

Career Decision Ambivalence and Career Counseling Change Ambivalence in Career Counseling

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Abstract

The concept of ambivalence has received little attention within the field of vocational psychology. In this article, we distinguish between two types of ambivalence that may surface during the career counseling process: *career decision ambivalence* (i.e., ambivalence between career options) and *career counseling change ambivalence* (i.e., ambivalence about engaging in career counseling-related changes). Using a single case study design of a 3-session career counseling process over 2 months including a two-chair dialogue intervention, we examine how these two types of ambivalence occur and evolve. We use mixed method to analyze the case, including fine-grained coding of the sessions' content, as well as pre-, post-, and follow-up measures. Results highlight career decision ambivalence and career counseling change ambivalence as distinct phenomena, occurring and evolving differently throughout the counseling sessions. The theoretical and practical implications of these findings are discussed.

Keywords

career decision ambivalence, career counseling change ambivalence, two-chair dialogue, career counseling, vocational psychology

Introduction

In the current world of work where individuals are constantly exposed to endless yet uncertain career opportunities and information, the experience of *ambivalence* is a common thread in career paths (Kasperzack et al., 2014). Accordingly, a better understanding of clients' career ambivalence is an important target for both research and career counseling interventions (Pittman, 2000).

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