HAIGAZIAN UNIVERSITY

The Contribution of Emotional Intelligence and Personality Traits to Career Decision Making Self Efficacy among University Students in Lebanon

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my parents Dr. Sarkis and Rita, and my sister Sarine, who believed in me and supported me in every possible way to reach my goals.

I would also like to dedicate this thesis to Dr. Hanine Hout who always believed in my potential and supported me every step of the way.

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to conduct correlation and regression analyses to investigate the relationship between and the contribution of Emotional Intelligence, the Big Five personality traits to Career Decision Self-Efficacy. The research investigated 6 hypotheses. Data for this study was collected from a sample of 200 students receiving education from three American system universities in Beirut (HU, AUB, & LAU). The data were analyzed by using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 20.0 software. Firstly, Reliability Analyses of all measurement instruments were conducted and their factor structure was revised based on the results. Then a correlation analysis was done to test correlation between EI, the Big Five, and CDSE. The results showed that neuroticism was not significantly correlated with CDSE, while Openness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness were significantly positively correlated. Furthermore, the mediating role of Emotional Self Efficacy in explaining CDSE in relation to the Big Five has also been confirmed. Moreover, a hierarchical regression analysis was done in order to test the prediction level of each independent variable. The results showed that Emotional Intelligence, Conscientiousness, and Neuroticism, in order, were significantly predictive of CDSE. Support for these findings was provided. Practice implications for vocational and career counselors were discussed. Results highlighted the importance of addressing emotional intelligence within a counseling context.

The Contribution of Emotional Intelligence and Personality Traits to Career Decision Making Self Efficacy among University Students in Lebanon

Self-beliefs are a critical component of most modern theories of human motivation. For instance, the central construct in Albert Bandura's (1986, 1997) social cognitive theory is **self-efficacy**, which he defined as one's belief in one's ability to succeed in specific situations or accomplish certain tasks. More specifically, Bandura believed that self-efficacy convictions assume a mediational role in that they fill in as filters between prior accomplishments or abilities and resulting behavior. Students, for example, who interpret the results of their test scores positively may utilize that interpretation to fuel their push to study hard in order to perform well on exams. Moreover, the convictions about one's own abilities impact the selection of tasks and activities; those activities that people believe they are unable to do well are typically avoided, whereas others that believe they can do effectively are more likely pursued (Bandura, 1986, 1997).

In addition, self-efficacy beliefs impact how much exertion individuals will exhaust on an action or task and how long they will persist in the face of difficulty. Strong perseverance typically results in higher performance attainments. Moreover, people who judge themselves efficacious in a given context are probably going to be resilient to obstacles and will not perceive minor setbacks to be insurmountable hindrances. On the other hand, people who are tormented with low confidence in a given situation are likely to give up easily, unconvinced that sustained efforts will result in increased capabilities (Bandura, 1986, 1997).

A specific example of self-efficacy is career decision-making self-efficacy, which was the focus of this paper (dependent variable). It is defined as an individual’s confidence in his or her abilities to effectively engage in career decision-making tasks and activities (Taylor & Betz, 1983). Many studies have shown that students, in general, lack sufficient knowledge and appropriate skills when it comes to discussing their future careers. In fact, all these studies

concluded that students 1) do not know their future plans, 2) are not sure what profession to choose, 3) need help in finding a job, 4) do not know how to find a job, and 5) have low self-esteem and fear of unemployment (Mizan, 2005; Bin Abu Talib, Mohamad, and Abdul Wahab, 2015; Pečjak & Košir, 2007; Ronan, 2005). Based on that, this study attempted to further understand career decision-making self-efficacy, specifically as it related to emotional intelligence and personality traits.

In fact, many variables could be associated with career decision-making, which, according to many researchers, is considered to be a complex and multidimensional process (Abbott 2001; Johnson & Mortimer 2002; Esters & Bowen 2004; Salami 2008). Apart from the ever increasing number of professions in the last decade which, alone, is complicating the career decision process for many of the students, other individual characteristics have to be taken into account which could be playing a significant role in this process (Gati, Landman, Davidovitch, Asulin-Peretz, & Gadassi, 2010).

For instance, a variable that correlated with career decision making self-efficacy was emotional intelligence, which is defined as "an individual's ability to monitor, label, and comprehend his or her own different emotions and feelings as well as those of others, and to use this affective information to guide his/her thinking and actions" (Salovey & Mayer, 2004). According to Emmerling & Cherniss (2003), Emotional Intelligence plays significant yet often misunderstood role in the career decision-making process as a lot of practitioners still have limited insight into this major aspect of mental life. Most students often struggle with common psychological issues, such as, locus of control, anxiety, identity formation and autonomy, during their career decision planning, without being aware of the role of emotions in influencing this whole process. In conclusion, career decisions that take into consideration people's values, tasks and activities of interest, their levels of aspirations, how work roles interact with their non-work roles, and what and how to seek needed career information as well as other career related

elements, are most likely influenced by the student's emotional makeup (Emmerling & Cherniss, 2003). Therefore, the first independent variable used in this study was emotional intelligence and how it correlated with career decision making efficacy.

Another significant factor that defined one's individuality and influences one's mental functioning as well as various decision making processes, whether personal or professional, was one's personality. People's various behaviors are partially determined by internal characteristics that reside within them (Caprara, et. al, 2000; Schmitt, et. al, 2007); hence, it's important to understand one's personality traits and how they could impact the career decision making process (Holland, 1997; Borgen & Betz, 2008; Hou, Wu, & Lui, 2014). Taking into account the Big Five Personality Traits, known as Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism, OCEAN in short, the advocates supporting this model stated that these five traits were responsible for one's dispositional tendencies. Consequently, studies have shown, for instance, that career-decided students who made their decisions more self-confidently, were higher in extraversion, conscientiousness, openness and emotional stability, and lower in neuroticism (Pečjak & Košir, 2007; Lounsbury, 2005). Based on all the above, the present study was an endeavor to understand career decision making self-efficacy of Lebanese young adults in relation to emotional intelligence and personality traits.

Background of the Study

Career Decision Making Self Efficacy

Career decision making self-efficacy was developed on two well-established psychological theories: one developed in the disciplines of social and personality psychology (the theory of self-efficacy) and the other induced from vocational psychology (the theory of career maturity).Taylor and Betz (1983) integrated the two theoretical perspectives and

assembled the Career Decision Self-Efficacy Scale (CDSE) that assesses the expectations of self-efficacy in the domain of behaviors relevant to the process of career decisions.

`The construct was defined based on the behavioral indicators that characterized the five areas of competency for making career choices outlined in Crites' hierarchical model of career maturity (1978). These five areas comprised accurate self-appraisal, gathering occupational information, goal selection, making plans for the future and problem solving, which constituted the set of subscales of the CDSE. Subsequently, Betz, Klein, and Taylor (1996) developed a short version of this measurement tool called "The Career Decision Self-Efficacy Scale—Short Form" (CDSE-SF), which was used in the current study. This scale comprises 25 items divided by the mentioned five subscales; each composed of five statements that describe the tasks necessary for career decision-making. This scale is also reflected by a total score of these subscales.

According to previous researchers, the lack of career decision-making was positively correlated with problems in career exploration and career indecisiveness. In a study conducted by Creed, Patton, and Prideaux (2006), 50% of college freshmen experienced career indecision and liked assistance in making career decisions. Another study found a negative correlation between career decision self-efficacy and dysfunctional, self-defeating career thoughts (Grier-Reed, Skaar, & Conkel-Ziebell, 2009). Further results also revealed a significant increase in career decision self-efficacy accompanied by a significant decrease in career indecision (Betz, Hammond, & Multon, 2005; Betz & Luzzo, 1996; Betz & Taylor, 2001; Betz & Voyten, 1997; Taylor & Betz, 1983; Taylor & Popma, 1990). Furthermore, career decision-making self-efficacy has been shown to be related to greater engagement in the career decision-making process, especially career planning (Chung, 2002) and exploration activities (Gushue, Clarke, Pantzer, & Scanlan, 2006).

In conclusion, career decision self-efficacy is an essential factor in predicting one's level of career decision making, as it takes part in determining one's well-being. Furthermore, keeping in mind how one's internal characteristics (personality, emotions, etc) influence one's behavior and mental processes, we conducted this current study to investigate how Emotional Intelligence and the Big Five Personality Traits, both internal characteristics, contributed to Career Decision Making Self-Efficacy among Lebanese university students.

Emotional Intelligence and Career Decision Self Efficacy

Emotions played an important role in career decision-making processes, but their influence was not fully understood and acknowledged (Di Fabio, 2012; Emmerling & Cherniss, 2003; Young, 2010). Emotion, in addition to cognition, was a key determining factor in career choice and career behavior (Kidd, 1998). According to Caruso and Wolfe (2001), emotions played a crucial role in career development and selection. Furthermore, emotions motivated and energized actions, they controlled and regulated actions, and they facilitated accessing and developing narratives about careers. To advance knowledge about the effects of emotions on career decisions, researchers introduced the concept of emotional intelligence (EI) to investigate career-related issues (e.g., Brown et al., 2003; Carson & Carson, 1998). Moreover, EI was considered to be a significant factor influencing career decision making because people who had higher EI were more likely to use their emotional experiences to guide their thoughts and actions in planning their careers (Di Fabio, Palazzeschi, Asulin-Peretz, & Gati, 2013).

For instance, a recent study done by Zhou Jiang (2014) examined the effect of emotional intelligence (EI) on career decision-making self-efficacy (CDMSE) in China and South Korea. Upon the collection of data from undergraduate students from China (N= 149) and South Korea (N= 218), the results showed that EI was positively related to CDMSE (Jiang, 2014). Moreover, Jiang (2016) studied the relationship between EI and CDMSE among 185 Chinese university

students, but simultaneously focused on the mediating role of goal and professional commitment. Results similarly showed a positive correlation between EI and CDMSE, and higher correlation with the mediation of goal and professional commitment (Jiang, 2016). Research showed that those who scored high on commitment to goals and profession performed better in achieving their goals and career than those who scored lower; which consequently contributed to an increase in self-efficacy (Durham, Knight, & Locke, 1997; Seijts Latham, Tasa, & Latham., 2004; Wood & Bandura, 1989).

Having said that, it was clear that Emotional Intelligence played a significant role on career decision making self-efficacy. It's through emotional experiences that the individual had further insight and guidance to plan, decide, and hence act more confidently. Therefore, this present study investigated the impact of this essential factor on career decision making self-efficacy among Lebanese university students.

Personality traits and Career Decision Making Self Efficacy

Several studies have been conducted to find the relation between personality and confidence (or self-efficacy). One study conducted by Nauta (2004) reported several moderately strong relationships between the Big Five factors as measured by the Adjective Check List (ACL) - an assessment developed to identify common psychological traits containing 300 **adjectives** such as intelligent, cautious, clear-thinking, determined, and poised (Gough, et. al, 1983) - and the Skills Confidence Inventory (SCI). Openness, a personality trait, was correlated at or above .30 (a moderate effect size) with investigative, artistic, social, and enterprising confidence. Extraversion, another personality trait, was correlated with social and enterprising confidence, whereas agreeableness was also correlated with social confidence. Nauta also found that self-efficacy mediated the relationships between personality and interests (Nauta, 2004).

The Big Five personality factors have been widely researched with regard to vocational behavior (Betz, 2007). Hartman and Betz (2007) sought to investigate the effects of the Big Five personality factors on career self-efficacy. Results demonstrated that neuroticism was a "consistent predictor of inefficacy, whereas conscientiousness and extraversion were the most robust predictors of career-related self-efficacy" (p. 156).These findings were consistent with Bandura's argument that positive affect raised perceived self-efficacy and negative affect lowers it. In addition, openness to experience correlated with self-efficacy for creative and intellectual pursuits. In addition, a study conducted in 2016 by Ambiel and Noronha found that agreeableness, extraversion and conscientiousness were the main predictors of professional choice self-efficacy.

Extending our focus on Social Cognitive Career Theory framework of Bandura from career choice formation to career decision-making process (Jin, Watkins, & Yuen, 2009; Rogers, Creed, & Glendon, 2008), a number of researchers have explored the mediating role of career decision self-efficacy between person inputs, such as personality, and certain career formation process variables, for example, career commitment (Jin et al., 2009; Wang et al., 2006) and career planning and exploration (Rogers et al., 2008). Jin et al. (2009) revealed that neuroticism, conscientiousness, and agreeableness had both direct and indirect effects on career commitment via career decision self-efficacy. Similarly, Rogers et al. (2008) found that career decision self-efficacy partially mediated the relationship between openness and conscientiousness and career planning. Career decision self-efficacy emerged as a partial mediator between personality factors, such as conscientiousness and extraversion, and career exploration. On the other hand, Wang, Jome, Haase, and Bruch (2006) reported that career decision self-efficacy fully mediated the relationship between extraversion and career choice commitment for American students. However, career choice commitment was found to be influenced both directly and indirectly by neuroticism and extraversion for students of color.

In conclusion, several investigations have revealed the significance of personality, specifically the Big Five Personality Traits (OCEAN) as they play an inevitable role in determining one's behavior and metal processes. Moreover, these studies shed light on how each of these five personality traits was correlated, directly and indirectly, to career decision making self-efficacy. Hence, we used this important variable, an internal characteristic, along with Emotional Intelligence, another internal characteristic, to investigate how these two variables together have contributed to career decision making self-efficacy among Lebanese university students.

Problem Statement

On the basis of findings described in the literature to date, the present study aimed to analyze the relationship between Emotional Intelligence, personality traits, and career decision-making self-efficacy. More succinctly, the global view of this study was to delineate how Emotional Intelligence played a moderating role in the relationship between the Big Five Personality Traits and Career Decision Making Self-Efficacy.

Hence the following hypotheses were investigated:

1- There is a negative correlation between neuroticism and Career Decision Self-Efficacy.

2- A. There is a positive correlation between conscientiousness and Career Decision Self-Efficacy.

B. The is a positive correlation between extraversion and Career Decision Self-Efficacy

C. There is a positive correlation between openness to experience and Career Decision Self-Efficacy.

D. There is a positive correlation between agreeableness and Career Decision Self-Efficacy.

3- There is a positive correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Career Decision Self-Efficacy.

4- Emotional Intelligence is the mediating factor in the relationship between the Big Five Personality Traits and Career Decision Self-Efficacy.

Significance of this Study

In the modern age of science and technology, hundreds of vocations are available to choose from. However, the choice of a right vocation is by itself a complicated process for many young people, especially in Lebanon, as their career choice depends upon several factors. Some of these factors, to mention just a few, are family pressure manifested in those Lebanese parents that assume to know what best fits their children, the current economic crisis in Lebanon, as unemployment rates are increasing, peer pressure and many others. This study, however, used Emotional Intelligence and Personality traits as the two independent variables since both of these factors play a significant role in influencing each person's mindset and hence, allowing him/her to perceive and deal with stressful situations, such as, the career decision making process., in his/her unique kind of way.

Several studies abroad have related personality or emotional intelligence with career decision making self-efficacy alone, yet no research in Lebanon has investigated these three variables together. Researchers in Lebanon failed to understand or consider the importance of career counseling and more importantly the influence of one's personal variables, i.e. emotions and personality, as they play a significant role in determining one's mindset including one's r career decision making self-efficacy. Having said that, this study would be of great significance in Lebanon as it would raise awareness in schools and universities, and allow teachers and school counselors to help students start becoming aware of who they are, how they think and feel, how they perceive situations and deal with them, and in turn, how to confidently make career decisions.

This study was also significant on the clinical ground, because career self-efficacy (dependent variable) initially brings forward the concept of "approach versus avoidance" behavior; that is to say that approach behavior describes what a person would try while avoidance behavior refers to things he or she would not try (Bandura, 1997). Therefore, this study investigated both the content of career choice, that is, the types of educational majors, and careers a person would attempt, and the process of career choice, that is, the career exploratory and decision making behaviors essential to making good choices based on emotions and personality. This, itself would have a major effect on the individual's psychological well-being. Hence, the findings of this study would help the therapist/counselor be able to make effective interventions in order to help the struggling students develop first of all, an awareness of their own emotional intelligence, how it would effect on their self-confidence, a concern for their future by choosing to become aware of how satisfying career choices are made, a sense of personal control over their careers by choosing to seek advice from credible sources, confidence to engage in designing their occupational futures and executing plans to make them a reality by ultimately choosing to believe in their ability to make the best choice for themselves.

Overview of Methodology

This research attempted to be a quantitative study using correlational and regression analyses to determine the relationship between emotional intelligence and the big 5 personality traits with career decision making self- efficacy. We used a convenient sample of 200 English speaking university students of mixed genders, mixed majors, age ranging between 18 and 23. The materials used in this study were a collection of informed consent, a demographic questionnaire, and the three main questionnaires targeting the variables of this study. The Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT; Salovey and Mayer,1990)**,**made of 33, items aimed to measure the participants' Emotional Intelligence; the Big Five Inventory (BFI;

John, et. al, 1991) comprising 44 items, aimed to measure the big 5 personality traits of the participants; and the Career Decision Self-Efficacy scale Short-Form (CDSE-SF; Betz & Voyten, 1997), comprising 25 items. Aimed to measure the participants' self-efficacy in choosing their careers. Each of these scales was a self-report on a five point Linkert scale, 1 being strongly disagree to 5 being strongly agree.

Students that took part in this study were from Haigazian University (HU), Lebanese American University (LAU), and American University of Beirut (AUB), as they were randomly selected from the university campuses and were asked to fill out a survey pack by hand. Upon completion, they were thanked verbally.

Limitations

This study was conducted on English speaking, private university students and therefore caution must be done in generalizing results to non-English speaking universities. It was more desirable to use a larger sample. Moreover, not using high school seniors as participants in the study might have also effected on the results.

Definition of Key Term:

*1) Self- efficacy theory: "*A person's beliefs concerning his or her ability to successfully perform a given task or behavior and the major mediator of behavior and behavior change" (Bandura 1977).

2) Career decision self-efficacy: "An individual's confidence in her or his abilities to effectively engage in career decision-making tasks and activities" (Taylor & Betz, 1983)

3) Emotional Intelligence: "An individual's ability to monitor and discriminate his or her own emotions and feelings and also those of others, and to use this affective information to guide thinking and actions" (Salovey & Mayer, 2004)

4) Personality traits: **"**Personality traits are distinguishing qualities or **characteristics** that are the embodiment of an individual's. They are your habitual patterns of behavior, temperament and emotion. Skills, on the other hand, are the learned capacity to carry out specific tasks."

5) Big Five Personality Traits: "the 'Big Five' is a term used to describe the five broad traits of human personality which are:

5.1) Openness: describes how open or resistant someone is to change.

5.2) Conscientiousness: describes the level of discipline, and how prone he or she is to taking risks.

5.3) Extraversion: describes how social a person is or how warm and loving they tend to

5.4) Agreeableness: describes how kind, dependable, and cooperative a person is

5.5) Neuroticism: describes how nervous or anxious a person tends to be, as well as the degree of self-confidence and self-contentment he or she possesses."

(Goldberg, L. R., 1993).

Chapter 2

Literature Review

The purpose of the current study was to examine the contribution of Emotional Intelligence (EI) and the Big Five Personality Traits to one's self-efficacy in career decision making. This chapter presents the review of literature related to the investigated hypotheses.

Career Decision Making Self-Efficacy

Self-Efficacy Theory

Bandura (1977) originally proposed the concept of self-efficacy expectations claiming that they refer to a person's beliefs regarding his or her ability to successfully perform a given task or behavior, assuming they be major mediators of behavior and behavior change. According to the theory, low self-efficacy expectations regarding a behavior lead to avoidance of those behaviors, whereas stronger self-efficacy expectations should lead to approach behavior. Thus, self-efficacy expectations can be useful in comprehending and predicting behavior (Bandura, 1986, 1997). In addition, interventions designed to facilitate approach behavior are effective because they increase the individual's expectations of self-efficacy with respect to the problematic, which is the previously avoided, behavior. Moreover, Bandura (1977, 1997) specified four sources of information through which self-efficacy expectations are learned and by which they can be modified. These sources of information include: (a) performance accomplishments, which means experiences of successfully performing the behaviors in

question; (b) vicarious learning or modeling; (c) verbal persuasion, for example, encouragement and support from others, and (d) lower levels of emotional arousal, that is, anxiety, in relation to the behavior. Therefore, the theoretical context of the self-efficacy construct provides not only a means for understanding the development of self-efficacy beliefs, but also the means for their modification through interventions associating positive applications of the four sources of self-efficacy information.

Career Self-Efficacy

The term career self-efficacy is a general term meant to summarize the possibility that low expectations of self-efficacy with respect to some aspect of career behavior may serve as a disadvantage to the ideal career choice and development (Betz & Hackett, 1986). Hackett and Betz (1981) determined the different uses of self-efficacy theory with reference to career choice content and career choice process; which was also made previously in Crites's 1978 theory of career maturity. Career choice content refers to content domains-for example, math, writing, and science. Low self-efficacy in a content area would presumably lead to avoidance of that area of course work or of careers in that area. Career choice process domains are those behavioral domains important to the choice and implementation of any career area; career decision-making self-efficacy is the most obvious example of this, but domains such as assertiveness, job search self-efficacy, and self-efficacy with respect to combining home and career are other examples.

Career Maturity Theory

University years are viewed as a time in which young people can engage in new levels of self-awareness and career exploration (Beauchamp & Kiewra, 2004); therefore, areas of career awareness that students may have gained in high school, which in turn boosts their level of self-

efficacy in choosing their majors, can be enhanced during the college years. One important area is career maturity. No specific agreement has been made on how to conceptualize career maturity. According to Super (1951, 1963), the founder of this construct, career maturity is the maturity which a person shows relative to their developmental stage, that is, comparing the individual's stage of maturity with his or her chronological age. On the other hand, Crites (1968) compares a person's maturity with others who differ in age, but are in the same stage of maturity, for example, students in the exploratory stage (15- 21 years). Although the concept of self-efficacy expectations provided the primary theoretical basis for scale development, Crites's (1978) model of career maturity provided the original scale authors (Taylor & Betz, 1983) with a framework for deciding how to define and operationalize the skills required in career decision-making. More specifically, Crites, in his model of career maturity, hypothesized that career decisions will be facilitated by competence with respect to five career choice processes and by mature versus immature attitudes regarding the career choice process. Because self-efficacy theory is defined in relationship to competence in specific behavioral domains, Crites's five career choice competencies were used to define the domain of interest, which was competent career decision-making. These five competencies are: a) Self-appraisal , which refers to the extent one accurately assesses her/his career-relevant abilities, values, and interests, b) Occupational information, which refers to the extent of knowledge one has about university programs, occupations, and labor markets, c) Goal selection, which refers to the extent one can set priorities in order to manage successfully her/his professional advancement, d) Planning, which refers to the extent one can establish plans for the future and can identify career paths, and e) Problem solving, which refers to the extent one is able to figure out alternative coping strategies and solve career choice problems when outcomes do not go as intended; applying this

competency leads the person reach an integrative, socially acceptable, and personally satisfying solution.

Therefore, and based on Crites' five competency areas of career maturity, Taylor and Betz (1983) developed the "Career Decision Self-Efficacy Scale" (CDSE), which is a 50-item scale. Years later, Betz, Klein, and Taylor (1996) developed a short version of this measurement tool called "The Career Decision Self-Efficacy Scale—Short Form" (CDSE-SF), which was used in the current study. This scale comprises 25 items divided by the mentioned five subscales; each composed of five statements that describe the tasks necessary for career decision-making. This scale is also reflected by a total score of these subscales.

Research on Career Decision Self-Efficacy

The first time the CDSE scale was used was when Betz and Hackett (1986) aimed to clarify "the mechanisms affecting women's disadvantaged status in the labor force" (p. 279). They indicated sex-role stereotyping of particular career-related tasks as being a key determinant of gender differences in CDSE. Later on, Betz and Luzzo (1996) reviewed the research on the CDMSE scale (both 50 and 25-item versions) and cited research affirming to their reliability, and content, criterion and construct validity (Luzzo, Funk Strang, 1996; Luzzo & Taylor, 1994).

Reviewing early studies concerning CDSE, Betz and Serling (1995) examined the relationship between Career Decision Self Efficacy-Short Form four scores and the Fear of Commitment Scale among 92 students enrolled at a private liberal arts college (Serling & Betz, 1995). Tapping the indecisiveness component of decisional difficulties, as opposed to indecision based primarily on lack of knowledge of how to make a career decision, the findings revealed a significant negative relationship ($r = -.50$) between CDSE scores and fear of commitment.

Another study done by Mathieu, Sowa, and Niles (1993) reported that career undecided college women had significantly lower CDSE scores than did women preferring either male-dominated or gender-neutral occupations, but their scores did not differ from those preferring traditional female occupations.

Focusing more on recent studies, researchers after the year 2000 have found a positive correlation between the lack of career decision-making and problems in career exploration and career indecisiveness. Moreover, in a study conducted by Creed, Patton, and Prideaux. (2006), 50% of college freshmen were found to experience career indecision and liked assistance in making career decisions. Another study found a negative correlation between career decision self-efficacy and dysfunctional, self-defeating career thoughts (Grier-Reed at al, 2009). This same study further examined the relationship between constructivist career development in the classroom and empowerment having the results reveal a significant increase in career decision self-efficacy accompanied by a significant decrease in career indecision (Betz, Hammond, & Multon, 2005; Betz & Luzzo, 1996; Betz & Taylor, 2001; Betz & Voyten, 1997; Taylor & Betz, 1983; Taylor & Popma, 1990). Last but not least, career decision-making self-efficacy has been shown to be related to greater engagement in the career decision-making process, especially career planning (Chung, 2002) and exploration activities (Gushue, Clarke, Pantzer, & Scanlan, 2006).

Emotional Intelligence

Theoretical Review

Emotional intelligence (EI) has been generally described as a proficiency or “ability to perceive and accurately express emotion, to use emotion to facilitate thought, to understand

emotions, and to manage emotions for emotional growth" (Brackett, Mayer & Warner, 2004, p. 1389). Over the last fifteen to twenty years, a review of the literature that focuses on the models of EI allowed different classifications of the construct, but which are, in some sense, compelling and complementary as they guide current lines of research. At present, the scientific community has accepted four theoretical approaches which are: the Ability Model by Mayer and Salovey (1997; Brackett & Salovey, 2006) and the Trait Model by Petrides & Furnham, (2001), the Bar-On's Emotional-Social Intelligence (ESI) Model (1997; Bar-On, 2006), and the Goleman's Emotional Competencies Model focused on the workplace (Goleman, 1998; 2001; Boyatzis, 2006). Thus, the purpose of this section is to define the different models that directed the current state of research.

Ability Model Theory

Ability EI, which is also known as cognitive-emotional ability, refers to one's actual ability to accurately perceive and identify one's own emotions as well as the emotions of others, and to use this knowledge to make socially convenient and desirable responses (Mayer and Salovey, 2004). Ability EI can be arranged in four branches, which are: 1) ability to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotions; 2) the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; 3) the ability to understand emotions and emotional knowledge; and 4) the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth (Mayer and Salovey, 1997; Rode et al., 2008). Ability EI is one's actual ability in performing his behavior based on one's EI in daily life and it can be assessed by paramount performance method rather than self-report method (Warwick & Nettelbeck, 2004). In addition, the items in the performance tests measuring Ability EI have correct and incorrect answers which are related to the realm of cognitive ability of one-self. However, it is a challenging task to measure one's ability EI

because, according to Petrides, Frederickson, and Furnham (2004), same answers of a particular item in a test seen as a correct answer for a person may be seen as incorrect for another person. It is important for an individual to know his own ability EI level to perform the best he is able in the daily life.

Furthermore, in order to test whether emotional intelligence meets the standard criteria to be accepted as scientifically legitimate, Mayer and his colleagues (1999) favored using Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) instead of the Multifactor Emotional Intelligence Scale (MEIS). The MSCEIT is a more recent scale which comprises 141 items measuring all the aspects of EI (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004). These measures provided evidence that emotional intelligence is a distinct form of intelligence, keeping in mind that the MEIS and MSCEIT are measures of ability to perceive, understand, manage, and use emotion in a positive, productive manner.

Trait Model Theory

Trait Model, developed by psychologist Konstantin Vasily Petrides, provides a very different understanding of Emotional Intelligence than the Ability Model. While the Ability Model is highly pragmatic and focuses on outward results, i.e. it is important for understanding the emotional context of social situations (Rieffe et al., 2005), the Trait Model is geared more toward emotional self-perception. By definition, Trait Model is a prospect of emotional self-perceptions based at the lower levels of personality hierarchies (Petrides, Pita, & Kokkinaki, 2007). In other words, trait EI refers to one's self-perceptions of their emotional abilities. This definition of EI encircles behavioral dispositions and self-perceived abilities and is measured by self-report method, contrary to the ability based model which refers to actual abilities, which have proven to be highly antagonistic to scientific measurement. Consequently, Trait EI should

be investigated within personality framework. (Petrides and Furnham, 2001). Moreover, another label substituting Trait EI construct is trait emotional self-efficacy as it resides almost wholly in the perceptions of the individual, rather than by any objective measures (Petrides & Furnham, 2000, 2003).

Additionally, research has confirmed that the same genes that are implicated in the development of individual differences in the Big Five personality traits are also implicated in the development of individual differences in trait EI (Vernon, Villani, Schermer, & Petrides, 2008).Therefore, the Trait Model of Emotional Intelligence essentially has to be conducted within a framework of understanding an individual's personality. The Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue) is the scale used to measure Trait EI; it is a self-report scale that comprises 153 items, measuring 15 distinct facets, 4 factors, and global trait EI (Petrides, 2009). Facets of personalities that relate directly to Emotional Intelligence, which are measured within the Trait Model, include adaptability, assertiveness, emotion expression, emotion management of others, emotion perception (of self and others), emotion regulation, impulsiveness, relationships, self-esteem, self-motivation, social awareness, stress management, trait empathy, trait happiness, and trait optimism (Petrides, 2009).

Bar-On's Emotional-Social Intelligence Model

Bar-On's (1997) theoretical approach to EI is wider and more comprehensive than Mayer and Salovey's model (1997). Bar-On's model defines the construct "emotional-social intelligence", as being formed by a cross-section of inter-related emotional and personality traits, skills and facilitators, that arbitrate how effectively we comprehend and express ourselves, understand others and relate with them, and cope with our daily requisitions. Specifically, emotional and social intelligence comprise five high level factors, which are subdivided in 15

sub-factors: 1) Intrapersonal Skills, which refers to the ability of being aware and understand emotions, feelings, and ideas in the self, and it is subdivided into the 5 sub-factors: a) Self Regard, b) Emotional Self Awareness, c) Assertiveness, d) Independence, and e) Self-Actualization; 2) Interpersonal Skills, which refers to the ability of being aware and understanding emotions, feelings, and ideas in the others, and it is subdivided into the 3 sub-factors: a) Empathy, b) Social Responsibility, and c) Interpersonal Relationship; 3) Adaptability, which refers to the ability of being open to change our feelings depending on the situations, and includes the 3 sub-factors: a) Reality-Testing, b) Flexibility, and c) Problem-Solving; 4) Stress Management, which refers to the ability to copy stress and control emotions, it is composed by 2 sub-factors: a) Stress Tolerance and b) Impulse Control; and lastly, 5) General Mood, which refers to the ability of feeling and expressing positive emotions, and being optimistic, and comprises the 2 sub-factors a) Optimism and b) Happiness (Bar-On, 2006).

In order to evaluate the factors proposed in his model, Bar-On developed the first commercial instrument named EQ-I (EQ Inventory) available to measure EI (EQ-I; Bar-On, 1997), which is a self-reported measure comprising 133 items that evaluates the five components described in his theoretical model. EQ-I is a wide inventory that includes many emotional and social competencies, giving not just an estimation of the EI level, but also an affective and social profile (Bar-On, 2000). This led some authors to consider Bar-On's proposals as a mixed model of EI, since it combines social, emotional, cognitive, and personality dimensions (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2000).

Goleman's Model of EI: A Model of Competencies Focused on the Workplace

Daniel Goleman brought to light the term EI using statements regarding the influence of these abilities upon many areas of our lives (Goleman, 1995). In his first book, Goleman stated that EI comprises five essential elements: 1) knowing one's emotions; 2) managing emotions; 3) motivating oneself; 4) recognizing emotions in others, and 5) handling relationships. In 1998, Goleman presented his second book, proposing a theory of performance in organizations based on a model of EI. This model was created and adapted to predict the effectiveness and personal outcomes in the workplace and in organizational fields (Goleman, 1998). Currently, the model presents four essential dimensions, which are subdivided into 20 proficiencies (Boyatzis et al., 2000; Goleman, 2001): 1) Self-Awareness, consisting of Emotional self-awareness, Accurate self-assessment, and Self-confidence; 2) Social Awareness consisting of Empathy, Service orientation, and Organizational awareness; 3) Self-Management consisting of Self-control, Trustworthiness, Conscientiousness, Adaptability, Achievement drive, and Initiative; and finally, 4) Relationship Management which consists of Developing others, Influence, Communication, Conflict management, Leadership, Change catalyst, Building bonds, and Teamwork and collaboration. According to Goleman, each one of these four dimensions are the basis to develop other learned abilities necessary in the organizational field. For example, the Self-awareness domain provides the basis for the development of learned competencies such as to perform an "accurate self-assessment" of the advantages and disadvantages in decision making processes, which is necessary when an executive must play his/her leading role in his/her work team.

For Goleman (2001), an emotional competence is "a learned capability based on emotional intelligence that results in outstanding performance at work" (p.24). He claims that emotional competencies by themselves represent the level in which a person dominates specific

abilities or skills based on his/her EI level and make this person more effective in his/her work (Goleman, 2001). In order to evaluate social and emotional competencies in the organization, a specific instrument was used to measure the external raters by using the individualized interview which indicates 20 emotional work related competencies' performance. This method is the Emotional Competence Inventory 2.0 (ECI 2.0), a valid and reliable scale (Boyatzis et al., 2000; Sala, 2002), which consists of 110 items, where 3 items is the minimum number to evaluate each competence, and comprises two ways of evaluation: a self-reported measure where people are asked to estimate their performance in each one of the competencies, and an evaluation by an external rater, such as work mates or superiors (Boyatzis et al., 2000; Goleman, 2001).

Having discussed the four models of Emotional Intelligence, this study used Schutte's Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT**),** an instrument that measures general Emotional Intelligence (EI), using four sub-scales: emotion perception, utilizing emotions, managing self- relevant emotions, and managing others' emotions. It comprises 33 items, measuring the four subscales, and results with a total score having high reliability (Schutte, 1998). It was structured off of the Ability EI model by Salovey and Mayer (1990) and is closely associated with the EQ-I model of Emotionabl Intelligence. Although all the theories mentioned above distinctly highlight the background of EI, this study aimed to use the basic overview of emotional intelligence as described by Salovey and Mayor (2004) stating how EI reveals the individual's ability to accurately perceive his emotions, to respond to them, as well as understand the emotions of others, regulate them based on his will, and become flexible in planning, think creatively, and be able to redirect his attention and motivation based on those emotions.

Emotional Intelligence and Career Decision Making Self-Efficacy

As previously mentioned, emotions play an essential role in career development and selection (Caruso and Wolfe; 2001), as they motivate and energize actions, control and regulate them, and facilitate accessing and developing narratives about careers. Consequently, researchers introduced the concept of emotional intelligence (EI) to investigate career-related issues (e.g., Brown et al., 2003; Carson & Carson, 1998, Boyatzis et al., 2000; Goleman, 2001). Research has shown how people having higher EI are more likely to use their emotional experiences to guide their thoughts and actions in planning their careers (Di Fabio, Palazzeschi, Asulin-Peretz, & Gati, 2013).

An interesting study conducted in China and South Korea in 2014 by Zhou Jiang examined the effect of emotional intelligence (EI) on career decision self-efficacy (CDSE) using 367 undergraduate university students (149 Chinese and 218 Korean); the author found a positive correlation between EI and CDSE (Jiang, 2014). Two years later, Jiang (2016) repeated his correlational study between EI and CDSE among 185 Chinese university students, but this time he added "goal and professional commitment" as mediating variables. Results not only showed a positive correlation between EI and CDSE but also a higher correlation with the mediation of goal and professional commitment (Jiang, 2016). Jiang also found that those who scored high on commitment to goals and commitment to profession performed better in achieving their goals and career than those who scored lower; consequently leading to a higher level of self-efficacy (Durham, Knight, & Locke, 1997; Seijts Latham, Tasa, & Latham., 2004; Wood & Bandura, 1989; Jiang, 2016).

Similarly, another study conducted by Afzal, Atta, and Shujja (2013) examined the predictive relationship pattern between emotional intelligence (EI), and career decision making using a sample of 203 university undergraduates. Note that, emotional intelligence, its facets, and career decision making were operationalized through Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (Wong and Law, 2002) and Career Decision Profile (Jones and Lohmann, 1998) respectively. The results of the correlational analysis revealed that emotional intelligence was positively correlated with career decision making. More specifically, the constructs of EI most related to career decision making were examined, and what was found through the multiple regression analysis was that, among EI factors, self-emotional appraisal, and utilization of emotions were found significantly correlated with career decision making. Finally linear regression yielded overall EI as significant positive predictor of career decision making (Afzal, Atta and Shujja, 2013).

Another study investigated the moderating effect of emotional intelligence on the relationship between parental attachment levels and career decision self-efficacy (CDSE) beliefs among 214 university students. Based on the hierarchical regression model identifying the predictive role of emotional intelligence on career decision self-efficacy, emotional intelligence accounted for 30% of the variance in CDSE. Consequently, individuals with higher levels of emotional intelligence indicated higher career self-efficacy beliefs. Parental attachment levels, secure or insecure, were not predictive of career self-efficacy beliefs, and emotional intelligence was not found to be a moderating variable. Moreover, insecure individuals were associated with lower career self-efficacy beliefs. Additionally, attachment theory and trait emotional intelligence theory were conceptually liked to social cognitive career theory (SCCT). The

results of this study highlighted the importance of addressing emotional intelligence within a counseling context (Dvorak, 2014).

Furthermore, Brown, George-Curran, and Smith (2003) sought to investigate the relations between career decision-making self-efficacy, vocational exploration and commitment, and emotional intelligence. They further added to that the extent to which gender would moderate the relationship between emotional intelligence and career decision-making self-efficacy and between emotional intelligence and vocational exploration and commitment. The subjects used were 288 university students of all academic levels, with an age mean of 22.5. Findings revealed that emotional intelligence as measured by the Empathy, Utilization of Feelings, Handling Relationships, and Self-Control factors was positively related to career decision-making self-efficacy and that the Utilization of Feelings and Self-Control factors were inversely correlated with vocational exploration and commitment. Those results however failed to reveal gender as a moderator of the relationship between emotional intelligence and the career variables under investigation (Brown, et. al, 2003).

Focusing more on young adolescents of senior high school students, one study in 2016, conducted by Andreja Bubić and Karmen Ivanišević, used 303 Croatian students attending their final year of elementary school to complete measures of career decision self-efficacy, emotional stability, emotional competence, and concerns regarding the upcoming transition. The findings indicated emotional competence as a statistically significant predictor of career decision self-efficacy, while emotional stability was revealed as a significant predictor of career concerns. Moreover, gender was found to have a moderating effect and career decision self-efficacy was found to play a mediating role. These findings provided novel evidence regarding the complex

relationship between individuals' vocational self-beliefs and emotional processing which might be informative for vocational guidance interventions targeted at young adolescents undergoing similar educational transitions (Bubić and Ivanišević, 2016).

One interesting study done by Annamaria Di Fabio, Letizia Palazzeschi, and Reuven Bar-On, examined the role of emotional intelligence (EI), personality traits, and core self-evaluation, in career decision-making difficulties. It was conducted among Italian university students (N= 232) who responded to questions on the Big Five Questionnaire, Core Self-Evaluation Scale, Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory, and Career Decision-Making Difficulties Questionnaire. The results revealed that EI added significant incremental variance compared with personality traits and core self-evaluation in predicting career decision-making difficulties. The results drew attention to the unique role of EI in career decision-making difficulties, which in turn offered new research opportunities and intervention possibilities (Di Fabio, et. al, 2012).

Personality and the Big Five Personality Traits

Theoretical Review

Sir Francis Galton (1884) was the first person to study the taxonomy of human personality traits by sampling language: the lexical hypothesis (Shrout and Fiske, 1995). Gordon Allport and S. Odbert (1936) put Galton's hypothesis into practice by extracting 4,504 adjectives which were believed to be describing observable and relatively permanent traits from the dictionaries at that time. In 1940, Raymond Cattell retained the adjectives, and eliminated synonyms to reduce the total to 171 (Cattell, 1957). He constructed a self-report instrument for the clusters of personality traits he found from the adjectives, which he called the Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire. Based on a subset of only 20 of the 36 dimensions that Cattell

had originally discovered, Ernest Tupes and Raymond Christal (1961) claimed to have found just five broad factors which they labeled: "surgency", "agreeableness", "dependability", "emotional stability", and "culture". Warren Norman (1963) subsequently relabeled "dependability" as "conscientiousness". Years later, these five constructs were relabeled by Costa and McCrae (1997) into what are known today as Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism, or the Five Factor Model of personality. According to Costa and McCrae, personality traits are generally considered as "relatively enduring styles of thinking, feeling, and acting (McCrae & Costa, 1997, p.509); moreover, personality structure is usually the patterned grouping of these traits into larger, cohesive factors that represent the basic dimensions of personality (McCrae, 2000); hence, it is important to understand one's personality traits and how they could impact the career decision making process (Holland, 1997; Borgen & Betz, 2008; Hou, Wu, & Lui, 2014).

Five Factor Model (FFM)

The five traits of the Five Factor Model (FFM) personality by Costa and McCrae, or the "Big Five" measured by the Revised NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI-R; Costa & McCrae, 1992), are: Openness, which describes how open or resistant someone is to change, Conscientiousness, which describes the level of discipline, and how prone he or she is to taking risks, Extraversion, which describes how social a person is or how warm and loving they tend to , Agreeableness, which describes how kind, dependable, and cooperative a person is, and Neuroticism, which describes how nervous or anxious a person tends to be, as well as the degree of self-confidence and self-contentment he or she possesses." (Goldberg, L. R., 1993). These traits have been found to highly correlate individually with trait EI and to more robustly explain and predict individual behaviors and outcomes than does trait EI (e.g., McCrae, 2000). The

NEO-PI-R is the most widely used questionnaire for assessing the FFM of personality. It is a 240-item self-report measure that has demonstrated good internal consistency, test-retest reliability, and validity across several studies, many different samples, and different cultures and languages (e.g., Gosling, Rentfrow, & Swann, 2003; McCrae, 2000; Petrides, Pérez-Gonzalez, & Furnham, 2007). A brief 10-item version of the NEO-PI-R was examined in a sample of 1,813 undergraduate students and was found to have adequate convergent and discriminant validity and test retest reliability (Gosling et al., 2003). Due to complications accessing the NEO-PI-R, a similar questionnaire was used in this study called The Big Five Inventory (BFI), which is a self-report inventory designed to measure the Big Five dimensions, comprising 44 items total, and consists of short phrases with relatively accessible vocabulary (John & Srivastava, 1999).

Personality traits and Career Decision Self Efficacy

Several studies have been conducted to find the relation between personality and self-efficacy. One of them was conducted by Nauta in 2004, as it reported several moderately strong correlations between the Big Five factors measured by the Adjective Check List (ACL) ; which is an assessment tool developed to identify common psychological traits comprising 300 **adjectives** such as intelligent, cautious, clear-thinking, determined, and poised (Gough, et. al, 1983), and the Skills Confidence Inventory (SCI). Results showed that Openness, one of the five personality traits, was moderately correlated at or above .30 with investigative, artistic, social, and enterprising confidence. Also, Extraversion, a second personality trait, was correlated with social and enterprising confidence, whereas agreeableness was correlated with social confidence. Interestingly, Nauta also found that self-efficacy played a mediating role between personality and interests (Nauta, 2004). On the vocational level, Hartman and Betz (2007) investigated the effects of the Big Five personality factors on career self-efficacy and found that

neuroticism was a "consistent predictor of inefficacy, whereas conscientiousness and extraversion were the most robust predictors of career-related self-efficacy" (p. 156).These results were consistent with Bandura's argument that positive affect raises perceived self-efficacy and negative affect lowers it. Moreover, openness to experience was found to be correlated with self-efficacy for creative and intellectual pursuits, and agreeableness was not related to career self-efficacy (Betz and Hartman, 2007).

Coming to Bandura's Social Cognitive Career Theory framework from career choice formation to career decision-making process (Jin et al., 2009; Rogers et al., 2008), some researchers have investigated the mediating role of career decision self-efficacy between person inputs, such as personality, and certain career formation process variables, for example, career commitment (Jin et al., 2009; Wang et al., 2006) and career planning and exploration (Rogers et al., 2008). Jin and his colleagues (2009) discovered that neuroticism, conscientiousness, and agreeableness had both direct and indirect effects on career commitment via career decision self-efficacy. Equivalently, Rogers et al. (2008) found that career decision self-efficacy partially mediated the relationship between openness and conscientiousness and career planning. Career decision self-efficacy emanated as a partial mediator between personality factors, such as conscientiousness and extraversion, and career exploration. On the contrary, Wang et al. (2006) reported that career decision self-efficacy fully mediated the relationship between extraversion and career choice commitment for American students. Nonetheless, career choice commitment was found to be influenced both directly and indirectly by neuroticism and extraversion for students of color.

Going further into the Social Cognitive Theory, this theory claims that decisions to pursue a career may be influenced by self-efficacy expectations and anticipated career outcomes.

Hence, Feldt and Woelfel (2009) examined the incremental validity of these constructs beyond gender and personality. The study was conducted among 179 undergraduate college students that completed a survey of two questionnaires, the Career Decision Scale (CDS), and the NEO Five-Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI). The survey included ratings of the importance of career-related outcomes (e.g., high income) and whether careers of choice or preference would provide such outcomes, in addition to self-efficacy ratings for completion of educational requirements, getting a job, job success, and progress. Results indicated incremental validity of three domains of the five-factor model, neuroticism, agreeableness, and conscientiousness; self-efficacy for getting a job and job success, importance ratings of job outcomes, and job outcome expectations. These findings evidently supported the hypotheses of social cognitive career theory in terms of the significant role that self-efficacy plays and the outcome expectations in predicting career planning.

In addition, a study conducted by Hartman and Betz investigated the hypothesis that the big five personality factors could exert two kinds of effects on career self-efficacy: (a) generalized or nonspecific effects and (b) domain-specific, content-correspondence effects. The study utilized NEO Five-Factor Inventory to 24 distinct domains of career-related self-efficacy—confidence for the six Holland themes, 17 basic dimensions of vocational activity represented by the Expanded Skills Confidence Inventory, and Career Decision Self-Efficacy. Results revealed that conscientiousness and extraversion correlated positively with a broad range of self-efficacy domains, while neuroticism displayed significant negative relationships with nearly all forms of career self-efficacy. Content correspondence was shown in significant correlations of openness to experience with self-efficacy for creative and intellectual pursuits (Hartman and Betz, 2007).

Another study investigated the mediating effect of career decision self-efficacy on the relationship between the Five-Factor Model of personality and the career commitment process (i.e., vocational commitment and the tendency to foreclose) in a sample of 785 Chinese graduate students. The multiple regression analyses showed that neuroticism and conscientiousness related significantly to progress in vocational commitment both directly and indirectly through career decision self-efficacy. In addition, career decision self-efficacy associated with greater progress in vocational commitment but also a strong tendency to foreclose (Jin, Watkins, and Yuen, 2009).

Moreover, the relationship between the Big Five personality traits and career decidedness was studied by Lounsbury, Loveland, and Hutchens among adolescents in middle and high school. Participants were 248 seventh-grade, 321 tenth-grade, and 282 twelfth-grade students. As hypothesized, Conscientiousness was positively and significantly correlated with career decidedness in all three grades. Openness and Agreeableness were found to be positively related to career decidedness for these middle and high school students. Emotional Stability was positively, significantly related to career decidedness for the twelfth-grade sample. However, there were no significant differences in correlational results for males versus females (Lounsbury, Loveland, and Hutchens, 2005).

Furthermore, Reed, Bruch, and Haase (2004) investigated the dimensions of the five-factor model (FFM) of personality and found them to be related to specific career exploration variables. Based on a canonical regression study, a covariation was found between conscientiousness, extraversion, low neuroticism and career search self-efficacy or occupation information seeking. Also, a correlation was found between openness and lack of career

information seeking. Lastly, a correlation was found between neuroticism, openness and self-exploration (Reed, Bruch, and Haase, 2004).

Problem Statement

Based on the findings described in the literature to date, the present study aimed to analyze the relationship between Emotional Intelligence, personality traits, and career decision-making self-efficacy.

Research on the Big Five Personality traits in relation to CDSE (Career Decision Making Self-Efficacy) has found that neuroticism is negatively correlated with career related self-efficacy while conscientiousness and extraversion are the strongest predictors of career-related self-efficacy. Moreover, openness to experience is correlated with self-efficacy for creative and intellectual pursuits. In addition, agreeableness was found to be one of the main predictors of professional choice self-efficacy.

. Therefore, we expected to find similar results within the current study:

1- There is a negative correlation between neuroticism and .Career Decision Self-Efficacy.

2- A. There is a positive correlation between conscientiousness and Career Decision Self-Efficacy.

   B. There is a positive correlation between extraversion and Career Decision Self-Efficacy.

   C. There is a positive correlation between openness to experience and Career Decision Self-Efficacy.

   D. There is a positive correlation between openness to experience and Career Decision Self-Efficacy.

Having literature and several studies show positive correlations between Emotional Intelligence and career related self-efficacy, we also expected the following:

3. There is a positive correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Career Decision Self-Efficacy.

More succinctly, the global view of this study was to delineate how Emotional Intelligence would play a mediating role on the relationship between both variables; Personality and CDSE. Personality traits are known to be somehow constant in adults and hardly shaped or modified; if any change is to happen then that would be by the individual's effort to control their determined behaviors. On the other hand, emotions are known to be unstable, as an unaware insensitive person or an over emotional person can be worked on being aware hence work on their Emotional Intelligence. As stated previously, emotions do influence one's self-efficacy. Having said that we expected to find the following:

4. Emotional Intelligence plays a mediating role in the relationship between the Big Five Personality Traits and Career Decision Self-Efficacy.

Chapter 3

Method

The purpose of this chapter is to highlight the method of the study by focusing on the research design, participants, types of questionnaires and their psychometrics as well as the procedure.

Research Design

This was a quantitative study utilizing correlational and regression analyses to determine the relationship between emotional intelligence, the big 5 personality traits and career decision making self- efficacy.

Participants

The purposive convenience sample in this study comprised 200 undergraduate university students of both gnders. The participants were selected from three English-speaking private universities in the larger area of Beirut, namely, Haigazian University (HU) (120 students), Lebanese American University (LAU) (35 students) and the American University of Beirut (AUB) (45 students). The age ranged from 18 to 23 years with an average age of 20.26 years.

Materials

The survey packet included an informed consent letter (Appendix A) that explains the purpose of the study and instructions for completing the required surveys. The survey packet also included the demographic questionnaire (Appendix B). The last section of the survey packet comprised the questionnaires a) Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT; Appendix C) b) the Big Five Inventory (BFI; Appendix D), and c) Career Decision-Making Self-

Efficacy Scale-Short Form (CDMSE-SF; Appendix E). The following is the description of the three used questionnaires:

Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT. It is a method of measuring general Emotional Intelligence (EI), structured off of the EI model by Salovey and Mayer (1990). The SSEIT model is closely associated with the EQ-I model of Emotional Intelligence. The SSEIT includes a 33-item self-report, using four sub-scales: emotion perception, utilizing emotions, managing self- relevant emotions, and managing others' emotions. It uses a five point Likert scale where 1 is strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree. Each sub-test score is graded and then added together to give the total score for the participant. The higher the score, the higher the participant's emotional intelligence (Shutte, et. al, 1998).

An internal consistency analysis showed a Cronbach's alpha of 0.90 for the 33-item scale; however, the utilizing emotions sub-scale has shown poor reliability (Ciarrochi, Chan & Bajgar, 2001). The Flesch-Kincaid reading grade level formula provided information regarding the reading ability needed to complete the scale. The analysis indicated that the 33-item scale requires a reading level typical of fifth graders. (Shutte, et. al, 1998).

BFI- Big Five Inventory. It is a self-report inventory designed to measure the Big Five dimensions. The scale consists of 44 items. It has 5 sub-scales: Openness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Neuroticism (John, et. al, 1991). The subscale that scores the highest means to be the highest trait within the individual.

It is a self-report inventory designed to measure the Big Five dimensions. It is quite brief for a multidimensional personality inventory (44 items total), and consists of short phrases with relatively accessible vocabulary (John, et. al, 1991).

The internal consistency reliability, factor structure, and convergent-discriminant validity of the Italian translation of the Big Five Inventory (BFI) were assessed in two independent samples of nonclinical adult volunteers (Sample 1: $N = 500$; Sample 2: $N = 316$) and in one sample of adolescent volunteers (Sample 3: $N = 223$). Two adult subsamples ($n = 70$, and $n = 141$, respectively) also provided 2-month retest reliability data. The internal consistency reliabilities were adequate for all five BFI scales (mean α values were **.77, .78, and .81** for Sample 1, Sample 2, and Sample 3, respectively); all test-retest correlations were greater than .75 in both adult participant subsamples. Principal component analyses showed that only the first five components of the BFI item correlation matrix could be reproduced safely across the three samples. The BFI scales showed adequate convergent-discriminant validity coefficients in all three samples. These findings suggest that the BFI is a succinct measure of the Big Five personality traits and it provides satisfactory reliability and validity data. (John, O. P., & Srivastava, S. 1999).

Career Decision Self-Efficacy Scale-Short Form. The Career Decision Self-Efficacy Scale–Short Form (CDSE-SF; Betz & Voyten, 1997). The CDSE-SF is composed of 25 items, and respondents indicate their level of confidence in completing a career-related task (e.g., selecting a major from a list of potential majors) on a 5-point Likert-type scale, where 1 indicates no confidence and 5 indicates complete confidence. The five CDSE-SF subscales are Self-Appraisal, Occupational Information, Goal Selection, Planning, and Problem Solving (Betz &

Taylor, 2001). The CDSE-SF is scored as a sum of the 25 rated items and provides an option for subscale scoring.

The CDSE-SF has been validated for understanding outcomes of career interventions in college settings (Betz & Taylor, 2001), and the validity and reliability of the CDSE-SF have been demonstrated on relatively diverse groups of college students across college levels (e.g., freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior; Betz et al., 2005; Chaney, Hammond, Betz, & Multon, 2007). Test–retest reliability for the Career Decision Self-Efficacy Scale (CDSE; Betz & Taylor, 2001) total score has been reported as .83 over a 6-week period. Internal consistency reliability estimates for the CDSE-SF total score have been reported as .94 and .95 (Betz et al., 2005).

Procedure

Thirty students were conveniently selected from Haigazian University's (HU) campus for the pilot study. The process to gather data took two days with no complications or difficulty. The students were asked by the researcher to read the consent form and fill out the survey. Each participant took around 10 to 12 minutes to fill out the survey. The English was easy to comprehend; they had no difficulty in understanding the meaning of each item. Once completed, they were thanked by the researcher.

For the actual study, students from HU, LAU and AUB were approached by the researcher on the different university campuses. First, they were asked if they were interested in participating in the study and accordingly were given the survey pack by hand. Second, they were asked to read the informed consent letter (see Appendix A) to make sure they understood

the purpose of the study. Third, they were asked to complete the rest of the survey packet. Upon completing the survey, the participants were thanked verbally.

The process of gathering data from HU took two weeks in total while that of AUB and LAU took three, making it a total of five weeks.

Chapter 4

Results

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings of the conducted study including the reliability testing using the computer software program Statistical Package for Social Science (IBM SPSS) version 20.

Descriptive Statistics on Demographical Data

As seen in the descriptive table below (Table 1), the participants were a total of 200 university students, comprising 109 females and 91 males, with an age range between 18 and 23, mean = 20.26.

Table 1: *Table of Frequency and Percentage of the Demographics*

Demographics		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	91	45.5
	Female	109	54.5
Age	18	33	16.5
	19	35	17.5
	20	50	25.0
	21	42	21.0
	22	11	5.5
	23	29	14.5
Edu Year	Sophomore	12	6.0
	Freshman	77	38.5
	Junior	72	36.0
	Senior	39	19.5
Career Choice	Yes	135	67.5
	No	65	32.5
Parental Role	Yes	54	27
	No	146	73
Career Counselor	Yes	38	19
	No	162	81

Reliability Testing

Crombach's alpha was computed to determine the reliabilities of each scale and subscale used in the study. Most of the current reliability scores were within accepted range. However, the Crombach alpha of the SSEI scale revealed originally a lower reliability (r=0.633) than previous studies, however when item 14 of the scale (I seek out activities that make me happy) was removed, Cronbach alpha became r=0.813. Moreover, Openness to Experience, which is a subscale of the BIG Five Inventory Scale, also revealed originally a low reliability (r=0.553) but when item 41 (Has few artistic interests) was removed, the reliability became r=0.622, which was considered acceptable in this study. Two of the subscales of the CDSES, Self-Appraisal (r=0.499) and Occupational Information (r=0.542), were also found to have low reliabilities in comparison to previous studies. However, since the study focused on the total score of the CDSES (r=0.851), these low reliabilities were ignored. The previous and current reliability coefficients of all the used scales and their subscales are reported in the table below (Table 2).

Table 2: *Crombach's Alpha for Schutte's Self Report Emotional Intelligence Scale, Big Five Inventory and its subscales, Career Decision Self-Efficacy-Short Form and its subscales.*

	Previous Crombach's alphas	Current Crombach's alphas
Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Scale	0.70-0.90	0.813
BIG Five Inventory	0.72- 0.90	0.799
Openness to Experience subscale	0.72 - 0.859	0.622
Conscientiousness subscale	0.78 - 0.888	0.657
Extraversion subscale	0.76 - 0.88	0.670
Agreeableness subscale	0.62 - 0.904	0.727
Neuroticism subscale	0.736 - 0.84	0.813
Career Decision Self-Efficacy-Short Form	0.92 - 0.95	0.851
Self-Appraisal subscale	0.66- 0.78	0.499
Occupational Information subscale	0.61- 0.74	0.542
Goal Selection subscale	0.73 - 0.81	0.738
Planning subscale	0.70 - 0.79	0.748
Problem solving subscale	0.68 - 0.70	0.669

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis 1: There is a negative correlation between neuroticism and Career Decision Self-Efficacy (CDSE).

A Pearson correlation coefficient was computed to assess the relationship between CDSE and neuroticism. A weak negative correlation was found between neuroticism and CDSE with r= -.128; with significance at p=0.071. Therefore, the hypothesis was confirmed (Table 3).

Table 3: *Correlation Matrix for the Big Five Personality Traits, Emotional Intelligence, and Career Decision Self Efficacy-Shot Form*

		Neu TOTAL	Ag TOTAL	Ext TOTAL	Consc TOTAL	OP TOTAL	EI TOTAL
CDSE	Pearson Correlation	-0.128	.282**	.140*	.502**	.316**	.518**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.071	0	0.049	0	0	0
	N	200	200	200	200	200	200

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Hypothesis 2A: There is a positive correlation between conscientiousness and Career Decision Self-Efficacy (CDSE).

A Pearson correlation coefficient was computed to assess the relationship between CDSE and conscientiousness. A significant positive correlation was found between conscientiousness and CDSE ($r = .502$, $p < 0.01$). Therefore, hypothesis 2A was confirmed (Table 3).

Hypothesis 2B: There is a positive correlation between extraversion and Career Decision Self-Efficacy (CDSE).

A Pearson correlation coefficient was computed to assess the relationship between CDSE and extraversion. A significant positive correlation of $r = .140$, $p < 0.05$ was found between extraversion and CDSE. Therefore, hypothesis 2B was confirmed (Table 3).

Hypothesis 2C: There is a positive correlation between openness to experience and Career Decision Self-Efficacy (CDSE).

A Pearson correlation coefficient was computed to assess the relationship between CDSE and openness to experience. A significant positive correlation was found between openness and CDSE ($r = .316$, $p < 0.01$) Therefore, hypothesis 2C was confirmed (Table 3).

Hypothesis 2D: There is a positive correlation between agreeableness and Career Decision Self-Efficacy (CDSE).

A Pearson correlation coefficient was computed to assess the relationship between CDSE and agreeableness. A significant positive correlation was found between agreeableness and CDSE ($r = .282$, $p < 0.01$). Therefore, hypothesis 2D was confirmed (Table 3).

Hypothesis 3: There is a positive correlation between EI and Career Decision Self-Efficacy (CDSE).

A Pearson correlation coefficient was computed to assess the relationship between CDSE and Emotional Intelligence. A significant positive correlation of coefficient $r = .518$, $p < 0.01$ was found between EI and CDSE (Table 3). Therefore, the third hypothesis was confirmed.

Hypothesis 4: EI plays a mediating role in the relationship between Big Five Personality Traits and Career Decision Self-Efficacy (CDSE).

A partial correlation was conducted to investigate whether EI had a mediating effect on the relationship between CDSE and BFI. Hence, the independent variable EI was controlled to

reveal the strength of the correlation between BFI and CDSE. As shown in Table 4, the correlation coefficients of CDSE in relation to the Big Five Personality traits, compared with Table 3, had a massive drop to a no correlation with Openness, Extraversion, and Agreeableness. Conscientiousness and Neuroticism remained significantly correlated at $p<0.01$. Hence, the fourth hypothesis was confirmed.

Table 4: *Partial Correlation between CDSE-SF and BFI by controlling EI.*

Control Variables			OP TOTAL	Consc TOTAL	Ext TOTAL	Ag TOTAL	Neu TOTAL
EI	CDSE	Correlation	.024	.269	.005	.062	-.220
		Significance (2-tailed)	.737	.000	.946	.381	.002
		df	197	197	197	197	197

Additional Analyses

Although not hypothesized upon, further analysis was conducted to assess the contribution of Emotional Intelligence and Big Five Personality Traits to Career Decision Self-Efficacy. Upon conducting a regression analysis between all the independent variables including the demographic data, the EI, the BIG Five and the dependent variable, Career Decision Self-Efficacy, the results showed that EI, Conscientiousness, and Neuroticism explain 37% of the variance in the CDSE with $F=9.165$ and $p<0.01$ (Tables 5 and 6).

Table 5:

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.609[a]	.370	.330	.33652

a. Predictors: (Constant), NeuTOTAL, Gender, AgTOTAL, CounselorRole, EduYear, ExtTOTAL, ParentRole, CareerChoice, OPTOTAL, ConscTOTAL, Age, EITOTAL

Table 6:

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	12.455	12	1.038	9.165	.000[b]
	Residual	21.177	187	.113		
	Total	33.631	199			

a. Dependent Variable: CDMSE

a. Predictors: (Constant), NeuTOTAL, Gender, AgTOTAL, CounselorRole, EduYear, ExtTOTAL, ParentRole, CareerChoice, OPTOTAL, ConscTOTAL, Age, EITOTAL

As table 7 shows, the strongest predictor of career decision efficacy is EI with $t=4.025$, $p<0.001$, followed by Conscientiousness with $t=3.953$, $p<0.01$, and Neuroticism with $t= -3.298$, $p<0.01$ respectively.

Table 7: *Regression Matrix of CDSE-SF with Demographics, EI, and BFI*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.313	.528		2.485	.014
Gender	.041	.049	.049	.833	.406
Age	.013	.022	.051	.599	.550
Career Choice	.008	.055	.009	.144	.886
Edu Year	-.050	.041	-.103	-1.210	.228
Parent Role	.016	.055	.017	.289	.773
Counselor Role	-.003	.063	-.003	-.054	.957
EITOTAL	.012	.003	.354	4.024	.000
OPTOTAL	.026	.077	.025	.340	.735
ConscTOTAL	.289	.073	.306	3.953	.000
ExtTOTAL	.001	.051	.002	.029	.977
AgTOTAL	-.025	.057	-.030	-.438	.662
NeuTOTAL	-.122	.037	-.203	-3.298	.001

b. Dependent Variable: CDSE

Chapter 5

Discussion

The purpose of the current study was to examine the contribution of Emotional Intelligence (EI) and the Big Five Personality Traits on one's self-efficacy in career decision making. This chapter presents the discussion of the investigated hypotheses.

The first hypothesis that states that neuroticism is negatively correlated with CDSE was confirmed. Although this correlation was in the right negative direction, unlike previous literature (Bandura, 1977; Hartman & Betz, 2007; Jin et.al, 2009) it showed a weak correlation between both variables; hence it was only significant at p= 0.07. This is aligned with Wang's study (2004) on the contribution of neuroticism and extraversion on career commitment among undergraduate private university students in the U.S. of different ethnic backgrounds. His findings revealed that ethnic minority groups manifested a strong negative correlation between their neuroticism and career commitment, while White students showed no correlation between neuroticism and career commitment. This was explained through the sociopolitical factor in the U.S. as the racial/ethnic minorities face more distress (Gunnings, 1982) and greater social isolation (Loo & Rolison, 2003) than the White population. Therefore, coping maladaptively with stress and isolation leads to higher neuroticism levels in these minority students which eventually effects negatively on their performance and confidence. Having said that, we come to highlight the fact that our participants were neither White American nor belonged to any of the ethnic minorities in the US and hence the amount of stress they have needs to be measured

first. Not all Lebanese students that we studied in this sample might be suffering from the same amount of stress, which could explain the weak correlation that we obtained in this study. Consequently, it is recommended for future studies to measure the stress level of the participants to see if it interacts with neuroticism. By doing that, researchers would be able to analyze the effects of both variables on the students' performance and self-efficacy.

Hypothesis 2 of this study, which predicted a positive correlation between CDSE and four of the subscales of the Big Five Personality Traits, namely, conscientiousness, extraversion, openness to experience and agreeableness, were all confirmed and therefore aligned with previous research. For instance, some studies found that extraversion was positively correlated to CDSE (Hamer & Bruch, 1997; Phillips & Bruch, 1988; Solberg et al., 1994; Tokar et al., 1998). One of these studies found that university students who were shy (i.e., those high on neuroticism and low on extraversion) had less mature attitudes regarding career planning and exploration; i.e. CDSE subscales, and were less likely to engage in career information-seeking behaviors than were students who were high on extraversion and low on neuroticism (Hamer & Bruch, 1997; Phillips & Bruch, 1988).Thus, individuals who are more extraverted are more likely to have greater CDSE because their social poise and energy contribute to more effective interaction with other people and ultimately, this would increase their chances of obtaining positive success experiences and achievements, consequently raising their self-efficacy for engaging in career-related tasks(Wang, et al., 2006)

The significant positive correlation between conscientiousness and career decision self-efficacy was also aligned with research. Interestingly, conscientiousness, along with extraversion, was positively correlated to career self-efficacy (Hartmen and Betz, 2007; Reed, Bruch, and Haase, 2004; Tay et al., 2006; Brown et al., 2006; Ambiel and Noronha, 2016;

Shaheen, Shaheen, and Shaheen, 2013). A study among 80 post graduate university students in India, was conducted by Dr. Sayeeda, Fareeda, and Hameeda Shaheen (2013) to investigate the personality factors and self-efficacy in relation to mental health. Upon using the NEO Five-Factor Inventory and Self Efficacy scale, the results showed that only conscientiousness was significantly positively correlated to mental health. Moreover, self-efficacy was positively correlated to conscientiousness and extraversion. Hence, it was clear that higher conscientiousness leads to higher self-efficacy, which in turn leads to better mental health.

The significant positive correlation between openness to experience and career self-efficacy was also supported by the findings of Hartman and Betz (2007). For instance, one of the conclusions is that openness to experience plays an important role in the job search process especially by assuring the needed adaptability to the irregular and constantly changing job search environment *(*Rusu, Sava, & Constantin, 2014). One study conducted among 103 unemployed university students revealed that a job seeker who is high in openness is more prone to explore new environments and use all genres of means suitable for the search process thereby improving his mastery over the job search process, which will in turn facilitate his job search behavior *(*Rusu, Sava, & Constantin, 2014). This highlighted the fully mediated relationship by job search self-efficacy between openness to experience and both job search effort and job search intensity. Since job search processes are most often conducted in rapidly changing environments, this study has highlighted that highly adaptable individuals can more easily enable the motivational resources needed for an actively sustained job search

The positive significant correlation between agreeableness and career self-efficacy was also supported by many studies that found agreeableness to have significant direct and indirect effects on career commitment (Jin, 2009; Ambiel and Noronha, 2016; Arora and Rangnekar,

2016) as well as to be positively correlated to career decisiveness (Lounsbury, Loveland, and Hutchens, 2004), and negatively correlated to career indecisiveness (Martincin and Stead, 2014). Applying the Social Cognitive Career Theory, where decisions to pursue a career is most likely influenced by self-efficacy expectations and anticipated career outcomes, a study by Feldt, and Woelfel, 2009 was conducted on 179 undergraduate college students who were asked to complete the Career Decision Scale (CDS). The CDS included ratings of the importance of career-related outcomes (e.g., high income) and whether careers of choice or preference would provide such outcomes, in addition to self-efficacy ratings for completion of educational requirements, getting a job, job success, and advancement, along with the NEO Five Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI). Results revealed an incremental validity with agreeableness and self-efficacy for getting a job and job success, importance ratings of job outcomes, and job outcome expectations (Feldt, and Woelfel, 2009).

The third hypothesis of this study, which states a positive correlation between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and CDSE- was confirmed. This result was consistent with recent research that identified the importance of emotional intelligence on variables related to career decision-making difficulties (e.g., lack of information, lack of readiness, and inconsistent information); (Di Fabio, Palazzeschi & Bar-On, 2012; Bubić and Ivanišević, 2016; Brown et al., 2003; Jiang, 2016). Moreover, the finding was aligned with previous research, such as, Zhou Jiang (2014, 2016) who found a strong correlation between EI and CDSE among 376 undergraduate university students in addition to establishing goal commitment as a mediating factor between EI and CDSE; the conclusion of the study was that more commitment among high EI level students, led to more achievement and hence more self-efficacy (Durham, Knight, & Locke, 1997; Seijts Latham, Tasa, & Latham., 2004; Wood & Bandura, 1989; Jiang, 2016). Moreover, a

study among 303 high school senior students has revealed that emotional competence is a statistically significant predictor of career decision self-efficacy, while emotional stability is revealed as a significant predictor of career concerns (Bubić and Ivanišević, 2016; Brown et al., 2003). This suggested that individuals who indicated greater understanding and perception of emotions in both themselves and others tended to report greater confidence in career self-efficacy.

The last hypothesis of this study that states that Emotional Intelligence (EI) plays a mediating role between the big five personality traits and CDSE- was confirmed. The regression model indicated that emotional intelligence was significantly predictive of and accounted for the greatest variance in CDSE. This is explained by the fact that emotional intelligence, as mentioned in the literature review, is what individuals are comprised of, so much so that decisions made with confidence are basically guided by their emotional experiences (Boyatzis et al., 2000; Goleman, 2001; Bechara, 2004; Di Fabio, Palazzeschi, Asulin-Peretz, & Gati, 2013). Hence, Emotional Intelligence, irrespective of external factors, plays a significant role in one's self-efficacy. Therefore, the confidence a person feels in his/her knowledge and abilities, and his/her ability to convey this confidence to others is mediated through Emotional Intelligence as it allows them to be able to step out of their comfort zones and embrace new challenges (Di Fabio, Palazzeschi, Asulin-Peretz, & Gati, 2013). In addition, research has revealed that emotions are the dominant driver of most meaningful decisions in life (Ekman 2007, Frijda 1988, Gilbert 2006, Keltner & Lerner 2010, Keltner, et. al, 2014, Lazarus, 1991, Loewenstein et. al, 2001, Scherer & Ekman 1984). Making decisions serves as the passage through which emotions guide everyday attempts at avoiding negative feelings (e.g., guilt, fear, regret) and increasing positive feelings (e.g., pride, happiness, love), even when we lack awareness of these processes

(Keltner & Lerner 2010, Loewenstein & Lerner 2003). And once the outcomes of our decisions materialize, we often feel new emotions (e.g., elation, surprise, and regret; Coughlan & Connolly 2001, Mellers 2000, Zeelenberg et al 1998). Consequently, emotion and decision making in general go hand in hand. Logically, this would also apply to career decision making.

Additional Analysis

A regression study was conducted between the demographics, EI, Personality and CDSE to assess the contribution of Emotional Intelligence and the Big Five Personality Traits. Results showed EI, followed by Conscientiousness and Neuroticism were the most predictive variables of CDSE. Research has supported the role of EI in predicting career self-efficacy where people with high EI are more likely to use their emotional experiences to guide their thoughts and actions in planning their careers (Afzal, Atta and Shujja, 2013; Di Fabio, Palazzeschi, Asulin-Peretz, & Gati, 2013; Dvorak, 2014). Moreover, finding conscientiousness and neuroticism as significant predictors was also aligned with previous research like Hartman and Betz's (2007) personality-related finding that neuroticism was a "consistent predictor of inefficacy, whereas conscientiousness and extraversion were the most robust predictors of career-related self-efficacy" (p. 156).

Clinical Implications

The findings of this study have clinical implications for counseling psychologists, counselors and specifically career counselors whether in school or university settings. Specifically, on the personality level, having found Conscientiousness and Neuroticism as

significant predictors of CDSE, therapists or career counselors may, upon assessing the students' BFI, determine the weak items of each personality subscale and work on boosting them effectively. For instance, in case of high Neuroticism, the therapist would work on decreasing the aspects most triggering the student's neurotic trait and accordingly, effectively work on developing their confidence in career choice. Moreover, determining the low aspects of Conscientiousness within each student would allow the therapist to target them, progressively increase them, and enhance the students' ability in developing their self-efficacy in choosing their careers.

As to the significant finding of the contribution of Emotional Intelligence to career decision making self-efficacy, this would allow practitioners to help undergraduate students by expanding their self-efficacy beliefs through associative emotional intelligence. By providing a restorative emotional experience (i.e., therapist responds differently, providing a reparative experience, by specifically working on perception of emotion, utilizing emotion, comprehending emotion, and dealing with emotion), university students may change their problematic interpersonal patterns (Teyber, 2006). This makes university students undergo an in vivo experience of progress and gives them a chance to utilize new and diverse behaviors that are more versatile.

Limitations and Future Recommendations

It is recommended to include high school senior students in future studies. They might show very different career decision paths in the process of career choice. Moreover, such studies might shed light on the different age group's self-efficacy levels. Furthermore, highlighting the

effect of stress on one's personality traits, here neuroticism, it is recommended to measure the stress level of participants, complementary to their personality traits, as these measures would shed light on the effects of external factors on one's performance and well-being. In addition, two subscales of CSE-SF showed low reliability (Crombach alpha < 0.6). Therefore, further studies might focus on further investigating the reasons behind those low reliabilities. This study used the total score of the CDSE scale and therefore, future studies can look into the effect of EI and the Big Five personality traits on the subscales of CDSE-SF.

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Appendix A

Consent Form

This study is Anonymous; NO name is required for this questionnaire!

My name is **Narineh Krikorian**, a Master's student in Clinical Psychology at Haigazian University.

The **purpose of this study** is to determine individual differences in relation to career decision making among university students. Approximately 200 students will take part in this particular study.

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be asked to complete a demographic questionnaire which includes your age, gender, current major, class, and current career choice. You will also be asked to complete three surveys after which you return the whole package to the researcher. The completion of the surveys should take no more than **10 minutes**.

Taking part in this research is **completely voluntary**. All the information that you provide will remain completely **confidential**.

If you have any questions about the research itself or if you would like to receive the results of this study upon completion, please contact the researcher, Ms. Narineh Krikorian by email at nkirkorian@students.haigazian.edu.lb. If you have questions about the rights of subjects, please contact the advisor of this study, Dr. Hanine Hout by email at hanine.hout@haigazian.edu.lb.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Narineh Krikorian

Appendix B

Demographic Questionnaire Form

Below are questions that will assist in compiling data for this study. Please tell me about yourself. Read each question carefully and either fill in the blank or circle the appropriate respon se.

1. Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

2. Age: _____

3. If you have a current major, what is it: _____

4. If you have a current career choice, what is it: _____

5. Higher Education Status:

Freshman

Sophomore

Junior

Senior

6. Did your parents play a role in your choice of university major? YES NO

7. Did you go to a career counselor when you were at school? YES NO

Appendix C

Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test

Instructions: Indicate the extent to which each item applies to you using the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

1.I know when to speak about my personal problems to others.

2.When I am faced with obstacles, I remember times I faced similar obstacles and overcame them.

3.I expect that I will do well on most things I try.

4.Other people find it easy to confide in me.

5.I find it hard to understand the nonverbal messages of other people.

6.Some of the major events of my life have led me to re-evaluate what is important and not important.

7.When my mood changes, I see new possibilities.

8.Emotions are some of the things that make my life worth living.

9.I am aware of my emotions as I experience them.

10.I expect good things to happen.

11.I like to share my emotions with others.

12.When I experience a positive emotion, I know how to make it last.

13.I arrange events others enjoy.

14.I seek out activities that make me happy.

15.I am aware of the nonverbal messages I send to others.

16.I present myself in a way that makes a good impression on others.

17.When I am in a positive mood, solving problems is easy for me.

18.By looking at their facial expressions, I recognize the emotions people are experiencing.

19.I know why my emotions change.

20.When I am in a positive mood, I am able to come up with new ideas.

21.I have control over my emotions.

22.I easily recognize my emotions as I experience them.

23.I motivate myself by imagining a good outcome to tasks I take on.

24.I compliment others when they have done something well.

25.I am aware of the nonverbal messages other people send.

26.When another person tells me about an important event in his or her life, I almost feel as though I have experienced this event myself.

27.When I feel a change in emotions, I tend to come up with new ideas.

28.When I am faced with a challenge, I give up because I believe I will fail.

29.I know what other people are feeling just by looking at them.

30.I help other people feel better when they are down.

31.I use good moods to help myself keep trying in the face of obstacles.

32.I can tell how people are feeling by listening to the tone of their voice.

33.It is difficult for me to understand why people feel the way they do.

Appendix D

Big Five Inventory
Please write a number next to each statement to indicate the extent to which **you agree or disagree with that statement.**

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

I am someone who…

1. _____ Is talkative
2. _____ Tends to find fault with others
3. _____ Does a thorough job
4. _____ Is depressed, blue
5. _____ Is original, comes up with new ideas
6. _____ Is reserved
7. _____ Is helpful and unselfish with others
8. _____ Can be somewhat careless
9. _____ Is relaxed, handles stress well.
10. _____ Is curious about many different things
11. _____ Is full of energy
12. _____ Starts quarrels with others
13. _____ Is a reliable worker
14. _____ Can be tense
15. _____ Is ingenious, a deep thinker
16. _____ Generates a lot of enthusiasm
17. _____ Has a forgiving nature
18. _____ Tends to be disorganized
19. _____ Worries a lot
20. _____ Has an active imagination
21. _____ Tends to be quiet
22. _____ Is generally trusting
23. _____ Tends to be lazy
24. _____ Is emotionally stable, not easily upset
25. _____ Is inventive
26. _____ Has an assertive personality
27. _____ Can be cold and aloof
28. _____ Perseveres until the task is finished
29. _____ Can be moody
30. _____ Values artistic, aesthetic experiences
31. _____ Is sometimes shy, inhibited
32. _____ Is considerate and kind to almost everyone
33. _____ Does things efficiently
34. _____ Remains calm in tense situations
35. _____ Prefers work that is routine
36. _____ Is outgoing, sociable
37. _____ Is sometimes rude to others
38. _____ Makes plans and follows through with them

39. _____ Gets nervous easily

40. _____ Likes to reflect, play with ideas

41. _____ Has few artistic interests

42. _____ Likes to cooperate with others

43. _____ Is easily distracted

44. _____ Is sophisticated in art,

Appendix E

CDSE–Short Form

INSTRUCTIONS: For each statement below, please read carefully and indicate how much confidence you have that you could accomplish each of these tasks by marking your answer according to the key, Mark your answer by filling in the correct circle on the answer sheet.

1	2	3	4	5
No confidence at all	Very little confidence	Moderate confidence	Much confidence	Complete confidence

HOW MUCH CONFIDENCE DO YOU HAVE THAT YOU COULD:

1. Use the internet to find information about occupations that interest you.
2. Select one major from a list of potential majors you are considering.
3. Make a plan of your goals for the next five years.
4. Determine the steps to take if you are having academic trouble with an aspect of your chosen major.
5. Accurately assess your abilities.
6. Select one occupation from a list of potential occupations you are considering.
7. Determine the steps you need to take to successfully complete your chosen major.
8. Persistently work at your major or career goal even when you get frustrated.
9. Determine what your ideal job would be.
10. Find out the employment trends for an occupation over the next ten years.
11. Choose a career that will fit your preferred lifestyle.
12. Prepare a good resume.
13. Change majors if you did not like your first choice.
14. Decide what you value most in an occupation.
15. Find out about the average yearly earnings of people in an occupation.
16. Make a career decision and then not worry whether it was right or wrong.
17. Change occupations if you are not satisfied with the one you enter.
18. Figure out what you are and are not ready to sacrifice to achieve your career goals.
19. Talk with a person already employed in a field you are interested in.
20. Choose a major or career that will fit your interests.
21. Identify employers, firms, and institutions relevant to your career possibilities.

22. Define the type of lifestyle you would like to live.

23. Find information about graduate or professional schools.

24. Successfully manage the job interview process.

25. Identify some reasonable major or career alternatives if you are unable to get your first choice.