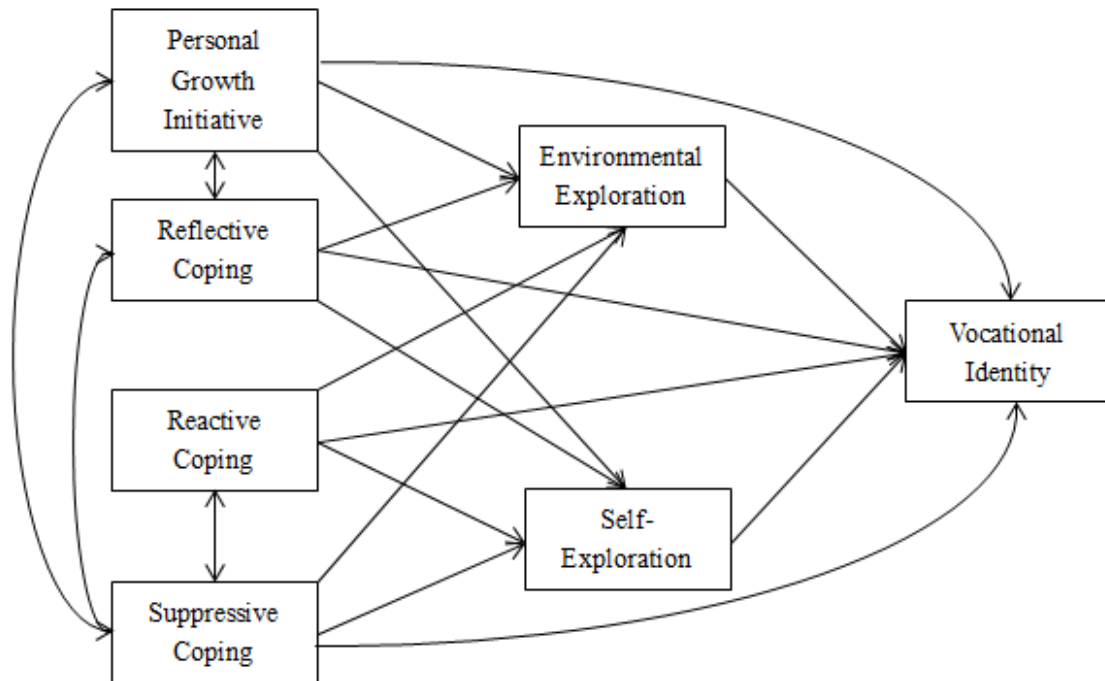
Figure 2. Robitschek and Cook's (1999) framework of the career decision-making

process (p. 129)

Career exploration is the crucial element in the formation of vocational identity.

As defined by Stumpf, Colarelli, and Hartman (1983), "career exploration is purposive

behaviors and cognitions that offer access to information about occupations, jobs, or

organizations that was not previously in the stimulus field" (p. 192). They proposed a

model of career exploration that focused on three aspects of exploration: exploration

beliefs, exploration process, and reactions to exploration (see Figure 3).
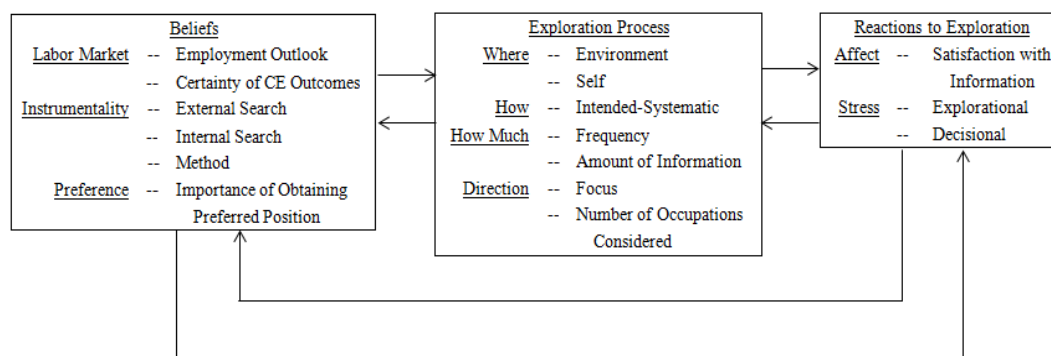
Figure 3. Stumpf *et al.*'s (1983) process model of career exploration (p. 194)

These researchers pointed out that unique pattern of exploratory behaviors (i.e.,

beliefs, exploration process, and reactions to exploration) can result in a unique

exploration experience for each individual (Stumpf *et al.*, 1983).   Beliefs in career

exploration are about the individual's confidence in past and future exploratory behaviors

(Stumpf *et al.*, 1983), which provides the motivations and expectations of one's career

exploration.   The four components of the exploration process are: where, how, how

much and direction (Stumpf *et al.*, 1983).   These factors determine the quantity and

quality of the exploration initiative and the information obtained.   Obtaining or not

obtaining the desired information subsequently determines the success of the career

exploration process and, in turn, leads to reaction in the form of affection or stress

(Stumpf *et al.*, 1983).   Based on this process model, Stumpf and his colleagues

developed the Career Exploration Survey (CES), and conducted several studies on its

dimensionality, validity, and generalization among different groups of people.

Conceptual Framework

Harren's model (1979) summarizes college students' career decision-making processes as passing through four stages: Awareness, planning, commitment, and implementation. Chinese college students fall into the first two stages and their career development processes function in the start-up periods. Nevertheless, the stage model is too broad to describe the details of students' career development processes. Robitschek and Cook (1999) combined the two stages, awareness and planning, into one stage, namely career exploration, in their study because the surveyed participants were college students who realized the need to learn about themselves while exploring career possibilities. Furthermore, Robitschek and Cook's (1999) framework described a career exploration process with four variables: personal growth initiative, coping behaviors, career exploration, and vocational identity. The search for jobs is generally believed to be very stressful for Chinese college students. Coping behaviors are thus included in the proposed study to investigate ways of coping with career obstacles and decision making. Robitschek and Cook highlighted vocational identity because career alternatives are crystallized and solidified in the form of vocational identity (Robitschek & Cook, 1999). For Chinese tourism management students, vocational identity reflects their intention and determination to work in the tourism industry. The present study follows Robitschek and Cook's (1999) assertion. This framework describes a

comparatively complete process of student career development. However, since

personal growth initiative is not an intuitive career behavior, it is excluded from the

present study. Meanwhile, the relationship between career exploration and vocational

identity is somewhat too simple for analysis of the cognitive process. Some additional

significant components must be added in the framework.

Stumpf *et al.*'s (1983) career exploration process model, analyzes the outcomes of

career exploration with two key elements: information and stress. The extent of

satisfaction with the information obtained, will directly change and determine career

exploration outcome (Stumpf *et al.*, 1983). These researchers included satisfaction with

information as a factor in their study on the career exploration process, and assessed it

with a subscale. Few Chinese researchers have attached the importance of career

information satisfaction to the outcomes of college students' career exploration. A

student who has inadequate career information is likely to have unilateral perception of a

future job, or even make a career choice that does not fit him/her. Satisfaction with

information is thus added to the variable career exploration in this research. Stress or

anxiety is the other reaction to career exploration, which refers to the level of one's

uncertainty about the desired outcome (Stumpf *et al.*, 1983). Coping behaviors and the

decision-making process can be influenced by stress or anxiety (Stumpf *et al.*, 1983).

However, the variable of explorational stress proposed by Stumpf *et al.* (1983) is limited

to certain exploration activities such as "interviewing with companies."　On the other

hand, career choice anxiety, the variable proposed by Chartrand, Robbins, Morrill, and

Boggs (1990), assesses negative reaction to career exploration from the perspective of

general feelings regarding one's career exploration process.　Therefore, career choice

anxiety is proposed as one of the variables of this study.　All of the three models serve

as theoretical foundations to guide the present research.　The combination and

modifications of the three models compose the proposed framework for the present study

to research career exploration of college students, especially in China.　Framework

developed for this research is proposed in Figure 4.
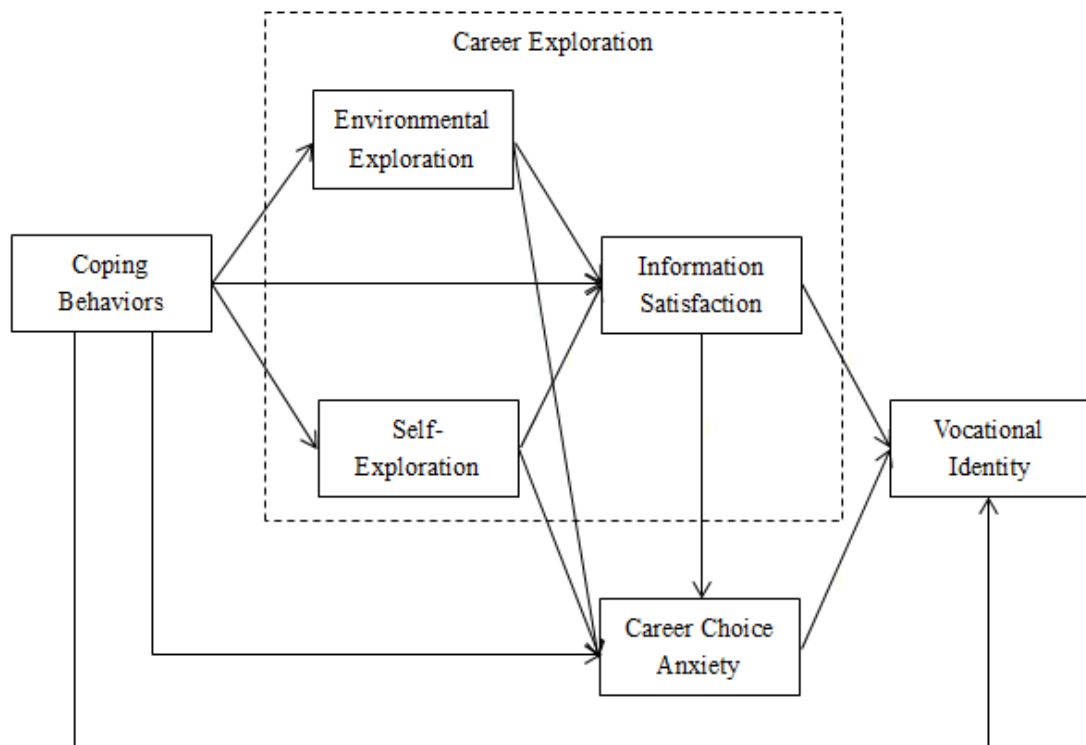
Figure 4. Framework proposed for this study

Coping Behaviors

Latack (1986) defined coping as a response to situations characterized by uncertainty and important circumstances. In Endler and Parker's study (1990), coping was referred to as "a response to external stressful or negative events" (p. 844). Lazarus (1981), on the other hand, thought that the response should also include internal demands that exceed the resources of the individual. Atkinson, Atkinson, Smith, Bem, and Nolen-Hoeksema (1996) stated that coping is the process of dealing with situations that

create stress.   Folkman and Lazarus (1985) conceptualized coping as a response to

environmental and psychological demands and, in particular, stressful situations.   Deniz

(2006) defined coping with stress as "the individual's cognitive and behavioral efforts" (p.

1162).   Among these definitions, stress is a key factor in coping behaviors.   Coping

can be seen as an effort to find a relief for an individual in stressful situations.

Categories of Coping

There are several studies that have categorized coping strategies from different

perspectives.   Based on the functions of coping, Folkman (1982) stated that there were

two domains of coping, namely, emotion-focused coping (i.e., the regulation of

distressing emotions), and problem-focused coping (i.e., doing something to bring about

change for the better).   These two types of coping may be defined as behavioral or

cognitive reaction, or both combined (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985).   Similarly, Chan

(1994) concluded that any coping activities may serve both emotion-focused and

problem-focused functions simultaneously.   Folkman (1982) further pointed out that

emotion-focused coping and problem-focused coping can impede each other.   Based on

these two domains of coping, Billings and Moos (1984) classified the third domain of

coping as appraisal-focused or one's efforts to define the "personal meaning" (p. 879) in

a situation.   However, they did not provide experimental evidence for this classification.

Endler and Parker (1990) classified coping behaviors into three types: task-oriented

coping, emotion-oriented coping, and avoidance-oriented coping. Task-oriented coping was put forward because problem-focused coping refers to task orientation, whereas emotion-focused coping refers to personal orientation. The third coping type, avoidance-oriented coping, refers to behaviors such as seeking help from others or engaging in other activities such as watching TV instead of concentrating on the task at hand. It can "include either personal-oriented coping or task-oriented coping." (Endler & Parker, 1990, p. 846) In Latack (1986), three broad coping strategies were identified: control, escape and symptom management:

> Control consists of both actions and cognitive reappraisals that are proactive, and take-charge in tone. Escape consists of both actions and cognitive reappraisals that suggest an escapist and avoidance mode. Symptom management simply consists of strategies that manage symptoms. (p. 378)

This categorization is more comprehensive because it includes symptom-management coping strategies.

Hall (1972) also categorized coping into three types. Type I coping, support-seeking behavior, suggests a desire for the company and advice of others. Type II coping, self-efficacy behavior, indicates a constructive, positive sense of control over the decision. Type III coping, reactive behavior, suggests a passive attempt to be superorganized and to do all that is expected. In 1980, Van Sell, Latack, and Schuler

(cited in O'Hare & Tamburri, 1986) proposed Type IV coping, which is symptom-alerting behavior and indicates an attempt to reduce or relieve associated symptoms.   The amount of effort put into problem-focused and emotional-focused coping depends on how a situation or event is appraised (Folkman, 1982).   The present study adopts Hall's (1972) classification of coping behaviors, because they lay more emphasis on specific events such as career decision-making, instead of on a general situation as do Latack's (1986) and Heppner *et al.*'s (1995) classifications of coping styles. Moreover, Type IV coping, symptom-alerting behaviors, is excluded in the present study because it refers to avoidance behaviors not directly related to career decision making.

College Students' Coping Behaviors

Coping strategies play a critical role in an individual's psychological well-being when he/she faces stressful life events (Endler & Parker, 1990).   Behaviors of coping aim to solve underlying problems in a decision-making process (Luce, 2005).   Super (1957, cited in Janeiro & Marques, 2010) addressed maturity as "behavior manifested in coping with the developmental tasks of a given life stage" (p. 37).   For college students, their career maturity refers to knowing how to cope with career planning tasks at school (Chuang & Dellmann-Jenkins, 2010; Janeiro & Marques, 2010).

Lent *et al.* (2002) stated that problem-focused methods (e.g. direct efforts at problem resolution) and social support seeking were most frequently mentioned by

college students as barrier-coping strategies. Personal goal setting and seeking

professional help were cited with low frequency. Deniz (2006) also found that there is a

significant positive relationship between life satisfactions and seeking social support.

Hsu, Chen, Wang, and Sun (2008) stated that social interactions have significant

influence on coping especially in Chinese culture. Lazarus (2000) found that people

with high perceived control over stress and anxiety are likely to use more

problem-focused coping. That being said, the problem-focused coping style positively

affects decision self-esteem (Deniz, 2006).

Harren (1979) stated that decision-making style, for example, the individual's

ways of coping with decision-making, affects a student's career exploration process.

Blustein and Phillips (1988) assessed the relationships between college students' ways of

coping and career exploration from the dimension of thinking versus feeling. Thinking

reflects "the extent to which the individual approaches decisions in a thinking-oriented,

rational, and deliberate manner" similar to reflective coping. Feeling is an approach to

decisions that is "feeling-oriented, emotional, and impulsive" (p. 205), similar to reactive

coping. They further found that people who scored high in thinking were engaged in

more extensive exploration.

Career Exploration

Students are caught in uncertainty, even frustration, in the transition from school

to work or in making decisions with regard to academic majors that might be suitable to their career goals.   Meanwhile, changes in the world of work remain active in students' life planning and career decisions (Baumgardner, 1982; Kracke, 2002).   Blustein and Philips (1988) reported that individual and contextual factors of decision-making are related to exploratory activities.   Porfeli and Skorikov (2010) added to this definition with interaction explorations of both the self and the world to obtain realistic perspectives and desired outcomes.   A student's expected outcome in career exploration is a career choice that matches individual interests and abilities as well as the demands in the occupational environment (Kracke, 2002).

Environmental Exploration and Self-Exploration

Environment and self are two major components in the studies of career exploration (Kracke, 2002; Porfeli & Skorikov, 2010; Robitschek & Cook, 1999). "Environmental exploration is career exploration regarding jobs, occupations, and organizations.   Self-exploration is career exploration involving self-assessment and retrospection" (Nauta, 2007, p. 168).

Harren (1979) hypothesized that career exploration of the self and the environment leads to a clear vocational identity.   This hypothesis had been tested in several studies (Gati, Landman, Davidovitch, Asulin-Peretz, & Gadassi, 2010; Robitschek & Cook, 1999).   An individual may explore the environment and the self

either systematically or randomly (Stumpf *et al.*, 1983).   In the process of

environmental exploration, an individual gains and revises perceptions of the general

economic conditions and the preferences of the labor market in one's desired career area

(Stumpf *et al.*, 1983).   In the process of self-exploration, an individual clarifies his/her

self-concept or ego identity (Bartley & Robitschek, 2000).   With these two processes

working together, one may gain a preferred outcome of career decision-making specific

to his/her need and preferences.

Satisfaction with Information

Information is a frequently mentioned factor in career exploration research

(Gaudron, 2011; Porfeli & Skorikov, 2010).   Satisfaction with information was defined

by Stumpf *et al.* (1983) as how "one feels with the information obtained regarding

occupations, jobs, and organizations relative to one's interests, abilities, and needs" (p.

196).   An individual can gather career information from two major sources:

environment and the self.   The external resources of career information are media,

senior students, peers, teachers and parents (Kracke, 2002).   Both quantity and quality

of career information are valued by students in the career exploration process.

Information gathering refers to "the exploration of various job opportunities and

the internal search focusing on ideas concerning personal abilities, interests, and goals"

(Kracke, 2002, p. 20).   It is considered the most important activity in career exploration.

"Those who feel better informed about their own interests and job opportunities are more likely to actively explore." (Kracke, 2002, p. 20)　　Gaudron's study (2011) also proved that gathering vocational information is one of the domains of behavior relevant to the process of career decision-making.　　An individual's career decision-making may be interfered with as a result of lack of environmental and self-information (Chartrand *et al.*, 1995).　　Whether one is satisfied with the information gathered will directly impact the outcome of career exploration.　　In addition, information not directly related to career plans is also needed in the process of career exploration for diversity of vocational information (Vignoli *et al.*, 2005).

College Students' Career Exploration

Super (1957, cited in Bartley & Robitschek, 2000) stated that career development among young people from 14 to 24 is dominated by career exploration.　　"Individuals initiate thoughts and behaviors that might lead to a future career choice" (Super, 1957, cited in Bartley & Robitschek, 2000, p. 63).　　The results of Gushue, Scanlan, Pantzer, and Clarke's study (2006) revealed that students who had greater self confidence in making career-related decisions could better define their sense of interests, abilities, and goals as well as actively engaged in activities regarding career exploration.　　Porfeli and Skorikov (2010) also stated that career exploration is one of the central mechanisms in career development and the vocational psychology process.　　In this stage, the

information gathered helps to foster the selection of and adjustments to a career (Bartley & Robitschek, 2000).   Porfeli and Skorikov (2010) found that career exploration can generate and then centralize job alternatives, as well as lead to career planning processes when college students move from a general sense of work to a specific career choice.

Lent *et al.* (2002) stated that a student's coping behaviors are linked to perceptions of a particular environment gained from environmental exploration. Meanwhile, Robitschek and Cook (1999) found out that coping has a positive relationship with self-exploration.   Folkman (1982) and Lent *et al.* (2002) stated that coping is the focus of decision-making, and that the process is directed at seeking and evaluating information which implies that coping is related to the results of career exploration.

In China, the examination-oriented education system causes students to lack independent attitudes to some extent.   At the beginning of the career exploration process, some Chinese students feel puzzled or hesitant about what or how to explore.   They may exhibit eccentric career exploration patterns and meet with more obstacles on the career development path.   Based on the above studies, five specific hypotheses are proposed:

Hypothesis 1: Coping behaviors are positively correlated with environmental exploration.

Hypothesis 2: Coping behaviors are positively correlated with self-exploration.

Hypothesis 3: Coping behaviors are positively correlated with information satisfaction.

Hypothesis 4: Environmental exploration is positively correlated with information satisfaction.

Hypothesis 5: Self-exploration is positively correlated with information satisfaction.

<center>**Career Choice Anxiety**</center>

The classical definition made by Spielberger (1966, cited in Croity-Belz, Chapeland, de Fillipis, & Garcia, 2005) stated that anxiety is either a state or a general personality trait.   The former is "a situation perceived as threatening" and the latter emphasizes "individual differences in the tendency to perceive situations as threatening" (p. 155).   O'Hare and Tamburri (1986) concluded on the basis of previous research that anxiety is an underlying theoretical assumption throughout the decision-making process. Blustein and Philips (1988) described anxiety as stress associated with general tasks of decision-making and with the more specific events of exploration.

The process of career exploration and the outcome may cause negative feelings, especially anxiety (Kelly & Shin, 2009).   A number of investigations have focused on the subject of career decision-making and the individual's concurrent state of anxiety

(Deniz, 2006; Kimes & Torth, 1974; Weinstein, Healy, & Ender, 2002).

O'Hare and Tamburri (1986) described anxiety concerning career decision as the consequence or outcome of the inability to cope with the stress caused by the uncertain situation. This situation consists of many job possibilities, career choices, and large amounts of interfering information. Mallet (2002, cited in Vignoli *et al.*, 2005) considered the anxiety in relation to career as a form of social anxiety, since "it concerns the individual's position in the society as a whole" (p. 155). In Chinese culture, position in the society is a big concern for both men and women. Social position depends on features of authority, wealth and, most importantly, the social status attached to one's job. This anxiety related to the process of career decision-making can be identified as "career choice anxiety" (Chartrand *et al.*, 1990, p. 493). In return, anxiety has significant impact on certainty of career decision (Daniels, Clifton, Perry, Mandzuk, & Hall, 2006). However, researchers held different opinions on whether these impacts are positive or negative. It is important to make clear how career choice anxiety influences other career behaviors. Properly utilizing the mechanism might help improve students' career development processes.

College Students' Career Choice Anxiety

Vignoli *et al.* (2005) and Hardin, Varghese, Tran, and Carlson (2006) reported that career anxiety is related to career exploration activities. Career choice anxiety

helps one to process career relevant information, and that enhances one's future

vocational commitment.   In other words, career choice anxiety is connected to a sense

of urgency that forces the college student to explore career options and involve career

related activities more efficiently.   Blustein and Philips (1988) also indicated that some

forms of anxiety may provide incentives for one to engage in career exploration.

Findings of Germeijs, Verschueren, and Soenen's research (2006) suggested that students'

career exploration outcomes are mediated by career choice anxiety.

However, high levels of anxiety may lead to career indecisiveness, negative

thinking about the self, and difficulties in the decision-making process (Saka & Gati,

2007).   O'Hare and Tamburri (1986) found that students with high anxiety are likely to

feel threatened by career decision-making and they may feel less confident in their ability

to cope with the situation by completing tasks necessary for career exploration (Hawkins,

Bradley, & White, 1977).   Students may think of escaping such a stressful situation.   A

research conducted among college students (Daniels *et al.*, 2006) suggested that a higher

level of career choice anxiety is related to less environmental exploration for male

students; in addition, less vocational identity is also related to career choice anxiety.

Greenhaus and Sklarew (1981) reported that self-exploration is more active among

students with low vocational anxiety.   Chartrand *et al.* (1990) further pointed out that

career exploration or career decision may be hindered by anxiety as a result of lack of

both self-knowledge and occupational information.   That being said, dissatisfaction

with information may also lead to career choice anxiety.

Some researchers have claimed that individuals' career choices often depend on

their coping behaviors in regard to perceived career barriers (Chuang, 2011;

Lipshits-Braziler & Tatar, 2012).   Coping behaviors act as moderators between stressful

events such as career decision-making and outcomes such as anxiety (Endler & Parker,

1990).   Thus, relieving anxiety will help the individual to engage in activities needed to

make a vocational decision (Hawkins *et al.*, 1977).   The less anxious he/she is about

career choices, the more confident he/she is with career exploration and decision-making.

Surveys conducted among both U.S. and Chinese students proved that effective coping

behaviors are helpful to relieve anxiety (Chan, 1994; Weinstein, Healy, & Ender, 2002).

One who can cope better is likely to experience lower choice anxiety.   It was suggested

that an individual should learn to cope with and manage to reduce anxiety so that an

effective career decision can be made (Kimes & Troth, 1974; Hawkins *et al.*, 1977).

The employment press of graduates is increasing given the large population of

China and the continuously expanding freshmen enrollment in both universities and

junior colleges in recent years.   Prospective graduates are worried about not only what

kinds of jobs they can take but also whether they can even find a job.   When they think

about actually deciding for sure what they want their careers to be, anxiety becomes the

common feeling, especially among those who are about to graduate.   Meanwhile, the

unstable transition from school to society is another source of anxiety because most

Chinese college students only have a little previous work experience.   It is, thus,

meaningful to examine the influence of career choice anxiety in Chinese college students'

career exploration processes.   Based on the above studies, four specific hypotheses are

proposed:

Hypothesis 6: Environmental exploration is negatively correlated with career

choice anxiety.

Hypothesis 7: Self-exploration is negatively correlated with career choice

anxiety.

Hypothesis 8: Information satisfaction is negatively correlated with career choice

anxiety.

Hypothesis 9: Coping behaviors are negatively correlated with career choice

anxiety.

Vocational Identity

Erikson (1968, cited in Meijers, 1998) described identity as "a sense of inner

identity" (p. 196).   It is a collection of all the identifications of what an individual wants

to be and/or is forced to become through his/her life (Erikson, 1968).   Marcia (1980,

cited in Meijers, 1998) identified identity as an "I-structure," which is "an inner, dynamic

and self-constructed organization of efforts, skills, opinions, and individual experiences"
(p. 196).   Based on similar assertions, Meijers (1998) concluded that identity is an
"I-structure" which "the individual constructs by exploring and experiencing his/her
environment and by then choosing specific values and norms that determine his/her
behavior" (p. 199).   To put it succinctly, identity reflects how an individual becomes a
distinctive person.

   As described by Meijers (1998), an individual can establish personal identity only
by transforming risk into opportunity.   As for vocational identity, its formation is thus a
process from uncertainty and anxiety to the crystallization of a specific career.   Holland,
Daiger, and Power (1980, cited in Toporek & Pope-Davis, 2001) defined vocational
identity as a realization and possession of "a clear and stable picture of one's goals,
interests, personality and talents" (p. 136).   Savickas (1992, cited in Meijers, 1998)
defined vocational identity as "an involving internal structure of self-concepts and
occupational concepts" (p. 199).   Vocational identity is the clarity of a person's
vocational goals and self-perceptions (Holland, 1985).   At the time one raises the
question of choosing a career, he/she has to learn to connect the world of work and
his/her own identity (Meijers, 1998).   Vocational identity can be seen as a combination
of one's understanding of a career and, simultaneously, one's understanding of the
environment and self.   Erikson (1963) addressed the fact that gradual clarification of a

vocational identity is an integral part of identity development. Fretz and Leong (1982) found that that vocational identity is related to competence in self-appraisal, occupational information and planning. The establishment of a vocational identity helps to integrate past and present aspects of the individual (Vondracek, Schulenberg, Skorikov, Gillespie, & Wahlheim, 1995).

College Students' Vocational Identity

Vocational concerns usually represent a key component of an adult's identity (Gushue *et al.*, 2006; Vondracek *et al.*, 1995). Super (1963) stated that career exploration plays an important role in the process of identity formation. Career exploration is considered a predictor of a student's vocational identity and career decision development (Porfeli & Skorikov, 2010).

The development of vocational identity is regarded as a central tasks in a young person's career development (Diemer & Bluestein, 2007), and that development can foster one's vocational future or "vocational hope" (p. 108). Vocational identity is important since it is the foundation on which one determines his/her "direction in life" (Meijers, 1998, p. 193). Lucas and Epperson (1990) reported that people in need of vocational information have insecure vocational identity. If a person has secure vocational identity, he/she will be confident in his/her own ability to make career decisions and cool headed in the face of the unknown and uncertainty (Holland,

Gottfredson, & Power, 1980; Holland, Johnston, & Asama, 1993).   Nevertheless,

Meijers's (1998) research revealed that students who were confronted with several

possible job options for a long time felt a great deal of stress and anxiety, which resulted

in more work related insecurity and less vocational identity.   Heppner *et al.* (1991)

suggested that there is a positive relationship between vocational identity and job related

coping behaviors.

Few studies have discussed Chinese college students' vocational identity,

especially tourism management students.   However, vocational identity is critical for

these students when making career choices in this industry.   Insecure vocational identity

impedes tourism management graduates from remaining in the tourism industry and they

sometimes even drop off just after graduation.   Therefore, it is important to understand

the formation of tourism management students' vocational identity.   Based on those

studies, the following specific hypotheses are proposed:

Hypothesis 10: Information satisfaction is positively correlated with vocational

identity.

Hypothesis 11: Career choice anxiety is negatively correlated with vocational

identity.

Hypothesis 12: Coping behaviors are positively correlated with vocational

identity.

The framework of hypotheses to be testified in this study is shown as Figure 5.
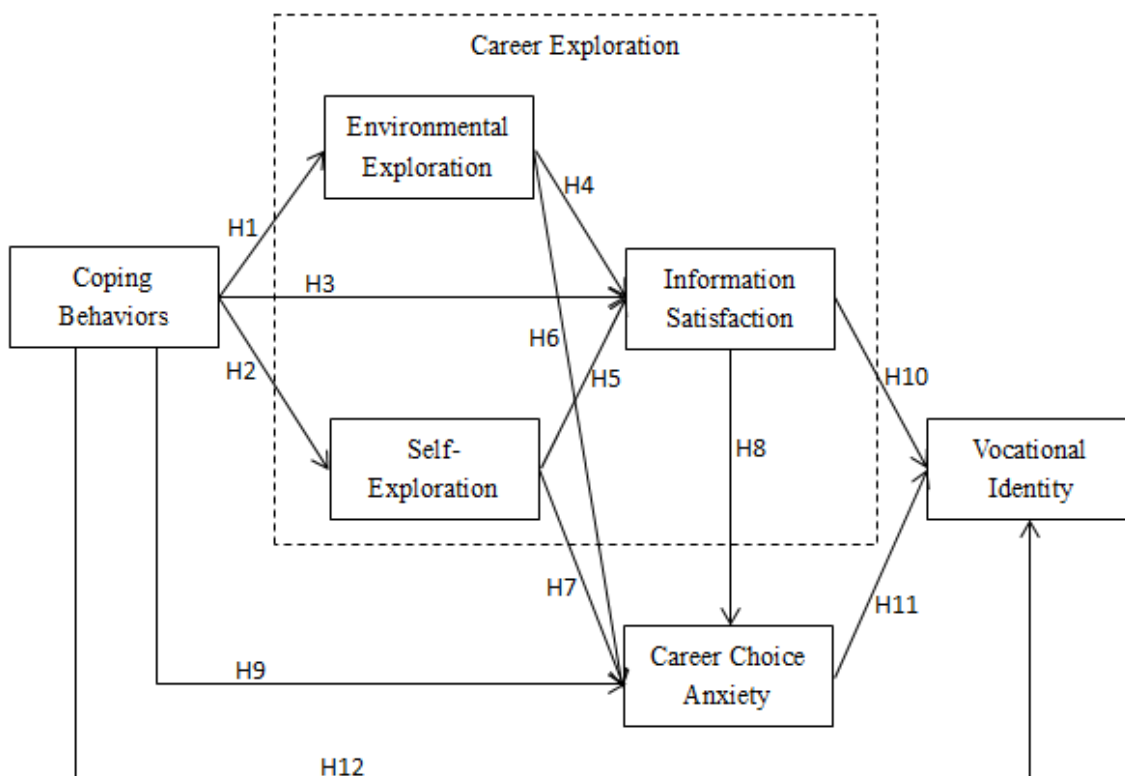
Figure 5. Framework of hypotheses to be tested in this study

Contextual and Career Background

In addition to personal characteristics (Robitschek & Cook, 1999), certain other factors also affect college students' career exploration behaviors. For instance, Daniels, Stewart, Stupnisky, Perry, and LoVerso (2011) pointed out that faculty affiliation has significant influence on undergraduates' performance in career exploration. Support from social relations is also mentioned as an important factor in career exploration

(Cheung & Arnold, 2010).   Moreover, parents also have impact on students' career searching processes and supportive parents promote their children's information seeking activities as related to career exploration (Kracke, 1997).   Kracke and Schmitt-Rodermund (2001) stated that parental openness, authoritativeness, individuation in the parent-child relationship and parental support in relation to career issues have positive effects on the level of exploration and change in information seeking activities over time.   On the other hand, those students who are self-determined and "intrinsically motivated" (p. 26) are more autonomously involved in vocational exploration activities (Cheung & Arnold, 2010).

College students' pre-entry job expectations and perceptions of future careers can predict their career exploration behaviors (Hurst & Good, 2009).   Furthermore, students of different academic status have different patterns of exploration behaviors (Robitschek & Cook, 1999); and the focus of their exploration may change with time.   Bartley and Robitschek (2000) suggested that gender differences and similarities in career exploration should be considered and discussed in future research.   The influence of all of the aforementioned factors on Chinese students' career exploration is to be examined in the proposed study.

Chinese Tourism Management Students' Exploration Behaviors toward Career

Choices

The tourism management major is offered in both junior colleges and universities throughout all the provinces in China. Bao and Zhu (2008) stated that the purpose of tourism management education is to cultivate qualified, professional and applied talents. In 2010, nearly 328,000 tourism management students graduated from institutions of higher education in China. Among them 165,000 graduates (50.52%) graduated from universities and the rest (49.28%) from junior colleges (2010 Annual Report of National Tourism Institutions in China, 2011). Nevertheless, in recent years, the university tourism management graduates' employment rate in this industry has continued at a low level of only about 15% (Guo, 2008). For junior college graduates, the employment rate in the tourism industry is relatively higher since there are many entry-level positions available in the job market (Guo, 2008; Zhang, 2007). Job opportunities are limited for Chinese graduates with tourism bachelor's degrees, which results in somewhat of a waste of educational resources in China (Guo, 2008). Given the college admission and major allocation policy, when applying for college, students often place more emphasis on school ranking than on their own personal goals. Thus, in order to get into a desired university, they sometimes have to compromise on their choices of specific academic majors. Different levels of academic major interest, different educational objects, and

different demands in the labor market result in university and junior college students' having various and sometimes confused career behaviors.

Moreover, in most international chain hotels, the senior management staff members are mainly foreigners with higher educations in tourism management (Song & Wang, 2008). These international chain hotels are mostly centered in larger and more developed cities in China where business and tourism are flourishing. Foreigners who visit China tend to choose a certain international hotel brand that they are familiar with. Foreign hotel general managers and department managers are believed to better maintain the service standards and quality of the international brands.

However, in some larger and more developed cities, tourism management graduates with higher educations are still needed in the constantly expanding tourism industry. In Shanghai, every year there are over one thousand management position vacancies in the new local tourism and hotel companies (Liang, 2007). Despite this, nearly half of the tourism management graduates do not consider entering the tourism industry, and even few of the graduates actually enter the industry eventually (Lu & Zhou, 2007). As of the year 2008, the retention rate for those who chose to work in the tourism industry was less than 20% two years after graduation (Guo, 2008). A low retention rate versus a high turnover rate has become a main point of conflict within the tourism industry in China (Zheng, 2008; Zhu, 2008). The obvious discrepancy between

supply and demand is continuously pervades the tourism job market in China (Wang, 2011; Zhang, 2007; Huang, 2007; Liu, 2006).

Career choices are affected by various internal and external factors (Chuang, Walker, & Caine-Bish, 2009). In a survey conducted at a university located in northeastern China, the students expressed the opinion that they were not confident in working in the tourism industry (Shi, Ma, & Zou, 2005), especially female students (Zhu, 2008). It is more possible for female graduates to drop out of the tourism industry since in Chinese traditional culture; young ladies are not considered apt for jobs in that kind of service industry (Zheng, 2005). Apart from the cultural factor, social factors and male and female characteristics may also influence male and female students' career development and choices. It can be hypothesized that Chinese tourism management students' career behaviors vary by gender.

With regard to other factors in making career choices, Wang (2011) examined the impact of choice of major on career intention among 686 tourism management graduates of sixty universities in southwestern China. The results revealed that 24.2% did not on their own initiative choose tourism management as their major. The voluntary choice of tourism management as a major was positively correlative with learning outcome. In addition, the willingness of students to choose the tourism management major had a strong impact ultimately on their career choices (Wang, 2011). The more they liked the

major of tourism management, the more optimistically they viewed careers in this

industry and the more willingly they sought jobs in this industry.   Liu and Zhang (2007)

considered that students' career expectations drive the internal mechanisms which

determine career choices.   However, there is also a demonstrable tendency with which

the longer students study this major and the more they know about the tourism industry,

the less willing they are to work in this industry (Wang, 2010).   The focus of their

career exploration sometimes moves on to other vocational areas.   It can be

hypothesized that students' career behaviors are related to academic status issues.

Shi *et al.*'s research (2005) showed that tourism management students ranked

"career advancement" as the first factor impacting their career choices; "major" was just

the sixth factor.   The location of future employment is another important factor for

consideration especially for college students in China with regard to their career choices.

Some larger and more developed cities such as Bejing and Shanghai are usually preferred

by the graduates (Liu & Zhang, 2007; Shi, Ma, & Zou, 2005).   Such cities are believed

to provide more job opportunities and better welfare (Zhang, 2007).

Wong and Liu (2010) found that parental influences such as "parental support of

hospitality and tourism industry," "parental career concerns about welfare and prestige"

and "parental barriers to career choice" (p. 98) can predict tourism management students'

career choices.   Chuang *et al.* (2009) suggested that faculty members should provide

appropriate career assistance and guidance to help students with their career goals while they are in school.   The students' career behaviors are "shaped by their learning experiences unique to each program" (Chuang *et al.*, 2009, p. 26).   Students rely heavily on their faculty's professional opinions and experiences.   However, in China, career assistance and guidance from faculty seems to be insufficient.   Guo (2008) thought that the main cause of tourism management students' dropping away from the industry lay in tourism management education.   This researcher found that the faculty members in China failed to arouse students' professional awareness and cultivate their professional quality.   The schools, especially universities, seldom cooperated with tourism companies and, thus, they could not provide opportunities for the students to learn realistically about the industry and its organizations (Wang, 2009).   That hindered students' first steps in information gathering and career exploration.   Without the schools' guidance on their career paths, students have to explore career possibilities blindly by themselves in order to gain a job after graduation.

Both tourism educators and industry advisory need to assist students to develop realistic expectations about careers in the tourism industry (Chuang, Goh, Stout, & Dellmann-Jenkins, 2007; Chuang & Dellmann-Jenkins, 2010).   The tourism industry should also be responsible for fostering graduates' professional awareness (Bao & Zhu, 2008; Huang, 2007).   Management trainee programs are popular in international chain

hotels in western countries but not so common in China due to neglect of the importance of training or the shortage of training budgets in some Chinese tourism companies and hotels (Lu & Zhou, 2007).   Such programs can help cultivate management talents for tourism organizations (Lu & Zhou, 2007).

Many Chinese researchers have studied tourism management students' career development from the respects of their career intentions (e.g., Liu & Zhang, 2007; Shi *et al.*, 2005) and the high turnover (e.g., Guo, 2008; Lu & Zhu, 2007; Zheng, 2008). However, most have focused only on one or two factors (e.g., Bao & Zhu, 2008; Huang, 2007; Wang, 2011; Wong & Liu, 2010; Zhang, 2007).   In the proposed study, this research integrates the possible factors and aims to find out which are perceived as more important by students and which of them have more influence.   Based on this study, specific hypotheses are proposed as follows:

Hypothesis 13: Male and female tourism management students have different pattern of career exploration behaviors.

Hypothesis 14: Chinese tourism management students with different levels of academic status have different patterns of career exploration behaviors.

Hypothesis 15: University students and junior college students in tourism management majors have different patterns of career exploration behaviors.

Summary

The discrepancy between tourism education and graduates' career choices has persisted for years in China, and many studies have highlighted the problem (Guo, 2008; Wang, 2009; Zhao, 2008; Zheng, 2008; Zhu, 2008).   Guided by the literature and theoretical models, this researcher proposes the following four research questions;

Question 1: What are Chinese tourism management students general career backgrounds and behaviors in terms of their (1) perceptions and expectations of the tourism major and industry, (2) exploration of career information and career assistance, and (3) factors impacting their career choices?

Question 2: How do career related variables affect and/or how are they affected by career exploration of Chinese tourism management students? (H1 to H12)

Question 3: Are there any significant differences among students' career behaviors in terms of gender, academic status, and school types (university and junior college)? (H13 to H15)

Understanding of tourism management students' career exploration processes and knowledge of factors impacting the process may shed some light on tourism management students' career paths.   The objectives of this research are to investigate the pattern of Chinese tourism management students' career exploration behaviors, examine its relationships with coping behaviors, career choice anxiety, and vocational identity, and

investigate the differences of career behaviors on demographic and background

information.   Coping behaviors and career choice anxiety can either facilitate or hinder

students' career planning and exploration.   Vocational identity should be found to be

closely related to students' intentions and/or commitment to their career choices via

through exploration behaviors.   Constructive suggestions are desired to be put forward

for (a) both educators and practitioners to utilize in assisting tourism management

students with their career planning and exploration and (b) encouraging tourism

management students to consider their possible careers more effectively and explore

more job possibilities in the tourism industry.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the use of human subjects, sample selection, instrument design, and the data analysis techniques employed in this research.   The reliability of each scale and the simple statistical summary of each variable are also discussed.

Human Subject Review

The researcher in the present study has completed human subjects training and was certified by Kent State University (KSU).   The KSU Human Subjects Review Board approved the proposal application for this study on May 3, 2012.   The research was approved and met the criteria for Level-2 Exemption under federal regulation stating it was research with minimal risk to human subjects.

Sample

For the present study, students majoring in tourism management in China were surveyed for their career exploration behaviors.   Universities and junior colleges in both northern and southern China were included so as to obtain a more general research result. Data were collected during summer 2012.   The participants surveyed comprised all levels of undergraduate and graduate students from freshmen to third-year graduate

students; and that was because all of them fell into the stage of career exploration (Blustein & Philips, 1988; Super, 1957, cited in Bartley & Robitschek, 2000). Some comparisons were made between the university students and the junior college students, between males and females, and among academic levels in order to investigate relevant differences in their career exploration behaviors. It was estimated that there are more female students than males students because, in China, the tourism management program is considered a part of the liberal arts; so female students tend to choose tourism management as their top choice.

Instrument Design

The survey was conducted using both paper-pencil and online formats. Hard copies of the questionnaire were distributed to three universities and two junior colleges by designated persons. At the same time, an online survey link was distributed through emails and Weibo.com (i.e., Chinese version of Twitter) among tourism management students. Snowball sampling method "has been frequently used when working with hidden populations whose members are difficult to locate" (p. 151) so as to generate a randomized and representative sample (Petersen & Valdez, 2005).

Questions concerning background and career information were included as the first section of the questionnaire. The participants were asked about their genders, school types, career aspiration and intentions, impacting factors of career choices, and

career information seeking behaviors.   The second section of the questionnaire was

intended to investigate students' coping behaviors, career exploration, career choice

anxiety, and vocational identity by using Coping Scale, Career Exploration Survey,

Career Choice, and Vocational Identity.

The original versions of the scales are in English.   In order to reflect the

meaning of the scales, the back-translation method was employed to translate the survey

to Chinese for better understanding among the participants.   A pilot test was conducted

to fine-tune the wording among several experts who know both Chinese and English.

The experts translated the survey from Chinese back to English to check the validity of

the translation procedure (Yu, Lee, & Woo, 2004).   It is believed that back-translation is

a widely accepted method to "maintain the equivalence between the original and

translated versions" (Cha, Kim, & Erlen, 2007, p. 386).   Back-translation of an

instrument is essential for its validation in a cross-cultural study (Cha *et al.*, 2007).

Coping Scale

Students' coping behaviors were assessed by the Coping Scale (CS) developed by

Latack (1986).   The scale consisted of four types of coping but only the first three were

used in the questionnaire: Type I coping (support-seeking), Type II coping (self-efficacy),

and Type III coping (reactive) were used.   Type IV coping (symptom-alerting) was

excluded from this study because the focus of this survey is intended to assist us to learn

about students' coping behaviors related to career decision-making instead of their general psychological coping strategies.   The leading question is "How often do you cope with career decision-making related problems in the following ways?"   Some modifications were made to ensure items were specific to students' career decision-making.   For example, Item 16 on Latack's measure "Throw myself into my work and work harder, long hours" was changed to "Work hard to make the best decision."   The twenty-one items were scored on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1= hardly ever do this to 5=almost always do this.   Latack (1986) has confirmed the reliability and the construct validity of the scale.   The validity coefficient of Latack's Coping Scale was .79.

Career Exploration Survey

The Career Exploration Survey (CES) (Stumpf *et al.*, 1983) was employed to measure students' career exploration behaviors.   Corresponding subscales of Environmental Exploration (EE), Self-Exploration (SE), and Satisfaction with Information (SI) were selected to assess to what extent the participants engage in career exploration activities.   These three subscales reveal four elements of career exploration: (a) where one explores, (b) how one explores, (c) how much one explores, and (d) what one explores (Stumpf *et al.*, 1983).   There are six items for Environmental Exploration, five items for Self-Exploration, and five items for Satisfaction with Information subscale.

Modifications were made to ensure the statements were specific for students' career exploration behaviors in the tourism industry.   The leading question of Environmental Exploration and Self- Exploration is "To what extent do you behave in the following ways?"   Examples of the Environmental Exploration are "Obtain information on specific jobs or companies in the tourism industry," and "Seek information of interest in the tourism industry."   Examples of the Self-Exploration are "Contemplate my past," and "Understand a new relevance of past behavior for your future career in the tourism industry."   The leading question of Satisfaction with Information is "How satisfied are you with the amount of information you have on…" Examples of the Satisfaction with Information inquiry are "The types of tourism organizations that will meet your personal needs," and "The specific tourism organization in which you are interested."   The responses were rated on a five-point Likert scale with 1=little to 5=a great deal.   High scores indicated greater use of the respective career exploration strategies.   The reliability and validity of these subscales have been confirmed by Stumpf *et al.* (1983), Blustein (1989), and Robitschek and Cook (1999).

Career Choice Anxiety

The instrument, Career Choice Anxiety (CCA), was adapted from Career Factors Inventory (Chartrand *et al.*, 1990) to measure tourism management students' anxiety concerning career choice.   The leading question is "When you think about actually

deciding for sure what you want your career to be, you feel…"   Items that carry similar

meaning were merged, for example, "Calm/Jittery" and "Carefree/Worried" are merged

into "Carefree/Worried."   Three items were put forward such as "Fearless/Frightened,"

"Relaxed/Tense," and "Carefree/Worried."   All of the responses were rated on a

five-point Likert scale.   In the original version, higher scores implied lighter career

choice anxiety.   In the proposed study, the scales are reversed for the convenience of

data analysis (i.e., higher scores imply higher levels of career choice anxiety).   Support

of the reliability and validity of this scale were provided by Chartrand *et al.*'s study (1990)

showing that the internal consistency coefficient for this scale was .86.

Vocational Identity

Vocational Identity (VI), a subscale of the My Vocational Situation (Holland,

Daiger, & Power, 1980), was used to measure students' career identity in the tourism

industry.   The Vocational Identity subscale has been the most frequently used for the

study of operationalize vocational identity (Diemer & Blustein, 2007).   The original

version contains 18 True and False items.   In order to have more rational survey results,

the 18 items were changed into the five-point Likert scale.   Originally, lower scores

implied that the respondent had stronger vocational identity.   For the purpose to obtain

consistent analysis results with the other three measures, the scales are reversed.   That is,

higher scores imply more secured vocational identity.   The leading question is "To what

extent do you feel about your career planning?" Examples of the items are "You would like to increase the number of occupations you could consider," and "You are uncertain about the occupations in the tourism industry you could perform well." In Lucas, Gysbers, Buescher, and Heppener's study (1988), reliability and construct validity of this subscale were tested with college freshmen samples. The Kuder Richardson (KR 20s) validity coefficient with a sample of college students was .89.

Data Analysis

The SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) version 20 was employed to analyze the data collected. Five methods of data analysis were performed in this study to test the hypotheses. First, Cronbach analysis was computed to examine measurement quality. Then, a series of regression analyses were used to test the relationship among career variables such as coping behaviors, career exploration, career choice anxiety, and vocational identity. Next, a couple of independent t-tests were used to reflect whether these variables differ between males and females and between the two school types in career related behaviors. After that, one-way ANOVA was used to compare the variances of career behaviors among different levels of academic status (e.g. freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior). Last, Chi-square and Crosstabs were used to investigate the differences of and compare career intention and career seeking behaviors between university students and junior college students. Hypotheses were to be tested.

Measurement Quality

The alpha value of the coefficient, the mean, and the standard deviation for each

scale are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Summary Scale Statistics of Career Variables among Chinese Tourism Management Students

Measure	Cronbach's Alpha	Mean	SD
Coping Behaviors	.87	3.01	.49
Environmental Exploration	.84	2.22	.74
Self-Exploration	.77	2.96	.78
Satisfaction with Information	.81	2.81	.67
Career Choice Anxiety	.84	3.57	.91
Vocational Identity	.87	3.30	.64

Note. $N = 636$.

Cronbach's coefficient alpha was computed to measure the internal consistency of

each of the scales used.   The values all exceeded .70, the minimum standard for basic

research (Nunnally, 1978).   Results of reliability tests indicated that all the

measurements used in this study were highly reliable.

Two of the scales (i.e., Environmental Exploration and Self-Exploration) had item

mean values in the "Somewhat" to "Moderate Amount" (2.0 - 3.0) range.   Satisfaction

with Information had an item mean value in the "Somewhat Dissatisfied" to "Neutral"

(2.0 - 3.0) range.   Coping Scales had an item mean value in the range from

"Sometimes" to "Often" (3.0 - 4.0).   Career Choice Anxiety had the highest mean score

in the "Neutral" to "Somewhat Negative" (3.0 – 4.0) range with an average mean score of

3.567.   Vocational Identity had an item mean value in the "Moderate Amount" to

"Somewhat" (3.0 – 4.0) range.

Furthermore, an independent t-test was performed to detect if there were any

differences between students who took online or hard copy survey.   No significant

difference was found on career-related variables.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This survey was designed to examine tourism management students' career exploration behaviors.   The questionnaire was distributed both by hand and online.   Of the 540 hard copies of the questionnaire that were sent out to three universities and two junior colleges in China 466 copies were returned valid.   The usable response rate was 86.3%.   The same survey was distributed through email and Weibo.com (i.e., the Chinese version of Twitter).   Students surveyed from the snowball sampling represented more than 47 different institutions (universities and junior colleges) that offer tourism management program in 21 provinces in China.   A total of 402 responses was received, 170 of which were usable, resulting in a usable response rate of 42.3%.   In all, a total of 636 valid responses were used in the analysis.

Sample Profiles

Participants in this study included 24.7% male students ($n = 157$) and 75.3% female students ($n = 479$) just as expected since females tend to choose liberal arts majors, such as tourism management, as their first choice.   Of the participants, 79.2% were university students ($n = 504$), and 20.8% were junior college students ($n = 132$). The sample consisted of 23.3% freshmen ($n = 148$), 29.7% sophomores ($n = 189$), 22.3%

juniors ($n = 142$), 15.1% seniors ($n = 96$), and 9.6% graduate students (first-year to third-year level, $n = 61$).

Career Information

Major Interests and Career Intentions

Participants were asked about their major, career intentions and the impacting factors in regard to entering the tourism industry. About half of the respondents ($n = 354$, 55.7%) reported that tourism management was their desired major when they were admitted to their schools. However, after a few years of study in this field, 62.3% of the students ($n = 396$) showed interest in this major and the industry, while 19.0% ($n = 121$) indicated that it was "Hard to say." Of the participants, 42.6% ($n = 271$) are currently taking or took internships in various segments of the tourism industry such as in hotels, travel agencies, resorts, travel administration, and travel websites. As for future career, 64.9% of the respondents ($n = 413$) stated that they intended to work in the tourism industry.

Factors Impacting Career Choices

Those students who did not consider the tourism industry as their career choices ($n = 223$, 35.1%) were asked to select and rank the reasons. The item stating that "Income is relatively low in the tourism industry." was reported most frequently ($n =$

110, 17.3%), followed by "Jobs in the tourism industry are too tough." ($n = 107$, 16.8%), "I do not like the working conditions in the tourism industry." ($n = 90$, 14.2%), and "Social status is relatively low for those who work in the tourism industry." ($n = 89$, 14.0%). "My parents do not want me to work in the service industry." was chosen with comparatively lower frequency ($n = 72$, 11.3%). Meanwhile, the respondents ranked the eight items according to levels of importance in their minds that kept them away from the tourism industry. For example, "Jobs in the tourism industry are too tough." was reported the most frequently by students ($n = 47$, 7.4%) as the first most important factor, and "I do not like the working conditions in the tourism industry." was reported the second most frequently ($n = 34$, 5.3%) as the first most important. For the second most important factor, "Income is relatively low in the tourism industry." was reported the most frequently ($n = 28$, 4.4%), followed by "Jobs in the tourism industry are too tough." ($n = 25$, 3.9%) (see Table 2)

Table 2

Ranking of Reasons Why Chinese Tourism Management Students Did Not Want to Work in the Tourism Industry

	%	First Most Important		Second Most Important		Third Most Important	
		%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank
1. Income is relatively low in the tourism industry.	17.3	4.9	4	4.4	1	3.1	2
2. Jobs in the tourism industry are too tough.	16.8	7.4	1	3.9	2	2.0	6
3. I do not like the working	14.2	5.3	2	3.6	4	2.7	3

conditions in the tourism industry.							
4. Social status is relatively low for those who work in the tourism industry.	14.0	2.7	6	3.1	5	4.1	1
5. My interest is not in the tourism industry.	11.8	5.0	3	3.8	3	.8	8
6. My parents do not want me to work in the service industry.	11.3	1.9	7	3.0	6	2.5	4
7. Schools did not prepare me enough.	10.4	4.2	5	2.0	7	1.9	7
8. Schools failed to provide enough career information.	9.6	1.4	8	3.1	5	2.2	5

The survey also asked respondents to rank factors that impacted their career choices.   Students reported they valued "career advancement" the most frequently, and 337 (53%) of respondents ranked it as the first most important factor.   "Income and welfare," the second most frequently reported item, was regarded by 107 respondents (16.8%) as the first most important factor impacting their career choices.   Only 36 students (5.7%) reported "experience accumulation" as the first most impacting factor to their career choices.   In term of ranking, these reasons were reported according to the levels of importance (see Table 3).

Table 3

Ranking of Factors That Impact Chinese Tourism Management Students' Career Choices

	First Most Important		Second Most Important		Third Most Important	
	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank
Career advancement	53.0	1	23.0	2	10.4	5
Income and welfare	16.8	2	26.1	1	21.9	1

Experience accumulation	5.7	3	9.7	5	14.5	2
Demands in the labor market	5.5	4	13.5	3	13.8	3
Development of the city	4.6	5	10.2	4	13.1	4
Distance from hometown	4.1	6	4.2	8	6.6	6
Major relevance	3.6	7	4.4	7	4.4	7
Social status	2.7	8	6.3	6	10.4	5

Career Assistance and Information Resources

A few questions were designed to investigate students' career information and assistance-seeking behaviors.   About two thirds of the participants ($n = 386$, 60.7%) reported that they sought career assistance while at school.   They usually obtained career information related to the tourism industry from course instructors ($n = 498$, 78.3%), followed by the Internet ($n = 442$, 69.5%), friends and classmates ($n = 364$, 57.2%), mass media such as newspapers and TV ($n = 273$, 42.9%), and companies (in which they interned in the tourism industry) ($n = 250$, 39.3%).   However, only a very few students reported that they used a school career service center ($n = 35$, 5.5%). When asked which resources offered the most helpful career information, students reported that they found information obtained from their internship was most useful ($n = 321$, 50.5%), followed by lectures given by practitioners from the industry ($n = 209$, 32.9%), conversations with faculty members ($n = 203$, 31.9%), searching on the Internet by oneself ($n = 115$, 18.1%) and campus talks ($n = 100$, 15.7%).

Relationships among Career Variables

Correlation analysis was computed in order to examine the relationships among the career variables in this study, namely coping behaviors, environmental exploration, self-exploration, satisfaction with information, career choice anxiety, and vocational identity.   Table 4 shows the Pearson correlations among the variables.

Table 4

Pearson Correlations among Career Variables among Chinese Tourism Management Students

Measure	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Coping Behaviors	--					
2. Environmental Exploration	.43***	--				
3. Self-Exploration	.49***	.84***	--			
4. Satisfaction with Information	.36***	.34*	.23***	--		
5. Career Choice Anxiety	-.20***	-.20***	-.07	-.11***	--	
6. Vocational Identity	-.09*	-.02	-.06	.13**	-.14**	--

Note. $N = 636$.
        *$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$.

As hypothesized, coping behaviors had significant and moderate correlation with three career exploration variables: environmental exploration ($r_1 = .43$), self-exploration ($r_2 = .49$), and information satisfaction ($r_3 = .36$) (H1, H2, and H3).   In addition and significantly, environmental exploration and self-exploration were positively correlated with information satisfaction ($r_4 = .34$ and $r_5 = .23$, respectively) (H4 and H5). Negative and weak relationships were found among career choice anxiety and three career variables: environmental exploration ($r_6 = -.20$), satisfaction with information ($r_8 = $

-.11), and coping behaviors ($r_9 = -.20$) (H6, H8, and H9). Vocational identity had a positive, moderately low relationship with satisfaction with information ($r_{10} = .13$) (H10), and significant negative relationships with career choice anxiety ($r_{11} = -.14$) and coping behaviors ($r_{12} = -.09$) (H11 and H12). Of all the variables, self-exploration was not significantly correlated with career choice anxiety (H7).

A series of regression analyses were computed to determine the predictive power between each pair of career variables. Results showed that both environmental exploration and self-exploration had significant positive relationships with coping behaviors ($F = 141.01$, $p < .001$; $F = 204.66$, $p < .001$, respectively). Specifically, coping behavior could predict 18.2% and 24.4% variances in environmental exploration and self-exploration respectively. The regression equations are: Environmental Exploration = 1.73 + .18 (Coping Behaviors) and Self-Exploration = 3.01 + .19 (Coping Behaviors). Satisfaction with information also had a significant positive relationship with coping behaviors ($F = 94.35$, $p < .001$). Coping behaviors could explain 13.0% of the variances in satisfaction with information. The regression equation is: Satisfaction with Information = 6.71 + .12 (Coping Behaviors). Moreover, environmental exploration and self-exploration had significant positive relationships with satisfaction with information ($F = 82.75$, $p < .001$; $F = 35.26$, $p < .001$, respectively). Environmental exploration and self-exploration could explain 11.6.2% and 5.3% of

variances in satisfaction with information respectively.   The regression equations were

as follows: Satisfaction with Information = 10.62 + .26 (Environmental Exploration) and

Satisfaction with Information = 11.11 + .20 (Self-Exploration).   Career choice anxiety

was found to be significantly and negatively related to both environmental exploration (F

= 26.81, p < .001) and satisfaction with information (F = 7.62, p < .01).   Environmental

exploration and satisfaction with information could explain 4.1% and 1.2% variances in

career choice anxiety.   The regression equations were Career Choice Anxiety = 12.12

- .14 (Environmental Exploration) and Career Choice Anxiety = 11.68 - .10 (Satisfaction

with Information).   It was found that there was also a significant negative relationship

between coping behaviors and career choice anxiety (F = 26.49, p < .001), and coping

behaviors could predict 4.0% of variances in career choice anxiety.   The regression

equation was: Career Choice Anxiety = 14.00 - .059 (Coping Behaviors).   This showed

that satisfaction with information has a significant and positive relationship with

vocational identity (F = 10.46, p < .01), whereas career choice anxiety and coping

behaviors had moderate negative relationships with vocational identity (F = 12.08, p

< .01; F = 4.88, p < .05, respectively).   Satisfaction with information, career choice

anxiety and coping behaviors could explain 1.6%, 1.9%, and .08% variances in

vocational identity.   The regression equations were as follows: Vocational Identity =

53.05 + .44 (Satisfaction with Information), Vocational Identity = 64.51 - .52 (Career

Choice Anxiety), and Vocational Identity = 65.30 - .10 (Coping Behaviors).

The coefficients of determination among variables were shown in Table 5 and

Figure 6.

Table 5

Coefficients of Determination for Each Hypothesis

	Correlations		R^2
H1	Coping Behaviors	Environmental Exploration	.18
H2	Coping Behaviors	Self-Exploration	.24
H3	Coping Behaviors	Satisfaction with Information	.13
H4	Environmental Exploration	Satisfaction with Information	.12
H5	Self-Exploration	Satisfaction with Information	.05
H6	Environmental Exploration	Career Choice Anxiety	-.04
H8	Satisfaction with Information	Career Choice Anxiety	-.01
H9	Coping Behaviors	Career Choice Anxiety	-.04
H10	Satisfaction with Information	Vocational Identity	.02
H11	Career Choice Anxiety	Vocational Identity	-.02
H12	Coping Behaviors	Vocational Identity	-.01
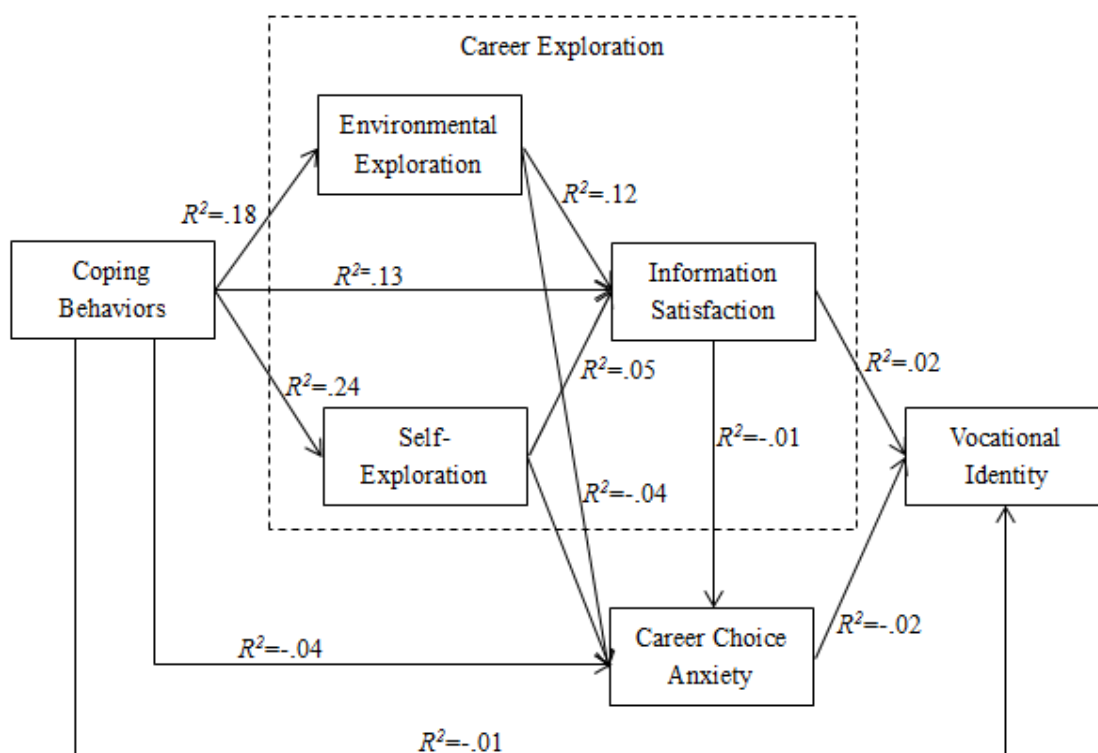
Figure 6. Coefficients of determination among variables

Career Behaviors among Male and Female Students

The *t*-test was conducted to determine whether these career variables varied between male and female students in their career related behaviors. Table 6 reveals the result of the independent *t*-test. A significant mean difference was detected between male and female students in environmental exploration, self-exploration, and career choice anxiety ($t = 1.99$, $p < .05$; $t = 2.85$, $p < .01$; $t = 3.19$, $p < .05$, respectively). Hypothesis 13 was thus partially supported. The means for male and female students

did not differentiate between the groups in coping behaviors, satisfaction with

information, and vocational identity.

Table 6

Gender Differences on Career Behaviors of Chinese Tourism Management Students

Measure	Gender	Mean	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Coping Behaviors	Male	62.78	-.41	.684
	Female	63.17		
Environmental Exploration	Male	13.93	1.99	.048*
	Female	13.02		
Self-Exploration	Male	15.58	2.85	.005**
	Female	14.49		
Satisfaction with Information	Male	13.99	.00	1.000
	Female	13.99		
Career Choice Anxiety	Male	9.81	3.19	.025*
	Female	10.43		
Vocational Identity	Male	58.66	.46	.500
	Female	59.37		

Note. $* p < .05$; $**p < .01$.

Table 5 also reveals that male students performed more environmental

exploration ($M = 13.93$) and self-exploration ($M = 15.58$) than did female students ($M =$

13.02 and $M = 14.49$, respectively).   However, female students were more anxious

about their career choice than were male students ($M = 10.43$ and $M = 9.81$,

respectively).

Career Behaviors among Different Levels of Academic Standing

One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was computed to examine the variances

in career behaviors among different academic levels. Levene's test was utilized to examine the homogeneity of variances. There were no differences in variances in coping behaviors, career choice anxiety, and vocational identity ($p = .082$, $p = .079$, and $p = .776$, respectively). The variances were not equal in these three career exploration variables, which meant the sample means were not equal.

The results of ANOVA showed that the relationships among academic status (i.e., freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, first-year graduate, second-year graduate and third-year graduate) and four career variables were statistically significant at a .05 level (Table 7). That being said, students of different academic levels behaved significantly differently in regard to coping behaviors ($F (6,635) = 2.31$, $p < .05$), environmental exploration ($F (6,635) = 12.46$, $p < .001$), self-exploration ($F (6,635) = 2.51$, $p < .05$) and satisfaction with information ($F (6,634) = 3.31$, $p < .01$) (H14).

Table 7

ANOVA Results of Academic Standing Differences on Career Behaviors of Chinese Tourism Management Students

Measure	F	Sig.
Coping Behaviors	2.31	.033*
Environmental Exploration	12.46	.000***
Self-Exploration	2.51	.021*
Satisfaction with Information	3.31	.003**
Career Choice Anxiety	1.38	.220
Vocational Identity	1.43	.199

Note. * $p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$.

Furthermore, the Tukey HSD test was performed to examine which group caused

the difference.   The results revealed that there were several group means that were

significantly different at a .05 level.   Third-year graduates had more coping behaviors

than did the college students from all four levels of in-school academic status.   As for

environmental exploration, freshmen did less than all other levels of academic status

students; the third-year graduate students did more than the college students from all four

undergraduate levels did.   Freshmen did the least self-exploration while third-year

graduates did the most.   Freshmen and juniors had higher levels of information

satisfaction than did sophomores.

Career Behaviors between School Types

Major Interests and Career Intentions

Given the different schooling, curriculum focus, and the demands in the tourism

labor market in China (Zeng, 2010; Zheng, 2008), university students and junior college

students are expected to show some differences in their career behaviors.   Table 8 shows

students' various career behaviors by school type (i.e., university vs. junior college).

Career behaviors consisted of information such as intention to work in the tourism

industry, seeking career assistance, and impact factors of career choices.   The results

from Chi-Square tests revealed that university and junior college students were different

in terms of students' preferences of majors when they entered school ($X^2 = 22.22$, p

$< .001$), their interest in their majors and in the tourism industry ($X^2 = 10.96$, $p < .01$),

and their intentions to work in the industry ($X^2 = 20.85$, $p < .001$).   With regard to the

question, "Was tourism management your desired major on entering school?" and "Do

you intend to work in the tourism industry?" for 73.5% and 81.8% of the junior college

students ($n = 97$ and $n = 108$, respectively), the answer was "Yes" while the

corresponding answers of the university students were 51.0% ($n = 257$) and 60.5% ($n =$

305).   In addition, 70.5% of the junior college students ($n = 93$) were interested in the

tourism major while it was 60.1% for the university students ($n = 303$).   However, no

significant differences were shown for the question that "Did you take an internship in

the tourism industry?" ($X^2 = 2.94$, $p = .087$).

Table 8

School Type Differences on Major Interests and Career Intentions of Chinese Tourism Management Students

	University Students		Junior College Students		Pearson Chi-Square	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
	N = 504	%	N = 132	%		
1. Tourism management was my desired major on entering school.	257	51.0	97	73.5	21.22	.000**
2. I am interested in this major and industry NOW.	303	60.1	93	70.5	10.96	.004*
3. I took or am taking an internship in the tourism industry.	206	40.9	65	49.2	2.94	.087
4. I intend to work in the tourism industry.	305	60.5	108	81.8	20.85	.000***

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

Factors Impacting Career Choices

University students' and junior college students' reasons to drop out of the industry varied in regard to two factors: "Jobs are too tough." ($X^2 = 15.39$, $p = .031$) and "Income are relatively low" ($X^2 = 15.07$, $p = .035$).   Seventeen point nine percent of university students and 12.9% of junior college students ($n = 90$ and $n = 17$, respectively) reported that they thought the tourism industry is a tough industry to work in, while 21.8% of university students ($n = 99$) and 7.0% of junior college students ($n = 11$) thought that tourism jobs are underpaid.   Moreover, university students ranked tough jobs and low income significantly higher than did junior students.   As for the factors impacting their career choices, university and junior college students also showed significantly different mean scores on the following variables "demands in the labor market" ($X^2 = 18.19$, $p < .05$), "experience accumulation" ($X^2 = 16.64$, $p < .05$), and "social status" ($X^2 = 17.40$, $p < .05$).   University students put more value on experience accumulation and social status attached to their future jobs, whereas junior college students thought the demands in the labor market would have a large impact on their future career choices.

Career Assistance and Information

Although university students and junior college students showed no differences in

their career assistance seeking behaviors ($X^2 = 1.35$, $p = .246$), where they sought career information varied (as shown in Table 9).   Both university students and junior college students regarded their course instructors ($n =377$, 74.8%; $n =121$, 91.7%, respectively), the Internet ($n = 343$, 68.1%; $n = 99$, 75.0%, respectively), friends and classmates ($n = 282$, 56.0%; $n = 82$, 62.1%, respectively), and mass media ($n = 201$, 39.9 %; $n = 72$, 54.4%, respectively) as important resources for collecting career information.   Junior college students sought career information more from their relatives or parents' friends ($n = 29$, 22.0%) and their course counselors ($n = 28$, 21.2%).   Compared with junior college students, university students received career information more from their school advisors ($n = 143$, 28.4%).

Table 9

Chinese Tourism Management Students' Use of Career Information Resources by School Type

	University Students		Junior College Students	
	N = 504	%	N = 132	%
Course instructors	377	74.8	121	91.7
Internet	343	68.1	99	75.0
Friends and classmates	282	56.0	82	62.1
Mass media	201	39.9	72	54.5
Tourism companies	198	39.3	52	39.4
Advisors	143	28.4	26	19.7
Relatives or parents' friends	56	11.1	29	22.0
Parents	43	8.5	21	15.9
Counselors	38	7.5	28	21.2
Career service center	31	6.2	4	3.0
Student organizations	20	4.0	2	1.5

With regard to the most helpful career information resources, both university and junior college students thought "internships" were the most useful ($n = 232$, 46.0%; $n = 89$, 67.4%, respectively).   Both groups of students also believed that the Internet could provide plenty of helpful career information ($n = 91$, 18.1%; $n = 24$, 18.2%, respectively). University students especially valued career information from "conversations with faculty" ($n = 150$, 29.8%), "lectures given by practitioners" ($n = 149$, 29.6%), and "research by myself on the Internet" ($n = 91$, 18.1%).   For junior college students, in addition to the internship experiences mentioned above, the ranking was "lectures given by practitioners" ($n = 60$, 45.5%), "conversations with faculty" ($n = 53$, 40.2%), and "job fairs" ($n = 36$, 27.3%).   "Reports on mass media" was chosen least frequently by university students ($n = 33$, 6.5%) while for junior college students the lowest rated category was "conversations with families" ($n = 16$, 12.1%).   Results also showed that 2.5% more university students more often thought conversations with peers were useful (see Table 10).

Table 10

Most Helpful Career Information Resources Reported by Chinese Tourism Management Students in Universities and Junior Colleges

	University Students		Junior College Students	
	N = 504	%	N = 132	%
Internships	232	46.0	89	67.4
Conversations with faculty	150	29.8	53	40.2
Lectures given by practitioners	149	29.6	60	45.5
Search by myself on the Internet	91	18.1	24	18.2

Job fairs	86	17.1	36	27.3
Campus talks	77	15.3	23	17.4
Conversations with peers	51	10.1	10	7.6
Conversations with families	38	7.5	9	6.8
Reports on mass media	33	6.5	16	12.1

Career Variables

Another independent *t*-test was performed to examine the differences in career related variables between university and junior college students. The assumptions of homogeneity of variances were accepted on coping behaviors, self-exploration, career choice anxiety, and vocational identity. Table 11 reveals the results of the independent *t*-test. Results revealed that the means for university and junior college students on environmental exploration, satisfaction with information, and career choice anxiety were statistically different ($t = 2.84$, $p < .01$; $t = - 4.54$, $p < .001$; $t = 2.73$, $p < .01$, respectively). University students had more environmental exploration behaviors ($M = 13.46$) and more career choice anxiety ($M = 10.45$), whereas junior college students were more satisfied with the career information they obtained ($M = 14.99$). The hypothesis that university students and junior college students have different patterns of career behaviors (H15) was partially accepted. However, no significant difference between university and junior college students was found in coping behaviors, self-exploration, and vocational identity.

Table 11

School Type Differences on Career Variables of Chinese Tourism Management Students

	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Coping Behaviors	-.21	.837
Environmental Exploration	2.84	.005*
Self-Exploration	.89	.373
Satisfaction with Information	-4.53	.000**
Career Choice Anxiety	2.73	.007*
Vocational Identity	-1.12	.265

Note. * $p < .01$; ** $p < .001$.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The objectives of the present research were to (a) examine the factors that impact career aspirations, intentions, and choices, and to (b) investigate and compare tourism management students' career exploration behaviors based on their demographic and background information.   The findings revealed that tourism management students' interest and intention to stay in the industry maintained on a moderate level.   They did not necessarily rely on on-campus career assistance.   Career behaviors were related to academic levels, gender, and school types.

Career Aspirations, Intentions, and Choices

Major Interests and Career Intentions

According to the data, as a result of college entrance examinations and the college admission policy in China, over one third of the students (43.7%) did not mean to take tourism management as their first choice of academic major when they were admitted to school; and that is consistent with some Chinese researchers' studies (Wang, 2007; Wang, 2011; Zheng, 2008).   Wang (2007) further found that fewer than half the students were interested in the major and willing to work in the tourism industry.   However, in the present study, a large proportion of students (62.3%) were interested in this major.   This

result was approximately 15% higher than that reported in Wang's study (2007).

Furthermore, this study found that two thirds of the participants intended to work in the

tourism industry.   This was contrary to Wang's statement (2011) that the longer students

studied in this major, the less willing they were to work in the industry.   However, as

revealed by previous studies (Lu & Zhou, 2007; Zhao, 2008; Zeng, 2010), tourism

management graduates' actual employment rate in the tourism industry may perhaps be

lower than the rate of intention to work in the industry.

Although the number of students who took interest in the tourism major and the

industry showed an increase in the present study, the fact that college applicants cannot

choose academic majors congruent with their own personal interests is still an obstacle

for them to choose careers pertinent to their own interests in the future.   Lack of interest

and biased perceptions of the tourism industry often cause those assigned to the tourism

management major to have insufficient intention to learn and explore this field.

Factors Impacting Career Choices

When the participants were asked why they did not want to work in the tourism

industry, low income, tough jobs, poor working conditions, and low social status were

reported as the main reasons that kept Chinese tourism management students away from

this industry.   These four features also accord with Chinese people's common

perceptions of the tourism industry (Zeng, 2010; Zheng, 2005) and are similar to

American tourism management students' perceptions (Dickerson, 2009).   When Chinese students focus on these drawbacks, and once graduates have choices other than tourism jobs, they certainly do not choose to work in this industry.   This also raises questions for tourism companies and hotel management groups about how they can improve employee welfare and job satisfaction as, in China, this area of employee benefits has not been properly addressed.

Chuang and Dellmann-Jenkins (2010) found that almost half the students made career decisions on their own; and that was also found among the Chinese students in the present study.   On the other hand, against expectation, the participants did not rank their parents' suggestions as a very important factor that might keep them from entering the tourism industry.   Chinese college students share some similar personality features with Generation Y (birth date range: 1980-2003) in the U.S., such as self-awareness. Students identified themselves as the most influential factor in career decision making (Chuang & Dellmann-Jenkins, 2010).   "Setting and achieving personal goals" (Hurst & Good, 2009, p. 573) is very important for members of Generation Y, and they expect to have a say in personal and family decisions.   Furthermore, given the "one-child policy" in China, most young people of this generation are the only child in their families especially in urban areas.   Doting Chinese parents usually do not want to go against their only child's opinions.

Consistent with Zhang (2007) and Shi *et al.* (2005), the results of the present study indicate that over half the participants ranked "career advancement" as the most important factor by which they assessed their potential jobs in the tourism industry or in other industries. They also valued "income and welfare" and "development of the city." These three factors are inter-related because a more developed city with a more affluent economy can provide more job opportunities and a better life (Shi *et al.*, 2005). In China, the significant imbalance in various urban areas and in economic development between inland and coastal cities has impacts on people' perceptions of employment. Only such larger and more developed cities as the capital, Beijing, and those cities along the southeast coast imply brilliant future careers and excellent quality of life. Many young people regard these cities as places where they can chase their dreams and achieve self-fulfillment.

The impacting factors, "experience accumulation" and "demands in the labor market" revealed that the students take both personal needs and general economic conditions into consideration (Stumpf *et al.*, 1983). Lack of work experience is the most common reason for which the young graduates are rejected by employers; thus, acculturating more experience is valued by most college graduates. In the global recession, being sensitive and reacting to the demands in the labor market may help graduates obtain stable jobs. The importance attached to working experience and

market demands can hopefully direct students' realistic opinions of future career choices.

On the other hand, "major relevance" had lower-ranking, showed a weak relationship between academic major and a career in a related industry for Chinese students and showed that the tourism industry is not necessarily the prior choice for these students.   This may imply that the students' intentions to remain in the tourism industry are not strong.   This is also consistent with previous studies (Shi *et al.*, 2005; Zhang, 2007).   Given the large population of China, it is a buyer's market in the labor force. As a result, for most young graduates, the first concern is to obtain well-paid jobs and not jobs of their own interest or related to what they have learned.   Meanwhile, jobs in the tourism industry are not thought to require too much specialized skill in China, which means, presumably, that anyone can get a job in the industry.   This industry accepts anyone even if he/she does not have related background or training on the entry-level positions.   As a result, major relevance is always neglected by tourism major students and by industry employers.

Career Assistance and Information

Career Assistance

When the students were asked whether they sought career assistance while at school, 60.7% of them said "Yes".   It was a high percentage, since only 37% of

American college students participants in Chuang and Dellmann-Jenkins's study (2010) reported that they used on-campus career services. For those who did not look to campus career services, reasons most frequently cited were "I have not considered it," "There is no one I can ask," "I do not know what I can ask," and "I do not think it will help." This may be partially because the career service centers in schools cannot provide detailed career information specific to a certain major. Moreover, higher education in China places substantial emphasis on imparting knowledge in specific subject areas but much less on guiding students' career planning and development efforts (Wang, 2007; Zheng, 2008).

Resources for Career Information

When asked from which resources students obtained career information while at school, instead of on-campus services, the participants usually used the Internet and mass media where information can be most effortlessly obtained. It is reported that Chinese students' perceptions of on-campus career services were so narrow that they thought the only function of career service was "giving information" (Cheung &Arnold, 2010, p. 27). It was no wonder that some participants in the present study regarded career services as useless. The Internet plays an important role in students' career information gathering activities. Almost every graduate who wants to find a job has accounts on more than two job sites. They search for employment information on those websites every day.

However, employment information about the tourism industry is comparatively limited on such frequently used job sites.   Reports on mass media often provide the general economic conditions and the changes of demand in the labor market.

Career information from faculty members was perceived as useful.   This result was consistent with American hospitality undergraduates' perceptions in Chuang and Dellmann-Jenkins' study (2010).   Meanwhile, peers also appeared to be one of the important information sources for Chinese college students.   They often exchanged information they were interested in while chatting in person.   Felsman and Blustein's (1999) findings provided supportive evidence that close peer relationships can facilitate young American's career exploration behaviors.   According to Cheung and Arnold (2010), social networking with both teachers and peers has significant and positive impacts on Hong Kong students' career exploration.

When asked at which resources they found the most useful career information, half the respondents (50.5%) thought of internships or practicums as the most helpful career information resource.   Numerous studies conducted both in China and in western countries have reported that students' working experiences (internship and practicum) give them better perceptions of the industry, and further strengthen their intention to stay in the industry (Barron, 2008; Chuang *et al.*, 2009; Lin *et al.*, 2008; Shan, Hu, Yu, & Fang, 2010; Zhang, 2007).   Prior work experience in the tourism industry can enhance

students' confidence in their career capabilities and help them gain realistic career

expectations of the industry as well (Chuang & Dellmann-Jenkins, 2010; Chuang, et al.,

2007; Kang & Glould, 2002). Lectures given by practitioners from the tourism industry

were also thought helpful because the information they offered was authentic and

up-to-date. Campus talks are similar to practitioners' lectures, which mainly provide

detailed information about a certain company, its employment plans, and its training

programs. Compared to American students, these kinds of opportunities are not as

common for Chinese students. Practitioners' lectures and campus talks are usually

warmly welcome by Chinese tourism management students and such lectures and talks

are cited as so helpful in students' perceptions that they prefer to skip classes to listen to

them. It is not necessarily that these students never take interest in this major; on the

contrary, they are eager to know more about the industry. They are badly in need of

voice from the tourism industry. The first-hand information obtained in direct contact

with representatives of the tourism industry is thought by students to be the most

authentic and helpful.

Career Behaviors

The relationships among these career variables were examined in the current

study. The results proved that coping behaviors have positive impacts on career

exploration, including environmental exploration, self-exploration, and satisfaction with

information as addressed by numerous studies (Folkman, 1982; Lent *et al.*, 2002; Robitschek & Cook, 1999).   In such a stressful situation, the desire to have better exploration outcomes forces the students to struggle with individual ways of coping with career decision making.   In order to obtain an ideal job, the students have to cope with various changes and obstacles in their career development processes, learn more about their own interests and the advantages and disadvantages of working in a certain industry, and then revise the direction and focus of their environmental exploration.   The quantity and quality of the career information gathered in the process can affect performance in coping behaviors and career exploration.   The result was also in line with Kracke's study (2002) and Lent *et al.*'s study (2002) that more environmental and self-exploration as well as coping behaviors enhance the levels of information satisfaction.

Career choice anxiety, an underlying assumption throughout the decision-making process, conversely, was an impediment to environmental exploration, satisfaction with information, and coping behaviors.   The result is partially consistent with some previous studies (Hawkins, Bradley, & White, 1977; O'Hare & Tamburri, 1986; Saka & Gati, 2007), but different from Blustein and Philips' finding (1988) that anxiety can be an incentive to engage in career exploration.   Higher levels of career choice anxiety led to lack of confidence in students' occupational information and ability to cope with environmental exploration tasks.

The results of the current study indicated that there was a positive relationship between vocational identity and satisfaction with information. A similar conclusion has been reported that adequate vocational information assists in establishing a secure vocational identity (Lucas & Epperson, 1990). Lower levels of career choice anxiety also imply higher levels of vocational identity because the less stress an individual feels, the more work-related security he/she will have (Meijers, 1998). Career choice anxiety, as stated by Meijers (1998), can predict a student's vague vocational identity. In the present study, career choice anxiety had the highest item mean score of 3.567 out of 5, which implied that Chinese tourism management students were beset by their future prospective careers. They appeared to be puzzled by many problems such as "What am I good at?" "Do I fit in the tourism industry?" and "Is there any other better career choice for me?" Meanwhile, Chinese students are under great pressure in the transition from school to society as their parents pay all their school costs and now it is time for them to grow up and stand on their own. College students are thought to be smart in Chinese society and they bear the expectations of the whole family, which means they must find "good" jobs after graduation. For most Chinese students, a job in the service or tourism industry seems not "good" enough. Hesitation and anxiety hinders the students' determination to work in this industry.

Against expectation, vocational identity was negatively correlated with coping

behaviors, contrary to previous studies (Heppner *et al.*, 1991).   That being said, those

who exhibited less coping behavior had more secure vocational identity.   That may be

because reactive coping that composes the major portion of the Coping Scale generally

leads to a lack of problem resolution and, further, influences the outcomes of career

decision-making processes.   For example, one item of the Coping Scale was "Tell

yourself that you can probably find a good job."   Thus, it focused more on the

respondents' psychological thinking rather than some virtual behaviors that would

improve their career development.   For Chinese tourism management students, too

much thinking can cause them to become more conflicted about their situations and to

neglect useful career information and even miss job opportunities.   Only putting their

plans and determination into practice can aid them in making their way into productive

careers.

Comparisons of Career Behaviors among Male and Female Students

Male students, the minority of the surveyed participants and of the tourism

management students in general, performed better than female students on environmental

exploration and self-exploration.   The result was consistent with Hardin *et al.*'s finding

(2005) but different from Nauta's finding (2007) that women were more engaged in

self-exploration.   Sharina (2011) reported that in China male students were more active

in career exploration.   Sharina also provided the explanation that in Chinese culture, the

society and family have higher requirements and expectations for men's career development.   The social and family pressure force male students to devote more attention to career planning and job searching in order not to be looked down upon by others.   Meanwhile, in the present study, males had more career choice anxiety than females.   Hardin *et al.*'s (2005) finding can be used to support the result that career anxiety is common for men who are low in independence.   Given the nature of Chinese society, students may not be completely independent within one or two years after they start a full-time job.   Chinese males are expected to take more financial responsibilities in the family, and this financial pressure is reflected in their high scores on the career choice anxiety scale.

Comparisons of Career Behaviors among Different Levels of Academic Status

The analysis results suggested that tourism management students' career behaviors varied by academic level.   Chinese students usually form their career intentions much later than American students because Chinese students' time and efforts are all devoted to study and the preparation for their national college entrance exam and it has been uncommon for students to take any part-time jobs since all tuition and fees are paid by their parents.   The surveyed freshmen had spent less than one year in college and were just newly engaged in the very beginning of the career exploration process; thus, they had not yet crystallized clear vocational identities (Robitschek & Cook, 1999).

However, because exploratory behavior leads to the desire for more occupational information (Stumpf, *et al.*, 1983), and freshmen were in the early stages of career exploration, they felt more satisfied with the career information available than did students at higher academic levels even though they did the least on both environmental exploration and self-exploration.   At the time this survey was conducted, the third-year graduates were about to graduate and most of them were about to make critical career decisions.   It is understandable that they were actively involved in career exploration. The third-year graduate students were the eldest among respondents, and they had more coping behaviors than students of any other academic level.   This result was in line with Chuang and Dellmann-Jenkins's (2010) and Janeiro and Marques's studies (2010) which showed that coping with career development tasks is a feature of maturity for young individuals.   Their successful or failed working experiences made them realize that initiative coping and career exploration behaviors might give rise to a better career path.

Comparisons of Career Behaviors between School Types

It is meaningful to make comparisons based on school type because junior college students and university students have some features in common but differ at the same time.   From an age standpoint, they enter college and university at the same age which also leads them into the same career exploration stage.   However, they may develop different career behaviors and perceptions toward the tourism industry due to the

different emphases in curricula in junior colleges and universities.

Major and Career Intentions

Perhaps because of the lower admission requirements of junior colleges, the competition among junior college applicants is not so severe as that of university applicants in China.   As a result, it is more likely for junior college students to choose major courses of study according to their own career interests.   However, scores are more important and the key objective for university applicants is to be admitted to a "good" university.   They tend to choose the university instead of the major they might desire to enter.   Wang (2011) addressed the fact that the individual initiative to choose tourism management as their major leads to better learning outcomes and stronger willingness to work in the industry.   This statement supports the findings of the present study and explains why junior college students had stronger positive interest in and intention toward the tourism industry.

Career Expectations and Career Choices

The focus of junior college curriculum design is practical, whereas it is theoretical in universities.   The practical skills that junior colleges courses provide to students are needed by tourism companies especially hotels frontline.   On the other hand, university graduates usually feel puzzled with regard to how to apply the

theoretical knowledge they learn even when they have had short-term intern experience.

Moreover, compared with university students, junior college students are provided with

more internship opportunities and their internships usually last longer.   Work

experiences assist them in developing a more realistic image of the tourism industry

(Blustein, 1989), which allow them not to think jobs are too tough and incomes too low

in the tourism industry as university students do.   In fact, in China, some university

tourism management graduates do not necessarily have better professional awareness

and/or practical skills because they expend excessive time and efforts in theoretical study

and have inadequate practical opportunities (Lin, 2005).   As a result, university

graduates usually have higher career expectations because they have higher entrance

examination scores and are generally believed to be able to find better jobs than do junior

college graduates.   University students put more value on ancillary features attached to

their future jobs, such as social status.   Given the fact that, in China, junior college

graduates' salaries are usually lower than those of university graduates, junior college

students are more realistic when hunting for jobs; jobs that fit the demand in the labor

market are lower paid but easier to obtain.

Career Assistance and Information

The majority of the participants surveyed, whether university or junior college

students, sought career assistance while at school, which showed their good habits in

collecting career information.   However, this also revealed that these two groups of students' needs for career counseling.   Both groups were eager to seek career information and guidance.

It was generally believed by both university students and junior college students that their course instructors, the Internet, friends and classmates, and mass media could provide large amounts of career information.   Employment information about entry-level positions in the tourism industry can often be found on mass media, such as newspapers or TV.   In the Chinese higher education system, university students have assigned advisors but junior college students do not.   As a result, advisors are important career information resources for tourism management university students.   Junior college students, on the other hand, turn to their course instructors and counselors who are in charge of the student affairs at the college level.   Tourism programs at the junior colleges usually cooperate with tourism companies to provide internship opportunities for their students (Wang, 2009), and counselors have access to internship information. Advisors in universities and counselors in junior colleges serve similar roles in students' career information seeking activities.   Relatives and/or parents' friends were also involved in junior college students' career information seeking, reflecting the importance of social connections in traditional Chinese culture (Hsu, Chen, Wang, & Sun, 2008). Relationships among acquaintances can also help in the spreading and gathering of career

information.   However, relatives and parents' friends were not frequently cited by

university students, which reveals that family bonding in modern Chinese society,

although still significant, is not as strong as before.

With regard to helpful career information resources, both university and junior

college students recognized the usefulness of information found on the Internet.   In

addition, university students favored conversations with peers.   This is probably due to

the fact that universities are usually much larger institutions than junior colleges in China;

and course selection policies similar to those in the U.S. are conducted in universities;

thus, university students find more opportunities to talk with classmates and friends who

study many different majors.   Such complex course policies are not conducted in junior

colleges and those students have fixed school timetables.   Junior college students'

networking among peers may be more limited.   Junior college students believe that the

career information obtained directly from the tourism industry as in practitioners' lectures

in the classroom setting and from talking to people from their internship companies are

quite helpful.   This accorded with junior college educational culture in keeping in touch

with the industry as much as possible (Lin, 2005).   Job fairs in which many companies

participate can provide students with opportunities to talk with people from different

companies in the tourism industry, and they can gain a plethora of employment

information at those venues.   In addition, because companies at job fairs recruit

employees mostly for entry-level positions, this kind of career information resource is preferred by junior college students.

Career Variables

University and junior college students performed similarly in terms of coping behaviors, self-exploration, and vocational identity.   The results showed that university students did better on environmental exploration than junior college students but were less satisfied with the career information obtained.   Faced with severe employment competition, university students experienced more career anxiety.   Furthermore, because university students in China face higher expectations from the society and their family and because they have a wider scope of knowledge (Li, 2010), they are more likely to demand more vocational information and wider career possibilities.   Junior college students' frequent contacts with the tourism industry may be another explanation for their greater satisfaction with information.

<div align="center">

Implications

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Tourism management students' high turnover rates have been common in China for years.   Their early drop-off is not only a waste of educational resources, but also a considerable loss for a Chinese tourism industry which is currently developing at a high pace.   Therefore, it is important for both educators and practitioners in the tourism

industry to understand students' career exploration patterns and their needs for career services, especially under the current college admission policy.   Positive interventions should be performed promptly to inform tourism management students more about the tourism industry and thus cultivate their career aspirations in this industry.   Tourism management majored graduates' contribution to the Chinese tourism industry will be inestimable.   This industry is badly in need of such people with higher education to improve the practitioners' quality.

Most Chinese college graduates have their eyes on larger and more developed cities for their future careers because those cities provide abundant employment opportunities, better chances for career advancement, and perhaps higher pay and better employee benefits.   It is understandable, however, that career development path may not fit everyone.   Competition becomes so severe in the major cities that quality of life may not be satisfactory for some people.   Life pressure, especially financial pressure is huge in big cities so that many young people can barely make both ends meet for many years. In recent years, the Chinese government has put more emphasis on development of the second-tier cities, in which living expenses are much lower.   The tourism industry is also advanced in the second-tier cities.   For example, some international chain hotels are expanding their branches in these cities.   These newly developing cities may be a new choice for Chinese tourism graduates, where a larger space for career advancement

may be available.   Faculties might guide their students to assess the locations of their

future careers synthetically and to avoid going blindly with the tide.   Meanwhile,

tourism companies and hotels in newly developing cities can introduce themselves via

campus talks and/or mass media so as to attract more tourism management graduates.

The present study found that the majority of students sought career assistance

while at school; thus, it is the program and faculty's responsibility to continue to make

efforts to improve the quality of on-campus career assistance because that is the most

direct resource for students.   After all, faculty members are those whom students rely on

the most.   It is important to build up relationships and trust between students and faculty

members.   The first step should be to establish students' intentions to work in the

tourism industry and to cultivate their acceptance and affection for the jobs and this

industry (Lu & Zhou, 2007; Wang, 2007).   Guidance can be provided according to the

students' personalities, interests and capacities.   Students should understand that a

"good" job is not only about income and social status but also some invisible transferable

skills such communication, which can be specially desirable in the tourism industry.

For the new generation, it would be helpful to take advantage of their special

characteristics, such as self-consciousness, to guide their career paths and to stimulate

their initiative in career exploration activities.   Both pertinence and time-effectiveness

of the information should be guaranteed while counselors assist students' with their

career planning and development.

Much more emphasis should be laid upon the practicum especially for university students in China. Their lack of realistic knowledge of the actual jobs available in the tourism industry has been a barrier to their career choices in this industry. In addition, the university tourism management students expressed that they were in need of skill-training courses and practice opportunities while at school. University faculty might take this into consideration when designing curriculum. It is indicated that hospitality students who participate more in experiential education feel better prepared for employment (Van Hoof, 2000).

It was found in this study that the Internet plays an important role in Chinese college students' career information gathering activities. This finding reminds us all of the power of information dissemination on the Internet. It should be efficient to promote the tourism companies and hotels more on their official websites and job sites with information related to corporate culture and employment. The respondents also mentioned Weibo.com (i.e., Chinese version of Twitter), the new social network service, as an effective tool for job applicants. The application of the Internet can develop a wider communication channel between tourism management majored students and the industry. Students' better understanding of the industry should produce positive impacts on their career awareness.

Higher levels of career choice anxiety implied that they were not adequately prepared when facing career decision-making. The late start of students' career exploration development processes may constitute one of the reasons. In the present study, freshmen did the least career exploration but had the highest satisfaction with information. Although students were involved more and more in career exploration activities over time, their anxiety increased. It is suggested that students' career interests and career awareness may be cultivated and guided earlier from high school as is done in the U.S., so as to allow more time for students to find out what they are really interested in and good at. A long period of preparation for a future career may help a student to feel more confident in his/her career choice.

Female students were found to be less active in environmental exploration and self-exploration than male students in the present study. Given the fact that the majority of tourism management students are female but that sometimes they are perceived not to fit in jobs in this industry in China, special encouragement may be needed by them. With the continued opening of Chinese society, gender related job differences are becoming weaker. In fact, many female hotel managers perform very well on executive positions. The glass ceiling effect is not significant for women in terms of management positions in the Chinese tourism industry. Female students should have more confidence in their career development in the tourism industry. They should be

encouraged to become more involved in career exploration by both faculty members and by their families.

Last but not the least, university students surveyed in this study were less satisfied with career information and they were in need of career information directly from the industry.   On the other hand, both university and junior college students surveyed reported the helpfulness of career-related information from practitioners' lectures.   Both schools and tourism companies are encouraged to become more active in communication with each other through these findings.   However, opportunities to talk to practitioners are currently quite limited, especially for university students.   Schools and tourism companies can work more together to foster students' professional consciousness (Lu & Zhou, 2007).   In addition to campus talks, visiting professors with industry background can also be considered.

Limitations

Due to the design of the research, this study has the following limitations which should be noted.   First, although an online survey can reach wider population (in this case, the proposed study was able to survey tourism students from most of the provinces in China) and participants can complete the survey at their own pace, that may lead to many incomplete surveys since the participants can stop at any time and forget or choose not to complete the survey.   Second, due to the fact that the survey participants mainly

came from six schools and the web respondents were those who were interested in this topic, this study may be limited in regard to generalizing the results. Third, one fifth of the participants were junior college students, which made a great disparity in numbers when compared with university students. That may have influenced the comparison results between these two school types. In addition, given the different schooling of universities and junior colleges (four and three years respectively), the exact stages of junior college students (i.e., first-year, second-year and third year) might have been justified and differentiated from university students. Fourth, given the nature of the tourism management major, three quarters of the participants were female students. This may have produced a less representative sample for male students. Future study is recommended to compare only the first three years of students in university and junior college or to compare between undergraduate and graduate students. Fifth, the length of time spent in completing the entire questionnaire ranged from 10 minutes to 25 minutes. As a result, for those who took a longer amount of time, fatigue may have led to additional error or variance in the results. Sixth, although the variables chosen from theories can significant predict each other, some of them can only explain less than 5% of the variances. The interaction effects among variables should have been better explored and explained. Finally, although Stumpf *et al*.'s model (1983) addressed both forward and backward cycle relationships between variables, the implications of the current

research only limit to the forward relationships.   A longitudinal research is recommended for future study to examine both directions of those relationships.

Future Research

It is worth notice that given the very different return rates of paper-pencil and online survey, future research could regard them as two sampling pools while analyzing. Future study is suggested to cross-check if there are any differences on career variables between students who took online and paper-pencil survey.

While this research was the first to examine tourism management students' career exploration behaviors in China, future studies could explore other career variables, employ other measuring scales or add more items to examine their career behaviors. Further research could also make some comparisons between Chinese students and the students of other countries where tourism education has a longer history of development such as the U.S.   The differences of culture, education system, and curriculum design (Liu, 2003) may lead to different perceptions of the industry and various career exploration behaviors.   For example, Chinese students usually face more pressure from their families and the society, as stated in this study.   In China, a developing country, young people's life stressors are also relatively heavier than those in western countries. It might be interesting to investigate how this distinction leads to different career choices within and/or out of the tourism industry.

The present study considered the tourism industry as a whole when investigating students' perceptions of the industry and their intentions to retain. Future study may consider diversifying the industry into different sectors such as hotels, food service, meetings and exhibitions, and leisure. In fact, some Chinese institutes specify their courses and/or tourism programs into different tracks or sectors of the tourism industry. Informal interviews with students might reveal their particular understandings of specific industry sectors, which might in turn impact their career intentions in the tourism industry.

Furthermore, while this research focused on tourism management students in school, future studies could include graduates who currently work in the tourism industry. Analyzing their perceptions of current jobs and/or the industry might shed some light on their career exploration behavior patterns. Dickerson (2009) found that it is important for human resource professionals to direct special attention toward the graduates whose first jobs are in the tourism industry in order to prevent their leaving. It would be meaningful to examine the gap between their career exploration, expectations, and job satisfaction; and that might provide helpful suggestions for both educators and practitioners to retain tourism management talents for this industry.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

CONSENT FORM IN ENGLISH

Appendix A

Consent Form in English

Dear Tourism Management Students:

I am conducting research to better understand the impact of career exploration on tourism management students' career choice in the tourism industry. You may understand your own career exploration behaviors better while you are filling out the questionnaire. The data that you provide can help both the educators and practitioners in the tourism industry increase their understanding on how students explore career related information and assistance. The results will help them prepare their students for future career path in this industry. The knowledge gained may help future researchers in conducting a similar study on a larger population. Meanwhile, there will not be greater risks than those encountered in everyday life if you are willing to participate in this research. **Please complete the survey by May 31, 2012.** Completing the survey should take approximately 10-15 minutes.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and anonymous. **Your answers will not be reviewed by anyone but the researcher here at Kent State University US, and individual responses will be kept completely confidential.** No identifiers will be connected to the survey. Your response is vital to the success of this study and will provide important information for the tourism management educators to make the program better.

If you want to know more about this research project, please call me at (001) 330. 389. 4850, or Dr. Chuang at (001) 330. 357. 9989. This project has been approved by Kent State University. If you have questions about your rights as a participant or complaints about the research you may call the IRB at (001) 330. 672. 2704.

Thank you for your time and assistance, it is much appreciated.

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APPENDIX B

CONSENT FORM IN CHINESE

Appendix B

Consent Form in Chinese

亲爱的旅游/酒店管理专业的同学：

您好!我正在进行一项关于旅游/酒店管理专业学生的职业探索行为对在本行业的职业选择的影响的研究。您在填写问卷的过程中能对您的职业探索行为有更多的理解。您提供的数据可以帮助教育工作者提高旅游/酒店管理专业学生加深对本行业的了解。研究结果能帮助他们培养真正想在本行业就业的学生，并帮助其他学者就本课题进行更广泛的研究。**请根据你考虑选择职业的情况选出最适合自己的答案，在 2012 年 5 月 31 日之前完成问卷。**完成这份问卷大概需要 10 到 15 分钟。

您对这项课题的参与是自愿和匿名的。**您的回答会被严格保密，不会被研究者以外的任何人阅读。**能收到您的回复对于这项研究的成功至关重要，并会为旅游/酒店管理教育者改进专业教学的提供重要信息。

这项研究已经被肯特州立大学批准。如果您想更多了解这个研究项目，请联系我 (001) 330 389 4850，或者庄教授 (001) 330 357 9989。如果您对作为一个参与者的权利有疑问或者投诉，请联系学术道德评审委员会 (001) 330 672 2704。

感谢您的参与和协助！

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APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE IN ENGLISH

Appendix C

Questionnaire in English

Please circle the answer that best suits you currently based on your knowledge of career decision-making.
Tourism Industry **in this questionnaire refers to Convention and Exhibition, Tourism, and Hospitality industries.**

I. Background Information
1. Gender: A. Male   B. Female
2. School: _____
3. Your school is:
   A. A university   B. A junior college   C. Other, please specify: _____
4. Academic status：
   A. Freshman   B. Sophomore   C. Junior   D. Senior
   E. First-year graduate   F. Second-year graduate   G. Third-year graduate
5. Was tourism/hospitality management your desired major when you entered the school?
   A. Yes   B. No
6. Are you interested in this major and industry NOW?
   A. Yes   B. No   C. Hard to say, please specify your reasons: _____
7. Did you ever take an internship in the tourism/hospitality industry?
   A. Yes (Please specify what kind of job it is/was: _____)
   B. No
8. Do you intend to work in the tourism/hospitality industry?
   A. Yes (Please skip to Question 9)   B. No (Continue to Question 8)
9. Why do **NOT** you want to work in the tourism/hospitality industry? (Please check all that apply and rank according to 1= the most important)
   ____A. Schools did not prepare you enough for jobs in the tourism industry.
   ____B. Schools failed to provide enough career information related the tourism industry.
   ____C. Jobs in the tourism industry are too tough.
   ____D. You do not like the working conditions in the tourism industry.
   ____E. Your interest is not in the tourism industry.
   ____F. Your parents do not want you to work in the service industry.
   ____G. Social status is relatively low for those who work in the tourism industry.
   ____H. Incomes are relatively low in the tourism industry.

_____I. Other reasons, please specify: _____

10. Please rank the factors that impact your career choice according to 1= the most important:

_____A. Career advancement

_____B. Development of the city

_____C. Demands in the labor market

_____D. Income and welfare

_____E. Experience accumulation

_____F. Social status

_____G. Major relevance

_____H. Distance from hometown

_____I. Other factor, please specify: _____

11. Did you ever seek career assistance while at school?

A. Yes   B. No (Please specify your

reasons: _____)

12. From whom did you receive the career information related to tourism/hospitality management? (Please circle all that apply)

A. Advisors   B. Course instructors   C. Counselors   D. Parents

E. Friends and classmates   F. Relatives or parents' friends

G. Career development center   H. Student organizations   I. Tourism companies

J. Internet   K. Mass media such as newspapers and TV

L. Others, please specify: _____

13. Among the following career information resources, which did you find the most helpful?

A. Conversations with faculty   B. Conversations with families

C. Conversation with peers   D. Lectures given by practitioners

E. Campus talks   F. Job fairs   G. Reports on mass media

H. Internships   I. Search by yourself on the Internet

J. Others, please specify: _____

II. To what extent do you behave in the following ways?	Little	Somewhat	Moderate Amount	Substantial Amount	A Great Deal
1. Investigate career possibilities in the tourism industry.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Go to various tourism	1	2	3	4	5

career orientation programs.					
3. Obtain information on specific jobs or companies in the tourism industry.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Initiate conversations with knowledgeable individuals in the tourism industry.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Obtain information on the labor market and general job opportunities in the tourism industry.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Seek information of interest in the tourism industry.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Reflect on how your past integrates with your future career.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Focus your thoughts on you as a person.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Contemplate your past.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Be retrospective in thinking about your career.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Understand a new relevance of past behavior for your future career in the tourism industry.	1	2	3	4	5

III. How satisfied are you with the amount of information	Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Neutral	Somewhat Satisfied	Very Satisfied

you have on:					
12. What one does in the tourism industry.	1	2	3	4	5
13. The types of tourism organizations that will meet your personal needs.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Jobs in the tourism industry that fit with your interests and abilities.	1	2	3	4	5
15. The specific tourism organization in which you are interested.	1	2	3	4	5
16. What to seek and what to avoid in developing a career path in the tourism industry.	1	2	3	4	5

IV. When you think about actually deciding for sure what you want your career to be, you feel:

1. Fearless(1)---------------2------------------3------------------4------------Frightened(5)
2. Relaxed(1)---------------2------------------3------------------4------------------Tense(5)
3. Carefree (1)--------------2------------------3------------------4---------------Worried(5)

V. How often do you cope with career decision-making related problems in the	**Hardly Ever**	**Seldom**	**Sometimes**	**Often**	**Almost Always**

following ways?					
1. Get together with your advisor to discuss this.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Try to be very organized so that you can keep on top of things.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Talk with people (other than your advisor) who are involved.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Try to see this situation as an opportunity to learn and develop skills.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Put extra attention on planning and scheduling.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Try to think of yourself as a winner—as someone who always comes through.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Tell yourself that you can probably find a good job.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Devote more time and energy to search for job-related information.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Try to get additional people involved in the situation.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Think about the challenges you can find in this situation.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Try to plan more carefully and intelligently.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Decide what you think should be and do it yourself.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Give it your best effort to do what you think is expected of you.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Request help from people who have the power to do something for you.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Seek advice from people outside the situation but	1	2	3	4	5

who can help you think of ways to do what you are supposed to do.					
16. Work hard to make the best decision.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Anticipate the negative consequences so that you are prepared for the worst.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Let others make decision for you.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Accept this situation because there is nothing you can do to change it.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Use this situation to find out what you can do.	1	2	3	4	5
21. Seek the company of friends.	1	2	3	4	5

VI. To what extent about your career planning do you feel:	A Great Deal	Substantial Amount	Moderate Amount	Somewhat	Little
1. You need reassurance that you have made the right choice to work in the tourism industry.	1	2	3	4	5
2. You are concerned that your present interests may change over the years.	1	2	3	4	5
3. You are uncertain about the occupations in the tourism industry you could perform well.	1	2	3	4	5
4. You don't know what your major strengths and weaknesses are.	1	2	3	4	5
5. The jobs in the tourism industry you can do may not pay enough to live	1	2	3	4	5

the kind of life you
want.

6. If you had to make an occupational choice in the tourism industry right now, you are afraid you would make a bad choice.	1	2	3	4	5
7. You need to find out what kind of career you should follow.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Making up your mind about a career has been a long and difficult problem for you.	1	2	3	4	5
9. You are confused about the whole problem of deciding on a career.	1	2	3	4	5
10. You are not sure that your present occupational choice is right for you.	1	2	3	4	5
11. You don't know enough about what workers do in various occupations.	1	2	3	4	5
12. No single occupation appeals strongly to you.	1	2	3	4	5
13. You are uncertain about which occupation you would enjoy.	1	2	3	4	5
14. You would like to increase the number of occupations you could consider.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Your estimates of your abilities and talents vary a lot from year to year.	1	2	3	4	5
16. You are not sure of yourself in many areas	1	2	3	4	5

of life.					
17. You have known what occupation you want to follow for less than one year.	1	2	3	4	5
18. You can't understand how some people can be so set about what they want to do.	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX D

QUESTIONNAIRE IN CHINESE

Questionnaire in Chinese

注：本次问卷中的"旅游业"，指的是包括旅游、酒店和会展业的大旅游业。

一、背景信息

1. 性别：　　A. 男　　　　B. 女
2. 学校：_____
3. 你的学校是一所：
   A. 本科院校　　　　　　B. 专科院校　　　　　C. 其他类型，请说明：_____
4. 年级：
   A. 大一　　　B. 大二　　　C. 大三　　　D. 大四　　　E. 研一　　　F. 研二　　　G. 研三
5. 旅游/酒店管理专业是你**入校时**的理想专业吗？
   A. 是　　　　B. 否
6. 你**现在**对这个专业和行业感兴趣吗？
   A. 是　　　　B. 否　　　　C. 不好说，请说明原因：_____
7. 你在旅游/酒店行业实习过吗？
   A. 是（请说明工作种类或企业类型，如导游或旅行社：_____ ）
   B. 否
8. 你打算在旅游/酒店行业就业吗？
   A. 是（请跳至第 9 题）　　　　B. 否（请继续回答第 8 题）
9. 你为什么不想在旅游行业内就业？（请圈出**所有你认为适合的**选项，再给**你圈出的所有选项**排序，1=最重要）
   ____A. 所学专业知识不足以应对旅游业的工作。
   ____B. 学校提供的旅游业信息及相关职业信息不足。
   ____C. 旅游行业的工作太辛苦。
   ____D. 你不喜欢旅游行业的工作环境。
   ____E. 你对旅游行业没有兴趣。
   ____F. 你的父母不想让你在服务行业就业。
   ____G. 在旅游行业工作的人社会地位不太高。
   ____H. 旅游行业的收入偏低。
   ____I. 其他原因，请说明：_____
10. 请为下列**所有**影响职业选择的因素排序（1=最重要）：
    ____A. 职业发展空间
    ____B. 工作城市发达程度
    ____C. 人才市场的需求

_____ D. 收入福利

_____ E. 经验积累

_____ F. 社会地位

_____ G. 专业对口

_____ H. 与家乡的距离

_____ I. 其他，请说明：_____

11. 你在校期间寻求过就业方面的咨询或帮助吗？

A. 是　　　　　　B. 否（请说明原因：_____）

12. 你平时是从哪些途径获得关于旅游/酒店管理的职业信息的？（请选择**所有你认为适合的**选项）

A. 导师　　　　B. 任课老师　　　C. 辅导员　　　　D. 父母　　　　E. 朋友和同学

F. 亲戚或父母的朋友　　　　　　G. 学校职业发展中心　　　　H. 学生社团

I. 旅游/酒店企业　　　J. 因特网　　　　K. 自己　　　L. 报刊、电视等媒体

M. 其他，请说明：_____

13. 在下列职业信息来源中，你觉得哪个是最有效的？

A. 与老师交谈　　　B. 与家人交谈　　　C. 与同伴交谈　　　D. 旅游/酒店从业者的讲座

E. 企业校园宣讲会　F. 校园招聘会　　　G. 媒体报道　　　H. 实习　　　I. 自己在网上搜索　　**（接下页）**

J. 其他，请说明：_____

二、以下这些事你做到过多少？	没有	稍微	适量	较多	很多
1. 调查旅游业内不同职业选择的可能性。	1	2	3	4	5
2. 参加各种旅游业职业培训项目。	1	2	3	4	5
3. 获得关于特定旅游业工作和公司的信息。	1	2	3	4	5
4. 主动和旅游业内有见识的人探讨。	1	2	3	4	5
5. 搜索旅游业内大致工作机会和就业市场的信息。	1	2	3	4	5
6. 寻找自己感兴趣的旅游业信息。	1	2	3	4	5
7. 反思你的过去并思考它如何和你未来的旅游业职业相结合。	1	2	3	4	5
8. 专注于自己个人的想法。	1	2	3	4	5
9. 思考你的过去。	1	2	3	4	5
10. 回顾自己对职业的思考过程。	1	2	3	4	5
11. 理解了你过去的某个行为和你未来的旅游业职业之间的新关联。	1	2	3	4	5

三、你对自己拥有的以下信息量满意吗？	非常 不满意	比较 不满意	一般	比较 满意	非常 满意
1. 旅游业从业者的工作内容。	1	2	3	4	5
2. 旅游业机构（或公司）能满足你个人的需求。	1	2	3	4	5
3. 旅游业的工作是否会与你个人的兴趣和能力一致。	1	2	3	4	5
4. 你感兴趣的特定旅游业机构（或公司）。	1	2	3	4	5
5. 旅游业中的职业发展应该注意和避免的问题。	1	2	3	4	5

四、当你真的要面临决定自己的职业时，你会感到：

1. 无畏(1)————有些无畏(2)————一般(3)————有些害怕(4)————害怕(5)
2. 轻松(1)————有些轻松(2)————一般(3)————有些紧张(4)————紧张(5)
3. 无虑(1)————有些无虑(2)————一般(3)————有些担忧(4)————担忧(5)

五、你会用以下方法应对职业决策的相关问题吗？	几乎不	偶尔	有时	经常	总是
1. 与导师一起讨论。	1	2	3	4	5
2. 尝试变得更有条理，使自己能对所有事都有把握。	1	2	3	4	5
3. 与其他相关的人（不是导师）探讨。	1	2	3	4	5
4. 尝试将这种情况视作可以学习和提高能力的机会。	1	2	3	4	5
5. 更多地注意计划和安排。	1	2	3	4	5
6. 试着想象自己胜券在握——好像自己什么都可以克服。	1	2	3	4	5
7. 告诉自己你可以找到一份好工作。	1	2	3	4	5
8. 花更多的时间和精力在搜索工作的相关信息上。	1	2	3	4	5
9. 让更多人参与到自己的职业决策中来。	1	2	3	4	5
10. 思考你会在这种情况下发现哪些机会。	1	2	3	4	5
11. 尝试更仔细和明智地计划。	1	2	3	4	5
12. 决定什么是自己应该做的并去实施。	1	2	3	4	5
13. 要求自己为达到目标而付出最大的努	1	2	3	4	5

力。

	很多	较多	适量	稍微	没有
14. 向有能力的人请求帮助。	1	2	3	4	5
15. 向不相关但能帮你想出你应该做什么的人寻求建议。	1	2	3	4	5
16. 努力做出最好的决策。	1	2	3	4	5
17. 预测最坏的结果，让自己有心理准备。	1	2	3	4	5
18. 让别人来为自己决定。	1	2	3	4	5
19. 接受这种情况，因为你无力改变它。	1	2	3	4	5
20. 利用当前情况激发自身潜力。	1	2	3	4	5
21. 寻求朋友的陪伴。	1	2	3	4	5

六、请根据目前你对职业规划的感受来选择程度。	很多	较多	适量	稍微	没有
1. 你需要重复确认自己做出在旅游业工作的选择是对的。	1	2	3	4	5
2. 你担心自己的兴趣过些年会改变。	1	2	3	4	5
3. 你不确定胜任哪些旅游业的职业。	1	2	3	4	5
4. 你不知道什么是你的主要优点和缺点。	1	2	3	4	5
5. 旅游业的工作可能不足以维持你想要过的生活。	1	2	3	4	5
6. 如果你现在只能在旅游业做出一个职业选择，你会害怕你会选错。	1	2	3	4	5
7. 你需要找出你会从事什么职业。	1	2	3	4	5
8. 下定决心来从事什么职业对你来说是一个费时又困难的问题。	1	2	3	4	5
9. 你对决定职业这整件事觉得很困惑。	1	2	3	4	5
10. 你不确定你现在的职业选择对自己是不是合适。	1	2	3	4	5
11. 你对不同职业的工作内容了解不多。	1	2	3	4	5
12. 没有某个职业特别吸引你。	1	2	3	4	5
13. 你不确定什么职业会让自己过得开心。	1	2	3	4	5
14. 你想增加自己考虑的职业选择。	1	2	3	4	5
15. 你对自己能力和天赋的估计每年会相差很大。	1	2	3	4	5
16. 你在生活的很多领域里对自己都不太确定。	1	2	3	4	5
17. 你已经知道什么职业你从事不超过一	1	2	3	4	5

年就会放弃。

| 18. 你不能理解有些人为何执着于他们想从事的职业。 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

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