WOMEN'S EXPERIENCES OF GROUP PROCESS
IN A CAREER COUNSELLING INTERVENTION

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Abstract

This study investigated women's experiences of group process in a career counselling intervention. Specifically, the study examined the relationships of Yalom's (1985) 11 group therapeutic factors, and six client demographic factors, in predicting post-intervention levels of goal instability (GI) after removing the effects of pre-intervention levels of GI. In addition, the study attempted to define the relationship between a set of client demographic variables and a set of 14 group change mechanisms which reflect Yalom's 11 factors.

Subjects were 108 adult women clients who attended a two-day career group counselling program at a government counselling unit. Data were collected using questionnaires at pre and post-intervention. Follow-up interviews were conducted by telephone with 71 participants two months after their workshop dates. Levels of goal instability were assessed using the Goal Instability Scale at pre and post-test, and client demographic information was solicited with a Participant's Information Sheet at pre-test. Group therapeutic factors were assessed at post-test by using
the How Career Groups Work Scale.

A preliminary analysis identified pre-test GI levels' contribution to variance in post-test GI levels. Pre-test GI levels were the only significant contributor to variance in post-test GI levels in all subsequent standard multiple regression equations tested. In a hierarchical multiple regression equation, cognitive change mechanisms accounted for a significant but small portion of the variance in post-test GI levels, over and above that accounted for by pre-test GI levels. A canonical analysis did not identify any significant relationships between a set of six client demographic variables and a set of 14 group change mechanisms. Follow-up data indicated that clients valued both the cognitive and affective group therapeutic factors for helping clients with career planning and for contributing to general benefits associated with the intervention.

Post-test findings confirmed that Yalom's therapeutic factors were operating in this study's career intervention, and that clients did not value the factors equally. The follow-up findings clarified the relationships between the therapeutic factors and participants' career planning and goal-setting processes.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

The field of vocational psychology focuses considerable effort on creating and validating theories of career choice and vocational adjustment. These theoretical ventures arise partly in response to the actual conditions and characteristics of the labour force. Until recently, men primarily comprised the labour force (Statistics Canada, 1987) and theorists posited ideas of career development based on the developmental, educational, and work experiences of men (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987). However, recent shifts in economic and social trends are prompting more women to enter, stay in, and move throughout the labour force (Employment & Immigration Canada, 1988; Herr & Cramer, 1984; Statistics Canada, 1987). Thus, women's participation rates in the labour force have significantly changed the size and gender proportions of specific occupational areas. As these changes increase in pace and magnitude, vocational and feminist theorists alike acknowledge that the emerging pattern of labour force participation for women differs significantly from that of men (e.g., Borman & Guido-DiBrito, 1986; Fitzgerald & Betz, 1983).
Specifically, women are concentrated in low-paying, low-status jobs that frequently do not match their ability and intelligence levels (Employment & Immigration Canada, 1988).

Vocational theorists try to account for the cultural, social, and psychological factors that confound women's career decisions and partly explain women's underachievement and overrepresentation in female-stereotyped jobs (Astin, 1984; Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987; Farmer, 1985; Fassinger, 1985; Gottfredson, 1981; Hackett & Betz, 1981; Hansen, 1984; Tinsley & Faunce, 1980). The major theorists of women's career psychology agree that our cultural view of women's roles has produced sex-role stereotypes and occupational sex typing (e.g., Fitzgerald & Betz, 1983; Gottfredson, 1981). Women's socialization, limited access to non-traditional occupations, and counselling interventions based on feminine-stereotypes maintain these stereotypes. Subcultural factors (e.g., socioeconomic status, race, and religion) plus factors in women's immediate social environments (e.g., parents' educational and occupational levels, female role models, and marital/family status) also determine career choice and career involvement (Betz & Fitzgerald). The
intrapersonal factors of ability levels, low self-efficacy beliefs (Hackett & Betz), motivation (Farmer 1985), and avoidance of math and science educations and vocations (Betz & Fitzgerald; Labour Canada, 1987) are also linked to women’s career development.

Combinations of the preceding factors pose barriers that limit the movement of women into more challenging jobs and non-traditional work (Astin, 1984; Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987; Fassinger, 1985; Hansen, 1984). Women who are entering or re-entering the workforce or changing careers must make career decisions in the face of these cultural, social, and individual barriers. Vocational theorists have identified two common barriers to women’s career decision-making. One barrier is the task of trying to establish priorities around family and work roles (Fitzgerald & Betz, 1983; Herr & Cramer, 1984; Perun & Del Vento Bielby, 1981; Robinson, Rotter, & Wilson, 1982; Sagaria, 1989; Tinsley & Faunce, 1980). It is difficult for women to set career goals when society expects them to meet the "new cultural imperative" (Betz & Fitzgerald, p. 251) of combining both work and family roles. The second common barrier to women’s career decision-making is women’s low self-esteem and low self-efficacy beliefs
(Hackett & Betz, 1981; Nevill & Schlecker, 1988; Wood, 1989). These beliefs cause women to question their ability to pursue challenging and non-traditional careers. Women internalize social stereotypes that imply women are not capable of performing work other than that which they have traditionally done. Women's integration of work and family roles, and weak self-concept (low self-esteem and low self-efficacy beliefs) are thus two significant barriers to career decision-making.

**Vocational Counselling for Women**

Women who are indecisive about their careers often seek counselling. Many women clients want career changes. Some are dissatisfied with their employment histories of unchallenging positions, limited career paths, and low-paying jobs. Other clients are returning to the labour force after prolonged absences, or entering for the first time. They are unsure of their abilities and interests, and unfamiliar with the "how to's" of life/career planning. According to Bernard (cited in Voydanoff, 1988) women need to acquire information and resources in order "to plan flexibly and effectively the combination of work and family that best meets their needs" (p. 277). However, despite differences in employment backgrounds
and family life, most women who seek career counselling have similar counselling goals. Usually clients want to explore career options and make a commitment to a long-term career.

Ideally, career counselling programs help women clients to set career/life goals and strengthen their self-concepts. However, we do not know if or how the majority of career counselling programs help women negotiate barriers to career decision-making. There is a paucity of recent outcome studies reporting on career counselling programs for adult/non-college women.

The few published outcome studies of women's interventions report on a variety of group career counselling programs. All of these program evaluations have used quasi-experimental and experimental designs. Their outcome measures have been limited to variables relating to employment success, attitudes toward self and work, and level of career indecision. Specifically, experimental/control-group and experimental-group-only designs have been used to explore treatment parameters such as content domain, interpersonal context, and degree of structure (Fretz, 1981) of counselling interventions. Results from experimental designs indicate that both
skills and beliefs-focused interventions are effective (Keller, Glauber, & Snyder, 1983), that supportive learning environments are a valuable part of counselling interventions (Berman, Gelso, Greenfeig, & Hirsch, 1977), and that a variety of topics included in long-term programs (Kahn & Ward, 1983; Rice & Goering, 1977) can facilitate client change.

Other outcome studies have been limited to experimental-group-only designs. In a survey of unemployed women accessing a government counselling unit, Kahn (1986) found that clients wanted career counselling and information on jobs, the labour market, training programs, and educational opportunities. These clients made use of a testing service, job search instruction, and personal counselling services, all of which were reported as helpful in establishing career goals. Evaluation of a multi-faceted career/life planning program for re-entry women (Bruyere, Stevens, & Pfost, 1984) also yielded positive results. These findings suggested that programs with varied structure and content yield successful client counselling outcomes.

**Purpose of This Study**

The purpose of the current study is to address two
shortcomings of outcome studies for women's career group counselling interventions: (a) limited choice of outcome variables, and (b) insufficient exploration of client-valued aspects of group counselling. This study focuses on these two features by using an outcome variable that may reflect women's state of career indecision better than previous studies (i.e., goal instability) (Robbins & Patton, 1985; Robbins & Tucker, 1986). It also attempts to identify the client-valued group process factors presumed to occur during career group counselling. Furthermore, this study will attempt to identify whether different kinds of clients (as defined by clients' biodemographic information) prefer different elements of career group counselling. These three variations on traditional outcome study methodology may identify client-valued aspects of a group career intervention that facilitate women's career decision-making.

This study also investigates women clients' experiences with career planning activities over time, following participation in a group intervention. By reporting on women's progress in the early phases of their career planning, this study indicates if and how clients value the intervention for its contribution to
their career development.

Specifically, the present study investigates clients' experiences of group process in a two-day career group counselling intervention for adult/non-college women that focuses on the career planning process. The construct of goal instability is used as an outcome variable, as it appears to represent a "general instability or absence of orienting goals" (Robbins & Patton, 1985, p. 226) that precedes the state of career indecision. Goal instability may reflect the psychological states and needs of career-undecided women more aptly than commonly-used outcome measures (e.g., employment/training status, career maturity, and self-esteem).

The conceptual link between goal instability and women's experience of career indecision is derived from Astin's (1984) model of career development. This model maintains that the relationship between socialization experiences and the structure of opportunity (e.g., distribution of jobs, discrimination, job requirements, and the economy) is dynamic and changing. Elements from both spheres of influence interact during a woman's career development and are ultimately manifested in
career choice. It is reasonable to assume that this "continual reverberation between the self and other, between micro (personal) and macro (public) spheres of influence" (Kahn, 1984, p. 145), shapes a woman's development and will affect and alter her self-concept. As a result, we may expect to see great flux in her career/life goals as she sorts through the factors impinging on her career decision-making.

Goal instability is also negatively correlated with self-esteem levels and perceived personal competencies (Robbins & Patton, 1985). Individuals experience variability in their feelings of personal strength and identity when they are going through life transitions (Kohut in Robbins & Patton, 1985). As a result, establishing life or vocational goals can be extremely difficult. Certainly, women (re)entering the labour force or changing careers are in a transition period. Their self-esteem and self-efficacy beliefs are low, and their life and career plans are in constant flux. Goal instability thus appears to incorporate the two major factors confounding women's career decision-making -- difficulties with goal setting and weak self-concept. Therefore, it is likely to be a sensitive indicator of
women's experiences with career decision-making.

In addition, this study utilizes a client self-report approach in an attempt to identify the relative significance of group process factors (Kivlighan, Johnsen, & Fretz, 1987; Lieberman, 1983; Yalom, 1985) associated with members' learning experiences in career group counselling settings. Efforts to assess client perceptions of helpful aspects of career group counselling have been extremely limited (Kahn & Ward, 1983; Kivlighan et al., 1987; Fretz, 1981). As a result, researchers do not know which aspects of the group context are conducive to client change, or which aspects are valued by clients. In order to address these questions, Kivlighan et al. suggested that "what is needed is a model that examines the psychological significance of the aspects of a career-group/class intervention" (p. 36). Like Kivlighan et al., the current study uses Yalom's model of 11 group therapeutic factors and their respective change mechanisms as a means of identifying client-valued processes in career group counselling.

Research Questions

This study addresses the following questions:
1. Which therapeutic factors (as indicated by client-preferred group change mechanisms) are most valued by women in a career group counselling intervention?

2. Which therapeutic factors (as indicated by client-preferred group change mechanisms) account for variance in women's post-intervention levels of goal instability?

3. Which client demographics account for variance in women's post-intervention levels of goal instability?

4. Do different kinds of women clients (as distinguished by demographic information) prefer different group therapeutic factors (as indicated by client-preferred group change mechanisms)?

5. How do women clients value career group counselling for contributing to their career development over time?

Significance of this Study

Information gained from this study may have broad implications for counselling practice. According to Lieberman (1983) "observations concerning the way in which individuals use a group context for change, learning, or growth could lead to alterations in how we conduct such groups" (p. 207). For example, leaders might
emphasize those elements thought to be most influential, and shape content materials and learning approaches to meet client needs and preferences.

Goal instability is a relatively new construct used in psychological and vocational research. Its relevance to career development of different age and gender groups is not fully established. However, it appears to reflect two factors which vocational theorists strongly link to women’s career development (confusion around goal setting and weak self-concept). This study’s use of the goal instability construct will thus provide some information on its relevance to researching women’s experiences of career indecision.

Finally, by establishing relationships between client demographics and levels of goal instability, and between client demographics and preferred group therapeutic factors, this study provides specific information about how different clients experience career group counselling. This information may lead to modification of program content and delivery, implementation of new screening criteria, and/or a rationale for the creation of more homogeneous groups.
Chapter 2

Literature Review

Women in the Workforce

The last two decades have witnessed tremendous changes in women’s participation in the Canadian labour force. In 1985, women comprised 43% of the Canadian labour force, compared with 37% in 1975, and 29% in 1965 (Statistics Canada, 1987). Women’s participation rate in the labour force is also steadily increasing, up from 51.8% in 1981 to 55.9% in 1986 (Employment & Immigration Canada, 1988). Although the most significant increase in the participation rate has occurred among women between the ages of 25 and 44, the pattern of women’s increasing participation rate and employment ratio is expected to continue for women of all ages (Statistics Canada, 1988).

More working-age women are also fulfilling both work and family roles. By 1986, 56% of Canadian women with children under three years were in the workforce, up from 32% in 1976. For the same ten year period, proportions increased from 41% to 62% among women with children aged three to five, and from 50 to 68% for those with children aged six to 15 (Canadian Council on Social Development, 1988). Vocational theorists (e.g.,
Fitzgerald and Betz, 1983) indicate that more women will continue to pursue both marriage and career plans, and that current trends in women's labour force participation "strongly suggest the importance of occupational pursuits in the plans and lives of women" (p. 85).

There are numerous reasons for these ongoing changes in women's assumption of work and domestic roles. In the last two decades, the women's movement has probably been the strongest force compelling women to work outside the home (Fitzgerald & Betz, 1984). This social phenomenon encourages women to identify and develop their potential in life roles other than those defined by family commitments. Changes in contemporary family structure and lifestyle also have prompted increasing numbers of women to enter and stay in the work force. Divorce rates have increased, forcing women with dependent children to assume the role of primary wage earner (Read, Elliott, Escobar, & Slaney, 1988; Robinson et al., 1982; Seligman, 1981). The trends to remain single, marry later in life, or marry and remain childless, have also provided women the opportunities to pursue personal career paths (Read et al.; Robinson et al.). Finally, as the cost of living rises and lifestyle standards increase, the second
household income contributed by women is often mandatory for establishing stable and sufficient household incomes.

Despite the increased numbers of women entering and staying in the labour force, women's positions and patterns of movement throughout the labour force are generally not as impressive as their participation rate. Women have not experienced any reduction in occupational stereotyping or limitations on career mobility. According to Perun and Del Vento Bielby (1981), "women are predominantly employed in clerical, semi-professional and service occupations which require fairly high levels of non-technical education and low levels of career commitment and which offer relatively high status and low pay" (p.237). It is apparent that women are "behind" men in their distribution across all hierarchical levels in most occupations. Their movement into and throughout the full range of occupations in the labour market is also limited (Employment & Immigration Canada, 1988).

Vocational and feminist theorists have noted the differences between men's and women's employment patterns in the labour force. Theorists and researchers alike have consulted traditional theories of career development to explain those differences and to study women's career
decision-making processes. However, these traditional theories are based on men’s career development and do not focus on the specific factors and issues that confound women’s career choices and career development. According to Kriger (1972), women’s career development is more complex than men’s. Career planning for women requires two decisions: (a) whether employment outside the home will be a focus in a woman’s life, and (b) what occupation she will pursue. Men need only address the latter question of occupational choice, since the work role is central to their adult lives and the family role is secondary.

Perun and Del Vento Bielby (1981) also argue that the addition of a work cycle to the traditional family cycle in the female life course renders women’s career development processes different from those of men. Vocational theorists have identified specific social, economic, and personal factors unique to women’s experience of both family and work cycles (Astin, 1984; Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987; Farmer, 1985; Fitzgerald & Crites, 1980; Gottfredson, 1981; Hackett & Betz, 1981). These factors often comprise major barriers to women when they try to access the full scope of existing traditional
and nontraditional career opportunities. These factors also influence women’s perceptions of their career potential and life role priorities. By considering the specific factors involved in women’s career development, most vocational theorists agree that:

... the determinants of occupational behavior of women are different from those of men, that the trajectory of the work cycle of women is less predictable than that of men, and that the process of synchronizing work and family cycles throughout adulthood may be more difficult for women than for men. (Perun & Del Vento Bielby, 1981, p. 249)

Career Counselling for Women

Vocational and feminist theorists continue their efforts to create a comprehensive theory that accounts for the cultural and intrapersonal barriers women encounter during their career development. A general "social conscience" has also arisen in response to the gender differences in employment patterns in the labour market, and in life role demands. Educational institutions, governments, social service agencies, and women’s groups have responded to this widespread social awareness by developing career counselling interventions
for women. Specialized career interventions for women are now regarded as the principle means of helping women deal with all the factors involved in their career choices and development (e.g., Betz, 1989; Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987; Borman & Guido-DiBrito, 1986; Fitzgerald & Crites, 1980; Read et al., 1988; Wood, 1989). According to Seligman (1981):

... career counseling seems to be one of the best vehicles for helping women deal with their changing lifestyles. It is a mode of counseling which can help both troubled and well-adjusted women gain confidence and self-awareness, acquire greater understanding of the world of work, and formulate viable and potentially rewarding plans. (p.26)

Recommenedations for Career Counselling for Women

Vocational theorists and researchers offer numerous recommendations on how to best meet women clients’ needs in career counselling interventions. The most important and basic expectation is that counsellors understand the systemic and personal barriers that confound women’s career development. Counsellors must also provide clients with access to relevant resources, and practice counselling strategies which can empower women to
overcome barriers (Betz, 1989; McGraw, 1982).

However, counsellors must also be aware that women who seek career counselling do not comprise a homogeneous group. Clients vary in their personal circumstances, in their needs for services, in their reasons for seeking work or education, and in their views of how they fit into a working role. Some clients are re-entering the labour force after varied absences, some are entering the labour market for the first time, and others are seeking either career or job changes. Bernard (1984) reminds us of the heterogeneity of this client target group:

Many are clearly tuned in to their needs, past experiences and work expectations; they need a nudge of encouragement, a push in the direction of information, and they’re off...Others, however, seem to lack a sense of vocational identity...their self knowledge is scanty. (p. 139)

Because of their different levels of self-awareness and employment experience, clients have a variety of ideas and expectations of occupations. Counselling programs must therefore strive to expand clients’ repertoire of career options (Betz, 1989). Clients’ career choices can then be better informed and better
matched to personal abilities and interests. For example, counsellors should encourage women clients to continue or enter math and science educational programs so that they can give equal consideration to nontraditional career options (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987).

In addition, counsellors must help clients overcome fears and anxieties about work and education. This can be achieved by working with clients on their values and belief systems. Together, counsellors and clients can work on increasing clients' self-efficacy beliefs, (Hackett & Betz, 1981), feelings of mastery and control over life and career events (Wood, 1989), and levels of assertiveness (Nevill & Schlecker, 1988). Several authors also stress that counsellors must challenge and alter their own sex-typed attitudes and biases about women and work (e.g., Fitzgerald & Crites, 1980; Nevill & Schlecker). Counsellors can then more effectively help clients confront the limits that women's socialization processes impose on women's career development.

Finally, several researchers recommend group career counselling as the most effective means for generating client support and empathy, and for ensuring exposure to others' ideas and coping strategies (Amundson & Borgen,
The above discussion briefly summarizes a wide range of counselling recommendations and theories of women's career development from which they are derived. The recommendations appear to be logical "action" steps to help women overcome barriers to their career development. It is likely a financial and administrative challenge to counsellors and program administrators in the field to incorporate such a variety of recommendations directly into counselling interventions. However, given the service mandates of government, agencies, and educational institutions, program planners and facilitators are still responsible for servicing the career counselling needs of women. The question arises as to whether the career counselling interventions they offer effectively help women clients make career decisions and plans.

Review of Career Counselling Interventions for Women

Evaluations of career counselling interventions for adult women are not widely reported in the vocational counselling literature. Most evaluations assess programs for high school and college women. In fact, in a major meta-analytic review of intervention outcome studies
(Oliver & Spokane, 1988), only 5% of reviewed studies reported on adult-focused interventions. According to Fretz (1981), "so many career interventions are focused on students in the educational system that outcomes more appropriate to persons already in or about to enter the world of work have often been neglected" (p. 85). As a result, practitioners and theorists focusing specifically on the career counselling needs of adults are not able to refer to a broad base of relevant evaluation research. The situation is even more dismal when we peruse the literature for reports on career interventions for adult women: only two were included in Oliver and Spokane's review of career intervention outcome studies.

Unfortunately, inclusion of outcome studies not reviewed by Oliver and Spokane (1988) still does not produce a substantial body of program evaluations reporting on career interventions for women. However, this small group of published studies does give readers an indication of the variety of career counselling programs available to women. These studies also report effects of interventions on client personality factors, career choice, and program-satisfaction. The majority of these outcome studies report on group career counselling
interventions. Given that several theorists and researchers uphold group counselling as the preferred format for meeting clients' career development needs (e.g., Amundson & Borgen, 1988; Rice & Goering, 1977) in addition to the economic and delivery efficiency of group counselling (Oliver & Spokane, 1988), outcome studies reported here are for women's group career counselling programs and workshops only.

Outcome Studies of Multiple Interventions

Berman et al. (1977) examined effects of two distinct career interventions for women who had either returned to college, or were contemplating the transition from home to the workforce. These researchers reported on two interventions which featured supportive learning environments. Each intervention featured different content and served two distinct client groups. One group was composed of entering college women. The second group was formed by women from the community, who were currently not working and wanted to set vocational goals.

Berman et al. (1977) sought treatment effects on women's self-concepts, career maturity, attitudes toward women, and receptivity to new information. In each intervention group, the authors maintain that group
leaders provided a supportive learning environment designed to promote client disclosure, interpersonal relationships, and goal-setting. Using pre-post and experimental-control group designs in assessment of both interventions, they found increased maturity in vocational decision-making in the group designed for adult women returning to university. In the group designed for women in the community, clients reported significantly improved self-concepts.

Although both these interventions appear to have addressed and satisfied some of the barriers and needs associated with women's career choice, it is difficult to interpret the results of these interventions, either in comparison to each other or as single interventions. Each was conducted at a different location, for a different client group, and featured varied content and delivery formats. It is also unclear how and why the authors distinguish a "supportive learning environment" from traditional group counselling interventions. We would expect that counsellors sensitive to the issues of women's career development would support clients and facilitate their learning experiences. Finally, although each intervention demonstrates some impact on relevant
career development variables, it is impossible to identify which components of each or both programs were responsible for client change. It is also impossible to credit the supposed supportive learning environment with a substantial role in inducing client change.

Other researchers have reported on multiple interventions in attempts to identify the specific content of group career counselling which best facilitates career development for women participants. Keller et al. (1983) compared a skills-based intervention with a beliefs-focused intervention. The former focused on developing job search and assertiveness skills. The latter used a cognitive approach to improve beliefs toward employment issues faced by women clients. A third treatment program combined the skills and beliefs approaches. A nondirective treatment group and a no-treatment control group were also run. Forty volunteer clients were solicited from the community and self-screened according to the criterion that they were dissatisfied with their employment status. Eight clients were randomly assigned to each of the five groups.

Results from pre-post measures indicated that participants in the skills-focused and beliefs-focused
groups reported significantly greater personal goal-satisfaction from the programs than did participants in the non-directive and control groups. Contrary to one of the hypotheses, members of the combined skills-and-beliefs-focused group did not report significantly greater goals satisfaction than clients in either of the singular approaches. Further, no treatment effects for any groups were found for participants’ general orientation to work. The researchers conclude that both skills-focused content and beliefs-focused content can be effective in meeting client expectations of these experimental career group counselling programs. However, they caution that combining the two content areas may cancel out each one’s maximum effectiveness. Adequate time must be spent in each area if they are combined in one program, and the rationales of each must be made clear to clients.

Unfortunately, despite the careful experimental design and control featured in Keller et al.’s (1983) study, the results regarding the relative efficacy of differing workshop content cannot be generalized to other workshops with other clients. The sample size is too small, and the volunteer participants may not have been
representative of women at large who are dissatisfied with their employment status. Additional similar research with larger groups and more outcome variables is necessary before any researchers can suggest that either beliefs-focused or skills-focused content is more effective for counselling women.

In another effort to identify the relative effectiveness of intervention content, Slaney and Dickson (1985) compared two counselling interventions for re-entry women attending college. Clients were randomly assigned to two treatment groups and a control group. One treatment featured a vocational card sort, and the other a vocational card sort plus a video which promoted a broad range of career options. Results reported minimal treatment effects on a program satisfaction opinionnaire, satisfaction with career scale, and occupational choice. Not surprisingly, undecided subjects expressed greater need for vocational services than did decided clients. Subjects in the video-VCS condition agreed more strongly than the other treatment group subjects that they would recommend the intervention to others, and that their experience motivated them to gain more information on careers. Undecided students also claimed they had gained
clarification about inappropriate future work for themselves, and that they felt motivated to research occupations. They disagreed less strongly than decided subjects that personal results of the program were confusing. This suggests that although the intervention had helped these undecided women, they may still have been experiencing considerable confusion compared to career-decided women. However, on a one-year follow-up, clients' comments for both treatments were positive.

**Outcome Studies of Single Interventions**

A number of outcome studies on single career/life planning counselling interventions for entry and re-entry women have been reported. Rice and Goering (1977) described the initial and follow-up effects of a life-planning workshop for women considering re-entry to the labour force. Two groups of 23 and 19 clients were studied, one of which included two male participants. Initial and follow-up measures assessed the relative meaningfulness of workshop content to clients. Results from both groups showed highest ratings for the lectures, guest speakers, and homework assignments. Follow-up outcome measures of 42 clients included reports on how they restructured time and activities to facilitate
career and life goals, the application of decision-making skills taught during the workshop, and attitudinal variables such as self-esteem. Over 75% of participants reported activity changes, predominantly around schooling. Thirty percent of respondents reported increased levels of self-confidence and assertiveness, 35% reported increased levels of self-knowledge, and 84% quoted examples of using decision-making models presented in the workshops. The authors suggest that the influences of role models (guest speakers) were probably the most successful method for generating client change. Further, the group format for counselling is upheld as a crucial means of providing opportunities for client exchange around problem solving and support.

The effects of Rice’s and Goering’s (1977) workshop are very impressive. The authors appear to identify client-valued aspects of workshop content and subsequent post-workshop change processes. However, although the two treatment groups apparently experienced the same workshop model, both groups were very small (23 and 19 respectively), and they differed in several ways: (a) two men were included in one group, (b) each group attended the workshop according to different meeting schedules
over different time periods, and (c) the follow-up interviews were scheduled ten months post-workshop for one group and six months post-workshop for the other. Despite these group differences, the authors have combined the two data sets into one. Their conclusions should therefore be interpreted with caution. A larger sample size, more homogeneous groups, and consistent program and follow-up time frames must be incorporated before results can be considered valid.

Kahn and Ward (1983) also reported initial and follow-up data from re-entry women participants in a career group counselling intervention. This intervention featured both didactic and experiential components that covered a broad scope of content similar to that featured in Rice’s and Goering’s (1977) workshop model (i.e., job search and assertiveness skills, self and career awareness, values clarification and goal setting). Two experimental groups of 12 and nine re-entry clients respectively attended the twelve-week counselling program. A waitlist control group of eight clients was also included. The dependent measures were clients’ levels of vocational indecision, anxiety, self-esteem and job/training entry. Results did not reveal any
significant treatment effects, nor any interaction effects. However, qualitative data derived from follow-up interviews three months post-program, were positive. Seventeen of 20 clients contacted had pursued training or found employment. Half of the clients contacted reported that their self-confidence levels had increased as a result of their workshop participation. Unfortunately, most clients at follow-up were still experiencing anxiety around career decision issues. Finally, clients cited career information and group member support as the most helpful aspects of their group experience.

Kahn and Ward (1983) are careful not to overemphasize the positive direction of some change patterns in their results. However, they do emphasize the importance of choosing appropriate outcome criteria for use in evaluation research. They suggest that employment status variables are inadequate indicators of how well interventions meet women’s needs. Instead, program evaluators should look at the quality of clients’ career decisions to assess whether interventions are helping women overcome barriers to career decisions (i.e., the extent to which resulting career decisions further the clients’ career development, if clients’ socioeconomic
status is improved, and how career decisions align with long-term career goals).

Bruyere et al. (1984) evaluated a thirty-hour state-sponsored intervention for entry and re-entry women facing financial hardship and change in marital status. The purpose of the program was to provide a multi-faceted service to help women clients meet their career and life planning needs. The program was comprised of group and individual counselling components, workshops, and peer support groups. Group counselling was the core delivery format for all program components.

Although 60% of participants in this intervention reported being employed at a three-month follow-up, the authors hesitate to credit the program for impact on employment status because they did not use a control group in their study. Further, they reflect on the inadequacy and inappropriateness of the outcome measures used in their program evaluation (i.e., employment status, pre-employment program enrollment, training, or non-change status). The program was designed to help participants with career and life planning by focusing on self-exploration and job search skills. However, the outcome measures limited the evaluators’ ability to
assess all the program’s elements and objectives. As did Kahn and Ward (1983), these authors emphasize the importance of choosing relevant outcome variables for assessment. They suggest that future program outcome studies use multiple outcome measures that reflect vocational, psychological, and interpersonal functioning.

Sandmeyer (1980) also attempted to identify client-valued program content in a career exploration workshop. The program was targeted toward women clients in their thirties who were contemplating a transition from the home to paid employment. The workshop was designed to provide these women support while they explored the factors involved in their career exploration process. Content was organized around four themes that are central to the career change process: (a) exploring career options, (b) personalizing options, (c) translating self-knowledge to the world of work, and (d) career/life planning. A combination of panel presentations, guided imagery exercises, goal-setting, and instructional presentations addressed these four themes. Feedback from participants in one workshop indicated that the majority of them considered all activities to be helpful. They claimed that the workshop developed their self-esteem,
and helped them to explore their values, skills and goals.

**Shortcomings and Possible Improvements of Evaluation Studies**

The above outcome studies reflect the wide variety of client characteristics, group membership criteria, program materials and content, delivery formats, design, and program objectives featured in career group counselling interventions for adult women. Generally speaking, it appears that the reviewed programs do have some positive effects on women's career exploration and planning. However, despite these positive findings, it is not practically or theoretically sound to generalize results from outcome studies to unevaluated programs. Generalization of findings cannot occur because too few programs have been assessed. Further, outcome studies' results are for the most part unduplicated and based on small sample sizes. Questions still remain as to if and how career group counselling interventions are effective in helping different kinds of women facilitate their career exploration and planning processes.

By focusing on characteristics of studies in the preceding review, it is possible to suggest reasons why
these outcome studies have failed to identify the relative effectiveness of programs' design, delivery, and content, on varied client groups. Three major shortcomings of the preceding studies merit discussion. First, despite efforts to compare treatment types, there is no preferred content or counselling approach to apply for career counselling of adult women. Positive outcomes are associated with coverage of either single or multiple topics, and with experiential and cognitive components. The least ambiguous conclusions regarding ideal structure for interventions are derived from Oliver and Spokane's (1988) meta-analytic review of career intervention outcome studies. Their results indicate that after individual counselling, group/class interventions are the second most effective approach for career counselling. We know that group career counselling provides a context for social support and community (Kahn & Ward, 1983; Kivlighan et al., 1987), and for self-disclosure and leader modeling (Robbins & Tucker, 1986). It is likely, then, that group counselling is an effective format for women's career counselling.

The second point emerging from a review of these studies is that their criteria variables are very
similar. Evaluations focus on follow-up employment and training status, change in self-concept, and levels of career indecision and maturity. Some evaluators and researchers suggest that these common outcome variables are not always chosen carefully enough to reflect the content of programs or the career decision needs of clients (Bruyere et al., 1984; Kahn & Ward, 1983). As a result, outcome measures do not indicate which elements of an intervention (e.g., information dispensing, discussion, written exercises, group exercises), have the greatest impact on which outcomes. Furthermore, the outcome measures do not identify which elements of an intervention are most valued by clients, and whether client needs have been adequately addressed.

Reconsideration of outcome measures applied in program evaluation appears to be one means of addressing this second shortcoming of published outcome studies. A possible relevant outcome variable is goal instability. This construct is derived from recent research on the career development of college students (Robbins & Patton, 1985; Robbins & Tucker, 1986). Goal instability reflects "that part of the self which is expressive of commitment to age-appropriate purposes or objectives" (Robbins &
Patton, p. 226). Persons with high goal instability do not have a clear system of goals or the confidence to plan for their futures. Goal instability thus underlies career indecision. In addition, goal instability is related to low self-esteem and perception of personal competency. The researchers responsible for isolating this construct suggest that because of its relationship with weak sense of self, "it may be tapping a sense of depletion accompanied by the absence of goals that could organize one's activities" (p. 226).

Two primary barriers to women's career decisions are low self-esteem and confusion around goal setting. Goal instability appears to subsume the struggles that women experience with both barriers. However, evaluations of interventions for women have not featured goal instability as an outcome or predictor variable. Most research exploring the relevance of goal instability to career development has used quasi-experimental designs that focus on the career plans of college students. In a study of the effects of a college career class, Robbins and Patton (1985) entered goal instability scores from 88 students into a regression equation predicting level of career decidedness. They found goal instability to be a
significant predictor of the extent that students used a career class to make career choices. However, it accounted for very little of the variance in the equation. In another study of a career class for students, goal instability scores from 107 students were entered into an equation for predicting changes in career indecision (Robbins, 1987). Again, goal instability was a significant but minor predictor of career indecision. Robbins and Tucker (1986) used an experimental design to explore the relationship between levels of goal instability and preferences for self-directed and interactional career workshops for students. These researchers found that students with high goal instability performed better in the interactional versus individual approaches to counselling. Results also indicated significant interactions between goal instability, career maturity and workshop formats. This study demonstrates the potential use of levels of goal instability as a blocking variable for exploring client attribute and intervention interactions.

The preliminary work with goal instability has been promising in establishing its relevance to college students’ career decision-making. However, it is a
relatively new construct and we cannot totally confirm its validity for studying career development. More work is needed in which goal instability is featured as an exploratory variable in studies of different populations and age groups. Since goal instability appears to reflect two theoretically defined barriers to women's career decision-making (i.e., confusion around goal-setting and weak self-concept), its application in studies of women's experiences of career interventions appears appropriate and promising.

The third shortcoming of outcome studies is that their outcome variables do not identify group process factors that contribute to intervention effectiveness. Research on a variety of psychotherapy, counselling, encounter, and self-help/support groups indicates that group events and group experiences facilitate client learning and change (e.g., Butler & Fuhriman, 1983; Kellermann, 1987; Lieberman, 1983; MacDevitt & Sanislow, 1987; Yalom, 1985).

Yalom's (1985) model of group therapy and client change is probably the best-known approach to investigating client perceptions of group processes. This model features 11 therapeutic factors: (a) instillation
of hope, (b) universality, (c) imparting of information, (d) altruism, (e) corrective recapitulation of the primary family group, (f) development of socializing techniques, (g) imitative behaviour, (h) interpersonal learning, (i) group cohesiveness, (j) catharsis, and (k) existential mechanisms. These factors are related to processes occurring within and between clients, to leader behaviours and to types of interventions. Research on different therapy and counselling groups supports Yalom's (1985) hypothesis that clients' valuing of these factors varies according to type of group, client problems, group stage and leader behaviour (e.g., Butler & Fuhriman, 1983; Kivlighan & Mullison, 1988; Lieberman, 1983; Yalom). Although different patterns have emerged for rankings of the factors, Yalom's hypothesis that all factors operate in all kinds of client groups has been borne out by research employing his model.

General qualitative client feedback and researchers' assumptions in the studies previously reviewed acknowledge the role of group processes in facilitating client change and learning (e.g., Kahn & Ward, 1983; Rice & Goering, 1977). However, outcome studies of career counselling interventions only recently have evaluated
group programs by specifically assessing clients' responses to group process variables. Kivlighan et al. (1987) used Yalom's (1985) model of group change mechanisms to assess client perceptions of valued change mechanisms in a career counselling class. Forty-seven career-undecided college students participated in a program with four primary topic areas: (a) identification of interests and abilities, (b) values and lifestyle, (c) occupational information, and (d) decision making. Students were assigned to nine career groups, ranging from four to seven members and running for four two-hour sessions. The dependent variable was change in career development status. Among the eleven possible therapeutic factors, results indicated that clients most highly valued (a) expressing feelings, (b) a sense of universality in a group, (c) the existential factor of taking responsibility for one's decision, and (d) group cohesiveness. Since the students ranked emotional components of group counselling highest, these researchers suggest that the typically rational and cognitive approach to career counselling may not encompass the full range of counselling techniques useful to clients. Kivlighan et al. suggest that although
practical information and teaching skills are necessary to career decision-making, their effectiveness in group career counselling can be increased by attending to group process factors like expressing affect, fostering feelings of inclusion and belonging, and encouraging personal responsibility for decisions.

Robbins and Tucker (1986) found results similar to those of Kivlighan et al. (1987) among students assigned to either self-directed or interactional career workshops. Goal instability was used as a blocking variable to assess changes in levels of career maturity and career exploration. Surprisingly, regardless of goal instability level and individual outcomes, participants indicated strong preferences for interactional counselling settings versus self-directed programs. Although these researchers did not apply Yalom's (1985) model of group change mechanisms, they noted that students appeared to value and respond to the interpersonal elements of group settings.

Amundson and Borgen (1988) attempted to identify client-valued aspects of membership in a job search group for unemployed adults. Through critical incident reporting, 77 clients named 501 helping factors and only
44 hindering factors to their group experiences. The
helping factors were assigned to 19 general categories of
group content and processes. These authors did not use
Yalom’s (1985) model to create the categories, but
several of their categories parallel therapeutic factors
in Yalom’s model: (a) mutual support and encouragement
(cohesiveness), (b) positive outlook (instillation of
hope), (c) belonging (universality), (d) leadership and
information (modeling, advice/suggestions from leader),
(e) emotional ventilating (catharsis), and (f)
contribution (altruism).

After assigning the helping factors to 19
categories, Amundson and Borgen (1988) noted that the 19
clearly fell into two major groups: (a) factors which
increased clients’ feelings of support and self-esteem,
and (b) factors related to task accomplishment and skills
acquisition. This finding thus confirms that clients
value the practical content and presentation of a group
counselling curriculum. In addition, these researchers
provided specific evidence that clients in a job search
group clearly recognize and respond positively to
interactional processes and dynamics inherent in a group
counselling setting.
Yalom’s (1985) hypothesis that different kinds of clients respond differently to the 11 therapeutic factors has also received partial support in studies of career counselling groups. Kivlighan, Hagaseth, Tipton and McGovern (1981) assigned college students to group counselling environments that emphasized either member interaction or individual and self-directive activities. Members were assigned to groups according to their personality type (people vs. task-oriented). Results showed that counselling approaches that were congruent with personality types were more effective than approaches that did not match personality type. Clients who are more people-oriented appeared to respond to the interpersonal elements of one group-type very differently than clients who were task-focused.

Robbins and Tucker (1986) also sought a client attribute by treatment interaction for college students in career group counselling. They used levels of goal instability (Robbins & Patton, 1985) to distinguish clients and assign them to either interactional or self-directed career workshops. Clients with high goal instability performed better in interactional than in self-directed workshops. Clients with low goal
instability did equally well in both types of workshops. Goal instability thus appears to be another aspect of personality that may determine how clients respond to group environments.

Taken together, the results of the above studies (Kivlighan et al., 1981; Robbins & Tucker, 1986) indicate that at least two personality characteristics (people vs. task-oriented, level of goal instability) may predispose clients to respond differently to the numerous aspects of group counselling contexts. More research on career counselling groups is needed to clarify relationships between client characteristics (personality traits and demographics) and clients' perceptions of group counselling. Studies could use client characteristics as either predictor or blocking variables, and then attempt to identify clients' respective preferences for the 11 therapeutic factors. Results would have implications for maximizing the quality of career group counselling, for a variety of client-types.

Summary

It is evident that increasing numbers of women will continue to enter and move throughout the labour force in a variety of occupational areas (Statistics Canada,
In order to enter non-traditional occupations and to access the full range of hierarchical opportunities within occupational areas, women must overcome cultural, social, and personal barriers to their career development. Career counselling interventions are one means of providing women with support and direction in the face of two prominent barriers to their career development: (a) difficulty setting goals, and (b) weak self-concept (e.g., Betz, 1989; Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987; Wood, 1989). Career group counselling is reportedly effective in helping women feel supported and motivated to pursue career exploration and to set career goals (e.g., Rice & Goering, 1977; Kahn & Ward, 1983). However, outcome studies of career group counselling interventions for women do not clearly indicate what kinds of program content or group processes impact on which counselling outcomes. Such outcome studies also do not indicate whether different kinds of clients respond differently to their career group counselling experiences. More information is needed regarding women clients' specific experiences of career group counselling in relation to counselling outcomes that are relevant to women's career decision-making. This information would allow counsellors
to emphasize different group processes and/or different program content according to clients’ varied career counselling needs.
Chapter 3

Method

Design

This exploratory study focused on women's perceivers and experiences of a career group counselling intervention. The study used a correlational design, with pre-and-post intervention testing, and a two-month follow-up telephone survey.

The independent or predictor variables were pre-test goal instability levels, group, group leader, 14 client-preferred group change mechanisms, and six client demographic variables. Composite independent variables were also created, in order to group the change mechanisms according to their emphasis on affective, cognitive, and behavioural learning components. The dependent or criterion variable was post-test GIS scores.

This study did not attempt to establish causal relationships between the intervention studied and change on an outcome measure. Therefore, the study was not a program evaluation. Rather, it was designed to identify any relationships between a set of predictor variables and variance in scores on the dependent measure. Also, the study was not designed to allow generalization of
findings beyond the intervention under investigation, to other interventions or client groups.

Sample

Data were collected from women clients who participated in a two-day Career Planning workshop (see Appendix A for agenda of workshop) offered at the Women's Employment Counselling Unit (W.E.C.U.) in Vancouver, British Columbia. This Unit is a specialized counselling and resource centre operated by the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission (C.E.I.C.) for C.E.I.C.-referred clients and any other women residing in the Metro-Vancouver area. W.E.C.U. clients may be preparing for first-time entry to the labour market, re-entry to the labour market, and career changes. Participation of W.E.C.U. clients in this study was on a voluntary basis, and no documentation of participation was made on clients' government employment records.

The sample size was 108 clients. Complete pre-post data sets were obtained from 99 clients. Between four and 10 clients per workshop participated in the study over a four month period.

Client Screening. All clients were screened for participation in the workshop. W.E.C.U. reception staff
conducted Service Needs Determination interviews with all potential registrants to ensure appropriate workshop referrals. Some referrals were also made by employment counsellors after in-depth assessment interviews with clients. Factors determining appropriate client registration for the career planning workshop were: (a) commitment to learning and active engagement in the career planning process, (b) confusion and indecision about career direction and options, (c) limited knowledge of how to conduct effective career exploration, (d) willingness to actively participate in a group setting, and (e) availability to attend the entire workshop.

Client Group Assignment. Clients were "walk-ins" to W.E.C.U.. They were assigned to workshop groups on a first-come first-served basis, according to personal availability and workshop vacancies. No systematic biases or criteria were involved in assigning clients to particular groups. Random assignment of clients to groups with different leaders was not feasible. This would have required booking some clients into later-scheduled workshops than others. This contravenes office mandates to service all clients as quickly as possible.

It was not possible to create a control group for
this study. Data from clients in a wait-list control group would have needed to be collected at the same times as for treatment groups. This would have required control-group clients to visit the office on five occasions. This was considered to be an unreasonable expectation of volunteer participants, and so rejected.

Groups. The Career Planning workshop at W.E.C.U. is a two-day career group counselling intervention. The objective of the workshop is to facilitate career exploration and career planning processes for women who are entering or reentering the labour market, or changing careers. The workshop covers a variety of topics that address barriers to career planning (e.g., role changes, low self-esteem, underestimation of skills), and topics that provide structure to career planning (e.g., decision-making, goal-setting, research strategies).

Three Career Planning workshops comprised of maximum 12 clients each were scheduled during each month of the study. Each workshop was facilitated by one employment counsellor. The workshop was comprised of experiential group and individual activities, short lecturettes, discussion, and homework exercises. Content focused on developing self-awareness, values clarification, interest
and skills identification, career awareness, resource utilization, goal setting, and decision-making (see Appendix A for agenda of workshop and descriptions of activities).

Leaders. Two W.E.C.U. employment counsellors facilitated the workshops. Both had extensive employment counselling experience with C.E.I.C. Both counsellors had also been trained in group counselling.

Data Collection

Upon arrival for Day One of the workshop, clients checked in with reception staff. They received a package of written material and were asked to be seated and to read the material. Three documents were included in this package: (a) an Information/consent letter (Appendix B), (b) a Participant's Information Sheet (Appendix C), and (c) the Goal Instability Scale (GIS) (Robbins & Patton, 1985) (Appendix D).

Clients who volunteered to participate in the research project then signed the consent form and proceeded immediately to answer the Participant's Information Sheet, followed by the GIS. This pre-intervention package required 15 minutes for completion.

In the last 15 minutes of Day Two of the workshop,
group leaders distributed a second package of instruments to research participants. Three instruments were included in this package: (a) an Instruction Sheet (Appendix E), (b) the GIS, and (c) the How Career Groups Work Scale (HCGWS) (Kivlighan et al., 1987) (Appendix F). The Instruction Sheet directed clients to complete the instruments in the above order. This post-intervention package required 15 minutes for completion.

**Measures**

**Participant’s Information Sheet.** This is a single page document asking clients for basic demographic information (e.g., marital status, primary vs. secondary wage earner, entry/re-entry/career changer, and work history) (see Appendix C).

**Goal Instability Scale (GIS).** This instrument measures general instability or absence of orienting life goals. According to this scale, difficulty creating realistic life goals also reflects a weak sense of self. The concept of goal instability is derived from Kohut’s self-psychology (Kohut 1971, 1977).

The scale has moderate concurrent validity. Scores correlate moderately with self-esteem ($r = - .64$, $p < .0001$) and with the feelings of self-competency
(r = -0.48, p < .0001) (Robbins & Patton, 1985) among college students. Robbins and Patton suggested that "the scale may be tapping a sense of depletion accompanied by the absence of goals that could organize one's activities" (p. 226).

This is a self-report, 10-item measure with 6-point Likert response scales. Each scale is anchored by "strongly agree" and "strongly disagree". The minimum score is 10, and the maximum is 60. Test-retest reliability is .76 (two-week interval), with internal-item consistency (alpha coefficient) of .80 (see Appendix D).

How Career Groups Work Scale (HCGWS). This scale assesses participants' perceptions of 14 elements of the group experience that contribute to participants' learning and change. These elements, or change mechanisms, are derived from Yalom's (1985) model of 11 therapeutic factors which account for client change and learning in group therapy/counselling settings. Ratings of the 11 factors vary across different types of groups and clients. This scale is a modified version of the How Encounter Groups Work Scale (Lieberman, Yalom, & Miles in Kivlighan et al., 1987). Kivlighan et al. applied the
instrument to researching career groups by changing the word "encounter" to "career" when describing the group in question.

This is a self-report, 14-item measure with 4-point Likert response scales. Each item represents a factor which facilitates learning and change in a group. Clients are asked to rate how important each factor was to their learning. Each item response scale is anchored by "Did not apply to my learning in group" and "One of the two most important experiences" (see Appendix F).

There is no reported test-retest reliability for this scale. However, Q-sort and questionnaire studies of a 60-item pool of change mechanisms reported good to excellent test-retest reliability (Yalom, 1985). Factor analyses of items provided varied (fair to good) item-to-individual scale correlations of the 60-item pool. Items consistently loaded on the eleven factors.

Follow-up Interviews

Interviews were planned with participants who provided complete pre-post testing data sets. Participants were contacted by telephone in the ninth or tenth week after completion of the workshop. Those clients who could not be reached in the ninth or tenth
weeks were dropped from this phase of the analysis. Data collected beyond the ten week limit could be expected to reflect increased opportunities to engage in career activities. Data collected at this later time would thus be incomparable to those collected earlier in the post-workshop period. The purpose of this follow-up was to assess the extent to which clients had followed through on or formulated career plans. Client perceptions of the stability of their current goals were also sought. If clients found employment, they were asked if their current job fits with their desired career direction. Finally, clients were asked for their retrospective evaluations of the workshop (see Appendix G for interview format).

Statistical Hypotheses

1. Clients will rate the 14 change mechanisms for their contributions to client learning and change equally, as measured by the HCGWS.

2. There will be no statistically significant differences among the independent variables of pre-test GIS scores, client demographics, the 14 change mechanisms as measured by the HCGWS, group membership, and group leader, in their abilities to account for variance in post-test GIS
scores.

3. Client demographics (as assessed by the Participant's Information Sheet) will not account for a statistically significant proportion of variance in post-test GIS scores.

4. The 14 change mechanisms (as measured by the HCGWS) will not account for a statistically significant proportion of variance in post-test GIS scores.

5. There will be no significant correlations between sets of client demographic variables and sets of group change mechanisms variables.

Treatment of the Quantitative Data

Preliminary psychometric analyses were performed on the GIS and on the HCGWS.

Hypothesis 1. Mean ratings on change mechanisms were computed for all groups. This produced a rank ordering of importance of the mechanisms for all subjects.

A Spearman rank order correlation was computed to compare the rank order of all 14 HCGWS change mechanisms as described by participants in this study, with that described by a college career class (Kivlighan et al., 1987).

Hypothesis 2. A simple linear regression model
regressing post-test GIS on pre-test GIS was first tested. This equation was constructed because pre-test GIS scores could be expected to contribute to the variance in post-test GIS scores. Results of this equation were used to verify including pre-test GIS scores as a significant covariate in subsequent multiple regression equations.

A standard full model multiple regression equation was then tested. Pre-test GIS scores, group, group leader, six client demographic variables, and 14 change mechanisms were entered as predictor variables. Group (N=13) and group leader (N=2) were included in the full model, in order to identify any possible differences between groups based on their membership and leader. The dependent variable in the model was post-test GIS scores.

A hierarchical full model multiple regression equation was also tested to determine the amount of variance in post-test GIS scores explained by other variables, after the effect of the pre-test GIS scores had been partialled out. The researcher pre-selected independent variables for entry into the equation, according to previous research results and theoretical rationale. HCGWS items were grouped into three categories
according to content: (a) cognitive (items 1, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, and 14); (b) affective (items 3, 4, 10, and 13); and (c) behavioral (items 2, 5, and 12) (see Appendix E). The independent variables were entered simultaneously into the equation in the following three steps: (a) pre-test GIS scores; (b) affective change mechanisms (Aff), cognitive change mechanisms (Cog), and behavioural change mechanisms (Beh); and (c) career status, marital status, wage-earner status, age, previous career counselling, and employment history. F-to-enter was set at 3.00, and F-to-remove was set at 1.00.

Pre-test GIS scores were entered first, as they were significantly correlated with the dependent variable (r = .71, p < .05). Categories of change mechanisms were entered next, since all group members could potentially experience them regardless of members' demographic differences. The set of client demographics were entered last, in order to assess whether individual differences could account for any difference in post-test GIS scores, above and beyond that accounted for by the former two variable sets.

**Hypothesis 3.** A standard multiple regression model was tested. Pre-test GIS scores and six client
demographic variables were entered as predictor variables. Post-test GIS scores were the dependent variable.

Hypothesis 4. A standard multiple regression model was tested. Pre-test GIS scores, and the 14 change mechanisms were entered as predictor variables. Post-test GIS scores were the dependent variable.

Hypothesis 5. A canonical analysis was performed on the set of six client demographic variables and the set of 14 change mechanisms. The purpose of the analysis was to examine the strength and complexity of the relationship between these two sets of variables. The analysis generates linear composites of variables (canonical variates) from each set of variables. The canonical correlation is thus the maximum correlation between pairs of canonical variates derived from two different variable sets.

Treatment of the Telephone Interview Qualitative Data

Responses to closed-ended questions were totalled and reported as frequency counts (see Appendix G, questions 1b, 2, 3a, 4a, 4b, 4d, 4f, 4g, 5a, 5b). Responses to open-ended questions were assigned to general descriptive categories based on conceptual
analysis of their content (see Appendix G, questions 1a, 3b, 4e, 4g, 6, 7, 8). These response categories were compared by reporting the frequency of clients' responses in each category. Responses that were reported only once, or responses which were not classifiable within the general descriptive categories, were reported as "other" responses.
Chapter 4

Results

Sample

Data were collected from 108 female participants in 13 workshops, over a four-month period. A biodemographic description of these participants is provided in Table 1. As shown, 52% of the sample had chosen to leave their last paid job and were considering a career change. The sample was almost equally divided on wage-earning status. Fifty-one percent of respondents were primary wage earners in their households. Forty-eight percent of the women were single, and 37% were married or living with a partner. Respondents ranged in age from 25 to 60 years. The majority of women (61%) were between ages 25 and 34.

Almost half (42.6%) of the participants had received career counselling prior to their contact with W.E.C.U.. Only one respondent had not held a paid job, and one respondent failed to indicate her work history. The majority of participants (32%) indicated that their work history was comprised of many different, unrelated jobs. Those respondents who checked off three or more job-type categories were also counted as having had many different, unrelated jobs. Eight respondents (7.5%).
Table 1

Demographic Variables of Workshop Participants (N = 108)

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<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>n of participants</th>
<th>% of participants</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>40 – 44</td>
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<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 – 60</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Prior career counselling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>70.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
provided uncategorizable data because they checked off two job-type categories. These responses were separated out from the available response options and dummy coded for subsequent regression analyses (see Table 2 for a summary of participants' employment histories).

**Psychometric Analyses**

**Goal Instability Scale (GIS).** An item-analysis of the GIS was performed using post-test GIS scores from the total sample. Table 3 reports the item means, standard deviations, and sub-test coefficients for the instrument. The sub-test coefficients are point-biserial coefficients representing the relationship between scores on each item and the total scale score, without the item removed from the total scale score. The sub-test coefficients thus indicate how well each item discriminates between subjects. Results showed that all items met a minimum criteria of $r = .3$, ranging from $r = .44$ to $.78$. The mean GIS score for this sample was 40.44 (SD = 10.23). Scores ranged from 14 to 59, with lower scores indicating high goal instability and higher scores indicating lower goal instability. The Hoyt estimate of reliability was .88.

**How Career Groups Work Scale (HCGWS).** An item analysis for the HCGWS was performed using data from the
Table 2

Distribution of Participants by Most Typical Job Worked

(N = 106)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational area</th>
<th>n of participants</th>
<th>% of participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clerical</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social services</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health care</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many different, unrelated jobs</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>32.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncategorizeda</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a 2 categories were checked off.*
Table 3

GIS Test Item Analysis (N = 108)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Sub-test r</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.16</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.31</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.19</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>1.62</td>
<td>.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
total sample. Ninety-nine completed surveys were used for the analysis. Nine incomplete surveys were also used, with sample mean values entered to replace missing data. Table 4 reports the item means, standard deviations, and sub-test coefficients for each of the scale's 14 items. Sub-test coefficients were adequate for all items. The Hoyt estimate of reliability was .86.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis 1. The mean ratings for the 14 change mechanisms on the HCGWS were used to produce a rank ordering of the change mechanisms according to their importance (see Table 4 for item rankings). Results showed that group members most highly valued (a) a sense of universality, (b) expressing feelings, (c) being an involved group member, (d) taking personal responsibility for one's life, and (e) installation of hope. Least valued aspects of the career group process were (a) seeing the group as one's family of origin, (b) revealing embarrassing things about oneself, (c) feeling encouraged to try new behaviours, (d) awareness of one's impact on others, and (e) understanding personal "hang-ups".

Rankings of the 14 change mechanisms of the HCGWS by
Table 4
HCGWS Test Item Analysis and Item Rankings (N = 108)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Therapeutic factor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>altruism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>cohesiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>catharsis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>modelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>interpersonal learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>universality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>self-understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>hope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>existential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>cohesiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>self-understanding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
this sample and a sample of students in a college career class (Kivlighan et al., 1987) were compared. The obtained Spearman rank order correlation was statistically significant using a one-tailed test, $r = .85$, $p < .05$.

**Hypothesis 2.** Sample mean values were substituted for missing data. Because pre-test GIS scores were assumed to contribute significantly to the variance in post-test GIS scores, a simple linear regression equation was first tested. The dependent variable was post-test GIS scores and the independent variable was pre-test GIS scores. Pre-test scores were significant predictors of post-test scores, $F (1, 106) = 106.25, p < .001$, accounting for 50.1% of the variance in the dependent variable (adjusted R-square = .496).

A standard multiple regression model was then tested to determine how much variance in post-test GIS scores could be accounted for by the pre-test and 22 other variables. Independent variables were pre-test GIS scores, group membership, group leadership, client demographics, and the 14 change mechanisms. Post-test GIS scores were the dependent variable. All assumptions of normality of the linear model were upheld; analysis of
the residual plot revealed no significant abnormalities in distribution of residuals or in linearity. The multiple regression equation was significant, $F(23,75) = 4.65, p < .01$. The predictor variables, in combination, accounted for 58.8% of the variance in the dependent variable (adjusted R-square = .461). However, this represented an increase of only 8.7% over and above the variance accounted for by pre-test GIS scores alone (by working with adjusted R-squares, an increase of only 3.5% was reported). The full model therefore failed to account for 41.2% of the variance in the dependent variable.

The hierarchical multiple regression equation was also significant, $F(2,96) = 54.27, p < .001$. Only two variables were entered -- pre-test GIS scores in step one and cognitive change mechanisms in step two. None of the client demographics achieved the $F$-to-enter value, set at 3.00. Together, pre-test scores and the set of cognitive change mechanisms accounted for 53.1% of the variance in the dependent variable. However, after the effects of the pre-test had been removed, the set of cognitive change mechanisms accounted for only 3.5% of the variance in the dependent measure (see Table 5 for summary data from the hierarchical model).
Table 5
Hierarchical Model: Predicting Post-test GIS Score (N = 108)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent variable entered</th>
<th>Step Simple R</th>
<th>Cumulative multiple R</th>
<th>change</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pretest</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIS score</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>.496</td>
<td>95.4*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive change</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mechanisms</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.531</td>
<td>.35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .001.
Hypothesis 3. A standard multiple regression model was performed with post-test GIS scores as the dependent variable. Pre-test scores and the six client demographic variables were the independent variables. Assumptions of normality for the linear model were upheld. The equation was statistically significant, $F (7,100) = 15.03$, $p < .001$ and accounted for 51.3% of the variance in post-test GIS scores (adjusted $R$-square = .479). However, the demographic variables accounted for only 1.3% of the variance in post-test GIS scores over and above that accounted for by pre-test alone.

Hypothesis 4. A standard multiple regression was performed with post-test GIS scores as the dependent variable. Pre-test scores and the 14 change mechanisms were the independent variables. Assumptions of the linear model were upheld. The equation was statistically significant, $F (15,83) = 7.65$, $p < .01$, and accounted for 58% of the variance in the dependent measure (adjusted $R$-square = .50). In combination, the change mechanisms accounted for 8% of the variance in post-test GIS scores. This increase in variance is considerably greater than that contributed by client demographics in the preceding equation. However, an increase such as this can be
expected, given the number of variables (15) entered into the equation (Pedhazur, 1982). The non-significant change in R-square values confirms that this increase is only a statistical artifact of a large equation.

**Hypothesis 5.** A canonical analysis on two sets of variables was carried out to determine the strength and complexity of the relationship between two sets of variables. One set of variables was comprised of six client demographic variables: (a) career status (Stat), (b) marital status (Marr), (c) wage-earner role (Earn), (d) age (Age), (e) previous career counselling (CC), and (f) employment history (EH). There were four Stat levels, three Marr levels, two Earn levels, six Age levels, 2 CC levels, and 8 EH levels. The second set of variables was comprised of the 14 change mechanisms identified by the HCGWS.

An examination of the assumptions of normality relevant to a canonical analysis was upheld; skewness and kurtosis of all variables except Marr were not unacceptable. The assumption of non-multicollinearity was also upheld. There were 6 outliers, but these were not dropped from the analysis because the canonical correlation was far from achieving significance.
Exclusion of outliers would not impact on analysis results.

None of the canonical correlations were statistically significant. The first canonical correlation was .51, with an eigenvalue of .26. The chi-square test for the first canonical correlation was not statistically significant, $\chi^2 (84, N = 108) = 73.38, p = .79$.

**Telephone Interview Results**

Telephone follow-up interviews (see Appendix G for interview format) were conducted with 71 of 99 respondents who provided complete data sets. These 71 respondents were contacted in either the ninth or tenth weeks after the workshops. Interviews ranged from 10 to 30 minutes each, with most lasting 15 to 20 minutes. All clients who were contacted agreed to complete the interview. A summary of interviewees’ comments are reported below according to order of questions during the interviews.

**Question 1.** What have you been doing since the workshop in terms of employment or training?

The most commonly reported activities were research-oriented. Almost 82% of respondents had researched
occupations and/or education programs at W.E.C.U. or the public libraries, contacted institutions, conducted information interviews, or attended C.E.I.C. program orientation sessions. Many respondents (43.7%) had also been engaged in job search activities and 51% were working at the time of the interview. A large proportion (38%) had actively pursued education activities (21% had completed or were registered for coursework and 17% had applied or registered for college, university, or pre-employment programs).

Several interviewees (25%) reported that they had completed or reviewed materials assigned during the workshop, or had done the suggested readings. Almost 13% had done work on CHOICES (a career exploration micro-computer software program). Thirty percent indicated they had done other miscellaneous activities. Only 4 of the 71 interviewees (5.6%) said they had done nothing in terms of employment or training since the workshop. Three of these four indicated that personal circumstances precluded doing any such activities, and they intended to follow through with career planning at their earliest convenience. Forty-three percent of the sample attended their respective workshop group follow-up meetings (see
Table 6 for a summary of Question 1 responses).

**Question 2.** Have you had any career counselling since the workshop?

Only 19 of the 71 respondents (26.8%) had received any career counselling since the workshop, either at W.E.C.U. or elsewhere (e.g., college counselling centre, personal counsellor).

**Question 3.** Did you leave the workshop with any long-term career plans or ideas about what career direction you wanted to take?

Almost half (48%) of the respondents had left the workshop with long-term career plans or ideas. Of the 37 who did not depart with long-term plans or ideas, 34 confirmed that they had benefited from the workshop nonetheless. For example, 18 of these 34 said that they had left the workshop with some occupational ideas for further exploration. Twelve left the workshop feeling more hopeful and motivated to actively engage in the career exploration process. Eight reported increased self-awareness in relation to their abilities and occupational roles and/or the world of work. Six respondents also reported feeling more positive about themselves, and four said they benefited from being in a
Table 6

**Interview Respondents’ Two Month Post-workshop Activities**

*(n = 71)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>% of respondents engaging in activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Researching occupations and/or education programs</td>
<td>81.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>50.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job search</td>
<td>43.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coursework or school program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application/registration</td>
<td>38.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>28.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completion/review of workshop</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials or suggested readings</td>
<td>25.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHOICES</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No activity</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
group and learning they were not alone in their experience of unemployment and/or career change. Seven respondents said that they learned how to do occupational research. Only two clients who departed the workshop without long-term plans reported feeling confused and discouraged and did not report any apparent benefits.

Question 4A. At present, do you have any concrete goals or plans for your career?

Forty respondents (56.3%) reported having concrete career plans or goals at the time of the interview.

Question 4B. (If 'yes' to 4A). Are these goals and plans the same ones you had when you left the workshop? please answer 'yes' or 'no'.

Thirty-five of 40 respondents (87%) confirmed that their career plans or goals were similar or identical to those they had in mind at the end of the workshop.

Question 4C. (If 'no' to 4A). Do you have any occupational ideas that you are considering for a long term career?

Thirty-one respondents stated that they did not have long-term career plans at the time of the interview. However, 26 of the respondents did have at least one possible career idea they were planning to explore.
**Question 4D.** Did the workshop contribute anything to the development of your current career plans or ideas? Please answer 'yes' or 'no'.

Fifty-nine respondents (89%) credited the workshop with helping them to discover or develop career plans, goals, or ideas.

**Question 4E.** Can you give me some examples of how the workshop helped you develop these career plans or ideas?

All interviewees responding 'yes' to 4D reported at least one way in which the workshop contributed to their plans. Many of the comments referred directly to respondents' experiences of being in a group setting. Specifically, 20 respondents (34%) valued the feedback and ideas about themselves and occupations that were shared during group interactions. Responses in this category seemed to consistently overlap two of Yalom's (1985) factors: (a) information and ideas provided by others about work and life experiences, (information/guidance), and (b) feedback about how members perceived each other (interpersonal learning). Since interviewees almost always described these two aspects of learning as a single experience, such
responses were included in a single response category.

Fourteen respondents (24%) described the encouragement and support from other members and the leader as significant. Seventeen (29%) acknowledged that being in a group helped them to feel better about themselves and their abilities (i.e., increased self-confidence and self-esteem) and believed that their increased self-regard had made them more effective in their career planning process. According to Yalom (1985), responses describing group support, encouragement, and increased self-esteem are all outcomes of group cohesiveness. Ten respondents (17%) reported that seeing others dealing with the same issues and circumstances helped them feel less isolated (i.e., universality) and stated that this helped them with their career planning.

Several of the interviewees valued the self-assessment components of the workshop that are designed to facilitate greater self-knowledge and self-understanding. For example, 24 respondents (41%) credited the interest identification activities as being particularly helpful and 17 (29%) mentioned that the skills identification work was also beneficial. See Table 7 for a summary of Question 4E’s response categories and
### Table 7

**Workshop Factors Contributing to Development of Interview Respondents' Career Plans and Ideas (n = 47)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Client-identified factor</th>
<th>Corresponding therapeutic factor</th>
<th>n of clients citing factor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group members’ discussion/feedback</td>
<td>information/interpersonal learning</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research skills/occupational information</td>
<td>information</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning how to structure/manage career plans</td>
<td>information</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouragement/support from group members</td>
<td>cohesiveness</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased self-regard and self-confidence</td>
<td>cohesiveness</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeing other members with similar concerns</td>
<td>universality</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeing other members worse off than self</td>
<td>universality</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>Self-understanding</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interests assessment</td>
<td>self-understanding</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills assessment</td>
<td>self-understanding</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Yalom's (1985) corresponding therapeutic factors.

**Question 4F.** Do you think your current plans/ideas are firmly set, or do you think that they will change?

Over half (61%) of the 66 respondents with career plans or ideas said that their plans/ideas were firmly set, and 12% said theirs were "somewhat" set. Twenty-two respondents reported that their plans or ideas were not at all firmly set.

**Question 4G.** Do your current career plans or ideas move you in a direction away from your previous career?

Most clients (51) confirmed they were moving away from their previous career areas. Forty-nine of these career changers described the nature of their career changes. Only 12 were entering non-traditional occupations and 18 had decided to stay in the same occupation area.

**Question 5A.** Are you employed at this time?

Thirty-six of the 71 respondents were employed at the time of the interview.

**Question 5B.** (If 'yes' to 5A and 'yes' to 4A) Does this job fit into your career plans?

Only 12 of 36 employed respondents (33%) were working in positions that fit into their career plans.
**Question 6.** What was most beneficial to you about the workshop?

All interviewees responded to this question and identified in total, 153 beneficial aspects or experiences. Almost half (48%) of the responses clearly reflected respondents' involvement in, and reactions to, their experiences of being in a group. Over 23% of the responses pertained to a sense of universality that respondents experienced as a result of being in a group of similar women. Twenty-four responses (16%) indicated that respondents valued group discussion and sharing (i.e., exchanging ideas and hearing feedback from others about each other, and about occupations). Fourteen responses (9%) described the group support, encouragement, and positive tone of others as being very helpful.

The cognitive, self-awareness aspects of the workshop were referred to in 18 responses (12%). Specifically, self-assessment of skills, interests and personal barriers to change were described as beneficial. Several responses (10%) concerned respondents' attitude changes toward themselves and toward the career change process (i.e., positivity, hope, and motivation).
Finally, gaining research skills and resource information was referred to in 13% of the comments (see Table 8 for a summary of Question 6 responses).

**Question 7.** What was least beneficial to you about the workshop?

Forty-seven interviewees provided a wide range of comments, only some of which were mentioned by more than one respondent. The most common criticism was that the introduction and initial part of the workshop was too lengthy. Some respondents requested a quicker initial pace in order to begin working sooner with the core workshop material. Others disliked the lunch/coffee break arrangements, and a few wanted more time focused on instruction and hands-on work with research materials.

**Question 8.** What could be done with the workshop so that it would have better met your needs?

Forty-five clients made suggestions for improvement of the workshop. These suggestions were varied: (a) requests for integration of job search materials and work-placement opportunities into the workshop, (b) requests for improved attendance at follow-up meetings, (c) requests for sign-out privileges of resource materials, and (d) suggestions for managing and
Table 8

**Beneficial Elements of the Workshop (n = 71)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Client-identified elements</th>
<th>Corresponding therapeutic factors</th>
<th>% of comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Being in a group of similar others</td>
<td>universality</td>
<td>23.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group discussion</td>
<td>information/ interpersonal learning</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruction in research/resources</td>
<td>information</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-assessment of skills/interests/etc.</td>
<td>self-understanding</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation/hope fostered in group setting</td>
<td>hope</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support/encouragement from leader/members</td>
<td>cohesiveness</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning steps of career planning</td>
<td>information</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased self-esteem/ self-confidence</td>
<td>cohesiveness</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressing feelings</td>
<td>catharsis</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking personal responsibility</td>
<td>existential</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
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structuring the groups differently. Some comments were made by more than one respondent: (a) make the workshop longer than two days, (b) screen the groups according to professional aspirations and/or language abilities, (c) include one-on-one counselling time for each client with the leader during the workshop, and (d) focus more on helping clients to integrate results of self-assessment activities into the occupational exploration process.
Chapter 5

Discussion

Assumptions of the Study

A primary assumption of this study was that the women who present for counselling at W.E.C.U. are representative of the population of career changing or (re)entry women who are considering career options. This assumption allowed the present study to be grounded in major theories of women's career development. The researcher assumed that women participants in this study would experience the barriers to career development identified by major theories of women's career development (i.e., low self-esteem, and confusion and difficulty with goal setting due to combinations of home and work roles).

A second assumption was that group process factors do operate during the career counselling intervention included in this study. Yalom's (1985) model of group process was therefore considered appropriate for assessing workshop participants' experiences of group process.

Finally, although goal instability can be defended conceptually as representative of women's experience of
career transition, this study assumed that goal instability is also an appropriate outcome variable in applied research.

Limitations of the Study

Sample limitations. Although no systematic biases or criteria were used either for selecting research participants or for assigning them to particular workshop groups, clients were not randomly selected from a general population of career-changing and (re)entry women. Therefore, results of this study’s sample findings cannot be generalized to a larger population of career changing or (re)entry women receiving career counselling. In addition, because participants were drawn only from a group of clients at a career counselling unit, we do not know if and how participants differ from women who do not seek career counselling. This information could have implications for programming, establishment of target groups, and promotion of interventions to women in the community.

Measurement limitations. The two instruments used in this study were the only paper/pencil measures of goal instability and therapy/counselling group process factors known to the researcher. Although administration of these
instruments was simple and time efficient, each instrument has some weaknesses which limit internal and external validity of this study's results.

A major limitation of the HCGWS is that, according to Yalom (1985), the 11 therapeutic factors and their respective change mechanisms do not represent absolutely independent dimensions of helpfulness. Rather, experience of one therapeutic factor is most likely an experience of an interaction of more than one of the change mechanisms subsumed by Yalom's individual factors (Butler & Fuhriman, 1983). The interdependence of factors and their specific change mechanisms is evident in the presentation of items on the survey. For example, the item that reads "revealing embarrassing things about myself and still being accepted by the group" combines the therapeutic factors of catharsis and group cohesiveness. It is therefore impossible to know if a client is responding to one or both factors in the item, and if the client equally values the factors.

This study's use of the GIS is confounded by the infrequent use of the instrument in previous research studies relevant to counselling psychology. Although the GIS is psychometrically strong (Robbins & Patton, 1985),
it was initially developed and used among American undergraduate college students for research purposes only. The scale’s norming and construction process may therefore limit the construct and content validity of the instrument when used to assess other populations’ experience of life transitions (e.g., career change).

**Interpretation**

**Ranking of therapeutic factors.** Research participants in the W.E.C.U. career planning workshop placed greatest emphasis on the therapeutic factors of (a) universality, (b) catharsis, (c) group cohesiveness, and (d) the existential factor of personal responsibility (see Appendix F, items 8, 4, 3, and 11). These factors are the same top four reported by college students who had participated in a career group counselling intervention (Kivlighan et al., 1987). The ranking of therapeutic factors in the present study also partly corresponds with the list of group factors deemed helpful by participants in a job search group (e.g., group support, positive outlook, and belonging in the group) (Amundson & Borgen, 1988).

The participants in the present study clearly valued being in a group of similar others. Given that these
group participants are likely experiencing career change or (re)entry to the workforce as a significant life transition (Kahn, 1986; Rice & Goering, 1977), they probably experienced a sense of universality upon seeing that other women were going through similar changes. The group provided a forum in which to share common issues and feelings. Recognizing that other group members were "in the same boat" undoubtedly served to normalize clients' feelings and concerns regarding unemployment and career indecision.

Research on outpatient counselling/therapy groups (Butler & Fuhriman, 1983) and a college group career class (Kivlighan et al., 1987) consistently reports catharsis among the three most valued therapeutic factors. Catharsis among participants in this study's workshops likely resulted from participants' realization that they were not alone with their feelings of self-doubt (Hackett & Betz, 1981; Nevill & Schlecker, 1988; Wood, 1989) and concerns around multiple roles and career options (Fitzgerald & Betz, 1983; Perun & Del Vento Bielby, 1981). A sense of universality among group members may have freed participants to disclose such feelings and concerns in an atmosphere of empathy, trust,
and common understanding. Research participants' emphasis on expression of feelings suggests that clients who are embarking on career exploration and planning processes do not necessarily consider information and guidance (e.g., occupational and training information, direction in decision-making and goal setting) as the most important contributors to their learning during career group counselling. In fact, research participants in these career workshops ranked items representing the information/guidance factor only sixth and twelfth of thirteen.

Participants in this study also ranked group cohesiveness as an important aspect of their group learning experience. Cohesiveness is a determinant and effect of intermember acceptance, and as such, is a precondition for effectiveness of group work (Yalom, 1985). Women attending these workshops informally report that they feel validated and accepted in the groups. Members encourage and support one another as they face common barriers to career decision-making.

This study's participants also valued the workshop groups for helping them to assume responsibility for their behaviour. It is very common to see women clients
present at these group counselling workshops hoping that the group leader, other members, or a particular test/exercise, will tell them what occupational choices they should pursue and/or make. It is notable that this study's clients were influenced by their group experiences to accept responsibility for personal changes and planning processes. One means by which this existential factor may have become significant is related to the factor of group cohesiveness. Yalom (1985) suggests that when a group is cohesive, members’ mutual acceptance results in their development of positive regard for each other. For example, an individual may frequently hear how the group evaluates her more highly than she evaluates herself. Such feedback results in an increase in her self-esteem. This, in turn, makes the client feel more capable of taking responsibility for her career change process.

Research participants rated installation of hope equally with the existential factor of taking personal responsibility for one’s life. Hope is likely also a product of group cohesiveness. Members provided each other with positive feedback, support, and encouragement to have faith in themselves and to pursue their
life/career goals. Clients felt hopeful and positive about the future. This positive affect may help clients to accept the existential challenge that each client is solely responsible for her own learning and change processes.

Interestingly, survey items reflecting the factor of self-understanding were ranked ninth and tenth. Self-understanding refers to insights about one’s personality, abilities, and ways of being in the world. The workshop program strives to facilitate increased levels of client self-awareness. The content emphasizes self-assessment of life and career interests, value systems, life roles, abilities, and barriers and coping skills relating to personal change processes. It appears that participants did not value the self-understanding factor as highly as they valued the affective factors relating to group dynamics and processes (i.e., universality, expressing feelings, group cohesiveness). However, it is possible that participants’ lower ranking of the self-understanding items is related to the duration of the program. After two days of intense group discussion and activities, clients may not yet have had the opportunity to process any new aspects of self-awareness.
Yalom's (1985) definition of self-understanding as a therapeutic factor may also have inhibited participants' identification of the factor. Yalom agrees that operationalization of self-understanding is inconsistent because it subsumes many dimensions of self-knowledge. The HCGWS contained two items reflecting this factor (see Appendix F, items 9 and 14). Both are focused on understanding one's problems and do not focus on any other levels of self-knowledge. Clients in the present study may have rated self-understanding more highly if it had broader item representation on the HCGWS.

Participants' ratings of the survey item representing the interpersonal learning factor (see Appendix F, item 7) also resulted in a low ranking for that factor (eleventh of thirteen). Duration of the workshop and timing of the post-test likely confounded clients' ratings of this factor. Interpersonal learning refers to recognition, through member exchange, of how a client is perceived by other people. However, if members' feedback is discrepant with self-perceptions, or is comprised of new information, clients would have required more than two days of workshop time before they could integrate the information and acknowledge the relevant
survey items.

The ranking of the 14 change mechanisms on the HCGWS computed for this sample is almost identical to that reported by the only other known study using the HCGWS in a career counselling group (Kivlighan et al., 1987). This similarity of rankings between the two career counselling groups is strong evidence that career group clients do experience the 11 therapeutic factors of Yalom’s (1985) model. This is an important finding because by definition, career counselling groups emphasize educational components. Such groups are often considered benign counselling contexts in comparison to other kinds of counselling/therapy groups that focus on affective components and group dynamics. This study’s corroboration of Kivlighan et al.’s results should remind researchers and group leaders to be cognizant of therapeutic factors as they operate in career groups.

In addition, career group clients may identify and value the 11 factors differently than clients in other kinds of therapy groups. The set of top-rated factors in the career groups of this study and that of Kivlighan et al. (1987) were highly and positively correlated despite differences in their respective client groups and
workshop programs. This finding provides some evidence that career group clients value the therapeutic factors consistently. Furthermore, there are several differences between the highly correlated rankings of therapeutic factors in the above two career groups and rankings from other types of counselling groups (Butler & Fuhriman, 1983; Yalom, 1985). These two observations support Yalom's hypothesis that although the same 11 factors operate in all therapy groups, their interaction and relative importance can be expected to vary according to type of group.

Predictions of post-test goal instability. This study's pre-post testing efforts to account for variance in participants' levels of goal instability were unsuccessful. Correlations between change mechanisms and levels of goal instability, and between client demographics and levels of goal instability, were all statistically nonsignificant. The predictive models therefore did not uphold the construct validity assumed by the hypotheses. Nonsignificant results from the standard multiple regressions indicated that only a simple linear regression equation need have been tested, using pre-test GIS scores as the only significant
predictor variable.

It is possible, however, that there was construct validity in this study and its hypotheses. The researcher can suggest three factors which may have prevented finding any statistical support for the hypotheses. The two-day pre-post testing period was perhaps too brief for participants to process their group experience and therefore too brief to impact on post-test levels of goal instability. Furthermore, because the GIS is comprised of only 10 items, participants may have responded on the post-test in part due to memory of their pre-test responses from two days earlier.

Administration of the HCGW scale immediately after termination of the group may also have precluded finding significant results. Clients are generally very fatigued after two days of intense activity and discussion in the workshop. As they leave the workshop, it is likely that they have already partly withdrawn from the immediacy of their group experiences. They must detach themselves from the group, and prepare to return to their lives outside the safety of the group. This re-orienting process may explain why cognitive change mechanisms were the only set of change mechanisms to account for any variance in post-
test levels of goal instability.

Relationships between client-types and therapeutic factors. Results in this study failed to identify any statistically significant relationships between the set of client demographics and the set of change mechanisms. In other words, client differences (e.g., career status, age, marital status, counselling history) were not related to different therapeutic factors. These results do not corroborate Yalom's (1985) hypothesis that different kinds of people respond to different things in group counselling/therapy.

Yalom's (1985) hypothesis has received some support from studies that have assigned clients to group/interactive career interventions according to personality characteristics (Kivlighan et al., 1981; Robbins & Tucker, 1986). Results from these studies suggested that clients with different personality characteristics respond differently to the elements inherent in group career counselling. However, in the present study, client differences were not identified according to personality characteristics. Instead, general client demographic information was used to distinguish participants. It is possible that only
personality characteristics and not demographic factors predispose clients to respond differently to therapeutic factors.

However, the lack of any significant relationships between client characteristics and preferred therapeutic factors in this study may be grounds for reconsidering the role of individual differences in career group counselling. Results indicate that significant individual differences may have become "invisible" because members were carefully screened to ensure that their counselling needs, personal motivation, and life/career circumstances were well-matched to the workshop's content and goals. Women's common career counselling needs may be powerful enough to overrule any individual differences and thus any possible preferences among the 11 therapeutic factors (Lieberman, 1983).

**Follow-up interviews.** Results from the two-month post-workshop follow-up interviews provide strong evidence that the workshop had a positive impact on sample members. Two months after the workshop, the majority of participants interviewed reported that they were still benefiting from their workshop learning and group experiences. Almost all the sample members had
embarked on some aspect of career planning or employment. Clients' most common activities involved research. This finding contradicts follow-up results reported by women workshop participants in a 1977 study by Rice and Goering. In Rice and Goering's study, 70% of clients reported at six and 10 months post-workshop that they were involved in activities concerning their return to school. It is possible that later follow-up interviews in the present study would find similar results, particularly since many of this study's participants were already researching education options.

Workshop follow-up data also show that up to 50% of participants interviewed felt higher levels of self-regard due to their experiences in career group interventions (Kahn & Ward, 1983; Rice & Goering, 1977). Similarly, interviewees in the present study reported increased levels of self-esteem and self-confidence. However, interviewees reported not only a change in attitude about themselves, but also a positive change in attitude toward the career planning process. Such a positive attitude may have helped these clients to make the lifestyle and role changes necessary during their career change processes.
Comparison of the most beneficial aspects of the workshop cited by participants in follow-up interviews, and post-test ratings of therapeutic factors (as measured by the HCGWS), revealed possible discrepancies in participants' valuing of factors. At the time of the follow-up, participants reported that the most helpful factors were (a) universality, (b) information, (c) member interaction (information and interpersonal learning combined), (d) group cohesiveness, and (e) self-understanding. The most highly ranked factors at post-test were (a) universality, (b) catharsis, (c) group cohesiveness, and (d) existential responsibility. The affective therapeutic factors may have been more powerful and obvious to participants at post-test. After two months, participants had probably found that cognitive factors (e.g., self-understanding, information on resources and occupations) are the most tangible benefits of the group and therefore more applicable to career planning over the long term. This possible shift in participants' evaluation of factors indicates that the informational components of career group counselling may have the most far-reaching benefits for participants. However, it should be noted that at follow-up,
participants still valued the comfort and validation they felt while in a group of similar women two months earlier. Knowing that there are other group members going through similar life/career transitions may be a long-term source of comfort and motivation for participants.

A major purpose of conducting follow-up interviews was to establish if and how the workshop contributed to participants' career planning processes. The researcher was seeking information on the particular components of the program -- or participants' experiences of being in the program -- that participants applied to their career planning. When asked how the workshop contributed to the development of their career plans or ideas, interviewees most frequently cited aspects of self-knowledge (i.e., self-understanding). These responses indicate that self-assessment activities successfully provided participants with greater self-awareness of skills, talents, values, and interests which could be applied directly to career planning. The information/guidance factor was also mentioned frequently (i.e., knowledge of resources and occupations, learning the steps of career planning). This factor may have facilitated participants' second "step" in their career development processes. Participants could
use newly acquired research and career-management skills
to integrate the results of their self-assessment work
into their career planning.

Although participants in the follow-up interviews
referred most often to cognitive factors (self-
understanding and information/guidance) as contributing
to their career planning, they also valued the affective
outcomes of the group cohesiveness factor. Participants
were able to incorporate increased self-regard, self-
confidence, support, and hope into their career planning
processes. This finding confirms that participants
credited both cognitive and affective therapeutic factors
for making significant contributions to their career
planning.

It is notable that participants in the present study
could identify relationships between group therapeutic
factors and personal career planning processes. However,
it is unclear exactly how any of the 11 factors actually
facilitated participants' learning and planning
processes. Yalom (1985) acknowledges this dilemma of
applying the therapeutic factors in outcome research. He
states that the factors are not truly independent and
that they function variably according to a largely
unknown variety of client and group characteristics. This researcher can suggest one means by which the group therapeutic factors identified in this study may have contributed to career planning. Participants appeared to have derived information, self-understanding, and positive feelings about themselves and the career planning process from the therapeutic factors. Perhaps participants felt more secure and emotionally stable when they left the workshop than when they had begun. This stability may have permitted participants to more thoroughly and effectively organize and integrate cognitive benefits of the workshop (e.g., self-knowledge, knowledge of research strategies) into their career planning processes.

Clients' efforts to formulate and actively pursue career plans presumably require self-awareness of abilities, skills, life roles, and work preferences. According to Robbins and Patton (1985), "career planning is also determined by the presence of a coherent set of values and goals, which directs the type of career alternatives considered. Absence of a system of goals will result in indecisiveness about a career choice" (p. 223). These researchers thus define goal instability as a
lack of, or weakness in value systems and goal-setting abilities. The follow-up interview questions attempted to operationalize goal instability through references to "long-term" career plans and goals, establishment of career ideas, and "firmness" of current career plans. If the operationalization of goal instability in the follow-up interviews has construct validity, 73% of the follow-up respondents appeared to have relatively low levels of goal instability at follow-up. These clients could articulate their career goals and plans and were demonstrating self-confidence and self-esteem by actively organizing and pursuing their plans. Furthermore, these clients readily credited group therapeutic factors with making specific contributions to their career planning processes and hence their levels of goal instability. This finding may therefore be cautiously interpreted as evidence that several group therapeutic factors did impact on interviewees' levels of goal instability, as experienced during career transition.

In pre-post testing, however, no statistically significant predictive relationship was found between the therapeutic factors and levels of goal instability (as measured by the GIS). Four factors may be responsible for
the discrepancy in post-test and follow-up results. First, it is possible that the operationalization of goal instability applied in the follow-up interviews did not have construct validity equal to that of the GIS. Second, the data collection methods were different. Pre-post testing with paper/pencil instruments may solicit different results than those qualitative data gathered during follow-up interviews. Furthermore, information concerning group processes and clients' experiences of a group may be more easily articulated in dialogue with a researcher. Third, at follow-up clients were asked to specifically identify aspects of the workshop which contributed to career planning. However, post-test findings from linear regression analyses did not represent how clients valued the factors in relation to the dependent variable. Finally, the two-month period between post-test and follow-up provides clients with time to reflect upon and process their group experiences. Retrospective evaluations are perhaps more concise and more thorough than evaluations solicited at post-test.

Conclusions

The results indicate that Yalom's (1985) model of 11 group therapeutic factors can be applied to researching
career counselling groups. The ranking of group change mechanisms from this sample is highly consistent with that in the only other study of career group members' perceptions of the therapeutic factors (Kivlighan et al., 1987). This significant correlation of rankings indicates that the current study effectively replicated the earlier study. Taken together, results from the two studies strongly suggest that group therapeutic factors are important aspects of career group counselling.

Client demographics failed to account for variance in levels of goal instability at post-test. Perhaps a different selection of client demographics would be more highly correlated with levels of goal instability. It is also possible that only personality characteristics are viable predictors of goal instability.

This study failed to confirm that group therapeutic factors accounted for variance in the post-test outcome measure of goal instability. Other studies (e.g., Keller et al., 1983; Berman et al., 1977) have also failed to identify relationships between workshop content or type on numerous client outcome variables. Perhaps other outcome variables like career indecision, career maturity, self-esteem, or assertiveness may have been
more sensitive to any influence of the 11 therapeutic factors.

Contrary to post-test results, follow-up data strongly support the hypothesis that group therapeutic factors influenced interviewees' career planning. The 71 interview participants clearly valued the therapeutic factors for their contribution to career planning and goal-setting. It appears that at follow-up, these participants were more cognizant of the meaning and value of their group experiences than they were at post-test. In general, follow-up results confirm that career counselling for women should be conducted in group settings where clients are free to interact with each other, thereby benefiting from group processes and dynamics.

Furthermore, post-test analysis show that different kinds of women in this study did not prefer different elements of the group counselling environment. The majority of participants in this study valued a wide range of change mechanisms representing several group process factors. This finding suggests that career counselling groups should not differ in their emphasis on therapeutic factors according to client differences as
examined in this study. Establishing group members' workshop expectations and counselling goals may be sufficient for reducing member differences in responsiveness to group process.

Finally, the importance of follow-up interviews with workshop clients should be considered. The researcher expected follow-up interviews to last no longer than 10 minutes. However, most interviews lasted at least 15 minutes, and some extended to 30 minutes. Follow-up interview participants were generally very responsive to the researcher's questions, and seldom limited their discussion to responses to interview questions. Many voiced their appreciation of the opportunity to discuss with the researcher their career exploration and planning activities. Several sought the researcher's advice and feedback on their activities and difficulties to date. The follow-up interviews appeared to function as a counselling intervention for most of those clients contacted. Clients' apparent need for, and appreciation of, another's interest in their career development has implications for scheduling follow-up contact with clients.
Recommendations

The present study investigated the relationships among selected client demographics, therapeutic factors, and levels of goal instability. Although no statistically significant results were found in pre-post testing, follow-up data suggest that the construct of goal instability and Yalom's (1985) model of therapeutic factors merit further investigation in women's career counselling groups. Following are recommendations for research which may strengthen design, measurement, and data collection methods of outcome studies of women's career groups:

1. The HCGWS was the only known written instrument for assessing the therapeutic factors in career counselling groups. The instrument has two major weaknesses: (a) the items often present aspects of more than one therapeutic factor, and (b) there is unequal item representation for all factors. It is necessary to restructure the HCGWS by carefully selecting items that (a) represent one factor each, and (b) are related to career group content/goals. In order to give item coverage to all factors, the survey may need to be lengthened. Validity and reliability of any new versions
of the scale should also be investigated.

2. Since no statistically significant relationship between client demographics and preferences for therapeutic factors was discovered, future research might consider substituting personality characteristics for client demographics (e.g., clients' levels of goal instability).

3. The linear equations tested in this study could be rewritten for future outcome studies. For example, the role of goal instability as a predictor variable could be investigated in relation to workshop outcomes. This application of goal instability could provide more information on the utility of goal instability for explaining women's experiences of career transitions. In addition, the outcome variable could be changed to reflect clients' reports on workshop outcomes provided during follow-up interviews.

4. Follow-up results yielded valuable insights on client responsiveness to group therapeutic factors. Future research on the factors' operations in career groups might also benefit by using qualitative data collection methods. Personal interviews with clients might solicit more detailed information regarding (a) how
and when clients experience the therapeutic factors, (b) why clients value the factors differently, and (c) in what specific ways clients believe the factors contribute to their learning and change processes.

5. The operationalization of goal instability used at follow-up was quite possibly different than that of the GIS. It would be useful to administer the GIS at follow-up assessment to ascertain whether clients’ levels of goal instability had changed between post-test and follow-up testing. Combining follow-up interviews with follow-up testing on the GIS would provide quantitative and qualitative information about the relationships between clients’ workshop experiences and levels of goal instability.
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International Universities Press.


Appendix A

Agenda and Activities of W.E.C.U.

Career Planning Workshop

Day I

A) 1. Introductions
2. Client expectations
3. Presentation of agenda
4. Norm setting

B) 1. Barriers to change and employment
2. Employment needs assessment
3. Life roles

C) 1. Work values
2. Skills identification
4. Closing activities - Day I

Day II

D) 1. Opening activities: review of Day I and homework
2. Interests identification: C.O.I.I. results and Holland interest codes
3. Introduction to career planning/exploration and labour market information resources
4. Decision-making/problem-solving models
E) 1. Goal setting: action plans

2. Dealing with discounting and other barriers to action

3. Termination activity

Activities

1. Barriers to change and employment:

   a) A wall of blank bricks is drawn by the leader on a board. Clients are invited to identify in small groups their most significant barriers to life changes. Each group presents its findings and labels the bricks on the wall according to those identified barriers. Group discussion follows regarding origins of barriers, and means of overcoming them.

   b) General discussion regarding fears, concerns, and confounding issues involved in clients' career exploration or changes.

2. Employment needs assessment:

   Clients are asked to identify and prioritize their needs and standards for potential employment. Small group discussion facilitates exploration and motivation to consider "dreams" and personal potential.

3. Life roles:

   An individual written roles exercise is completed by
all clients regarding current life roles, and then potential and preferred life roles. Discussion and sharing around "self versus other" commitments and priorities is facilitated by the group leader. A feminist orientation to understanding the roles of women in society and the workforce is introduced to clients.

4. Work values:

Group discussion supported with flip charts focuses on the meaning and significance of work values. A questionnaire focusing on prioritizing and describing work-related values is assigned for homework completion and subsequent discussion on Day II of the workshop.

5. Skills identification:

A variety of reading materials and written exercises are presented (e.g., skills checklists, sample occupational descriptions). Skills are identified and prioritized as self-management, functional, or work specific.

6. Interests identification:

a) The Canadian Occupational Interest Inventory is administered to all participants, and debriefed in the group context.

b) The Holland Party Game is presented as a means of
self-identifying interest-codes.

7. Resources and research:

A variety of labour market information resources and occupational description resources are introduced to participants. Instructions in research strategies according to clients' research needs are presented and accompanied by supervised hands-on use.

8. Decision-making:

A five step decision-making model is presented. Clients are invited to either analyse a personal significant life decision in terms of the model, or to project the model's structure onto an eventual career decision.

9. Goal setting:

Clients break into small groups for discussion of goal-setting for their careers, and the issues and circumstances requiring consideration. A variety of points are identified for ensuring "good" goals. Clients complete a contract for career planning which includes both short and long-term goals.

10. Discounting:

Group discussion is focused on clients' potential discounting of the tools and positive approaches to
career planning introduced during the workshop. Clients provide one another with trouble-shooting techniques, much of which involves cognitive reframing of negative assumptions and attitudes.
Appendix B

Client Consent Letter

Dear Workshop Participant:

At this time the Career planning Workshop which you are about to attend is undergoing evaluation. I am conducting this evaluation to see if the workshop meets women’s career counselling needs. I also want to know if and how it may help women make career decisions. This research is being done for a Masters degree thesis from U.B.C..

I am requesting your participation in my research on this workshop. This will mean that you fill out two questionnaires now, (ten minutes) and two questionnaires on the last day of the workshop (fifteen minutes). The group leader will give you time to complete the forms on the last day. In addition, I will contact you by telephone in two months. In a brief telephone interview, I will ask you some simple questions about your career plans.

Your participation in this research project is purely voluntary. You are under no obligation to participate and are free to deny consent. Your access to services from this office, from other government
I have read this form and consent to participate in this research project. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from this study at any time.

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Appendix C

Participant's Information Sheet

Following are a number of questions about your present life situation. Please respond to all items as accurately as you can. The information you provide will help us to better identify and meet women's career counselling needs. Thank you for your cooperation.

1. Please circle the letter of the sentence that best describes your present situation.

   A. You are entering the labour force for the first time.

   B. You are returning to the labour force after an absence when you were busy with activities outside the labour force e.g., raising your family.

   C. You have left your last paid job and are now considering a career change.

   D. Other (please describe)________________________

2. Are you:___ married/living with a partner
   ___ single
   ___ separated/divorced
3. At this time, are you the main wage-earner in your household?

   ___ yes    ___ no

4. How old are you?

   ___ 25 - 29    ___ 40 - 44
   ___ 30 - 34    ___ 45 - 49
   ___ 35 - 39    ___ 50 - 60

5. Have you received any career counselling before coming to this office?

   ___ yes    ___ no

   If "yes", was it ___ group counselling?
   ___ individual counselling?
   ___ both?

6. If you have held paid jobs at any time in your life, which one of the following would best describe the most typical work you have done? Check one:

   ___ Clerical    ___ Sales
   ___ Social Services    ___ Finance
   ___ Teaching    ___ Health Care
   ___ Other (please name)____________________
   ___ Many different, unrelated jobs
Appendix D

SELF-EXPRESSION INVENTORY

Directions: Following are a number of statements that reflect various ways in which we can describe ourselves. After reading each statement, one at a time, circle a number along the scale which ranges from 1 (Strongly Agree) to 6 (Strongly Disagree). There are no right or wrong answers, so please just make your best judgement. Simply try to rate the extent to which you agree with each statement. Do not spend too much time with any one statement. Circle the number which best fits for each statement and do not leave any unanswered.

Please Circle a Number for Each Statement, along:

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</table>

1. It's hard to find a reason for working:
   1   2   3   4   5   6
2. I don't seem to make decisions by myself:
   1   2   3   4   5   6
3. I have confusion about who I am:
   1   2   3   4   5   6
4. I have more ideas than energy:
   1   2   3   4   5   6
5. I lose my sense of direction:
   1   2   3   4   5   6
6. It's easier for me to start than to finish projects:
   1   2   3   4   5   6
7. I don't seem to get going on anything important:
   1   2   3   4   5   6
8. I wonder where my life is headed:
   1   2   3   4   5   6
9. I don't seem to have the drive to get my work done:
   1   2   3   4   5   6
10. After awhile I lose sight of my goals:
    1   2   3   4   5   6
Appendix E

Instruction Sheet (Day II)

Dear Workshop Participant:

This is the second set of questionnaires for you to complete. It will take less than fifteen minutes for you to do both questionnaires. Please complete them in this order:

1. Self-Expression Inventory

2. How Career Groups Work Scale

Please complete all items on each questionnaire. When you have finished both instruments, please put them back in the envelope and hand it to the receptionist as you leave.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Diana Mawson

Researcher
Appendix F

HOW CAREER GROUPS WORK

Directions: The following items are some aspects of the career group experience which others in the past have found useful in helping them learn. Please review in your mind the time you have spent in this Career Planning workshop. Read all these items, then make a decision and indicate for each item whether it was an aspect of your group that was important for your learning.

Please CIRCLE THE NUMBER that corresponds to the best description of your learning experience.

Respond to ALL items using the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Did not apply to my learning in the group</th>
<th>Applied somewhat</th>
<th>Definitely an important part of my experience leading to learning</th>
<th>One of the two most important experiences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. The group members and/or leader gave me some direct advice or suggestions about how to deal with some career/life problems or with some important relationships.

2. Helping others, being important to others, giving part of myself to others has been an important experience for me and has resulted in a change in my attitude toward myself.

3. The important issue was that I was an involved member of a group: I felt close to the other members.

4. I was able to express feelings very fully: I was able to say what I felt rather than holding it in; I was able to express negative and/or positive feelings about myself, career and other people.

5. I was able to use others as models, to pattern myself after another member and/or leader. Seeing how others approach problems or make decisions gave me ideas of how I could.

6. The group was, in a sense, like my family. Rather than pass through blindly, however, I was able to understand old hang-ups with parents, brothers, sisters. It was like reliving, only in a more aware manner, my early family experience.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>The group helped me understand the type of impact I have on others; they told me honestly what they thought of me and how I come across.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>I learned that “we’re all in the same boat.” My problems, feelings, fears, are not unique and I share much with others in the group.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Getting insight into the causes and sources of my hang-ups: learning that some of the things I think or feel are related to earlier periods in my life.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>The group gave me hope; I saw that others with similar problems and experiences were able to grow and overcome their hang-ups.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>The experience that despite the availability of others, I must still face life alone and take ultimate responsibility for the way I live.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>The group helped me by encouraging me to experiment with new forms of behavior.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>I was able to reveal embarrassing things about myself and still be accepted by other group members.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>I learned some of the causes and sources of my problems. Now I understand better why I think and feel the way I do.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix G

Follow-up Interview

Script: Hello. May I speak with ..... My name is Diana Mawson. I’m calling about the Career Planning workshop you took at the Women’s Employment Counselling Unit two months Ago. Do you remember attending?... (name) was your group leader. You will recall that you volunteered to participate in an evaluation of the workshop at that time. I am the person who is conducting that evaluation. I am calling you today/night to do the follow-up interview for the evaluation. This telephone interview will take about ten minutes. Is it convenient for you to answer some questions for me now? Or should I call you back at another time?

(If convenient, proceed)

Before we begin, I want to remind you that all your answers to my questions will be kept strictly confidential. The government offices are not in any way connected with my evaluation project. There will be eight questions. I will read each question to you twice. Please try to make your answers as specific as possible. I will be writing notes as you talk. Do you have any questions before we begin?...

Questions:

1. a) What have you been doing since the workshop in terms of employment or training?
   b) Did you attend the workshop follow-up meeting?

2. Have you had any career counselling since the workshop? Please answer yes or no.

3. a) Did you leave the workshop with any long-term specific career plans or ideas about what career direction you wanted to take? Please answer yes or no.
   b) If no: What, if anything, did you come away with?

4. a) At present, do you have any concrete goals or plans for your career? Please answer yes (b follows) or no (c follows).
b) Are these goals and plans the same ones you had when you left the workshop? Please answer yes or no.

c) Do you have any ideas that you are considering for a long term career?

d) Did the workshop contribute anything to the development of your current career plans/ideas? Please answer yes or no.

e) (if yes to 4d): Can you give me some specific examples of how the workshop helped you develop these career plans/ideas?

f) Do you think your current career plans/ideas are firmly set, or do you think they will change? Please answer yes or no.

g) Do your current career plans or career ideas move you in a direction away from your previous career?

5. a) Are you employed at this time?

b) (if yes to 5a and to 4a): Does this job fit into your career plans? Please answer yes or no.

Now I will ask you some questions about your opinions of the workshop. Would you like me to refresh your memory about the workshop by naming some of the things the workshop covered?...

6. What was most beneficial to you about the workshop?

7. What was least beneficial to you about the workshop?

8. What could be done with the workshop so that it would have better met your needs?