Using the Self-Directed Search: Career Explorer in a Middle School Guidance Program:

Preliminary Results of a Longitudinal Study

Roundtable Presentation at the 2003 Career Development Across the Lifespan Conference

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Our Study:

90 seventh grade students (40 males, 50 females, 98% African American, 2% Hispanic) completed the Self-Directed Search: CE as part of a group career counseling experience. This demographic was similar to that of the school as a whole, which reports that 98% of its students are involved in free/reduced lunch programs. This middle school was the recipient of a five year GEAR-UP grant, which has as its goal increasing the number of middle school students who stay in school, eventually graduate high school and obtain some type of post-secondary training. We have begun following up with some of these students (N=16) who are now in tenth grade with the SDS: R.

Findings:

1. Typology by Gender and School Level:
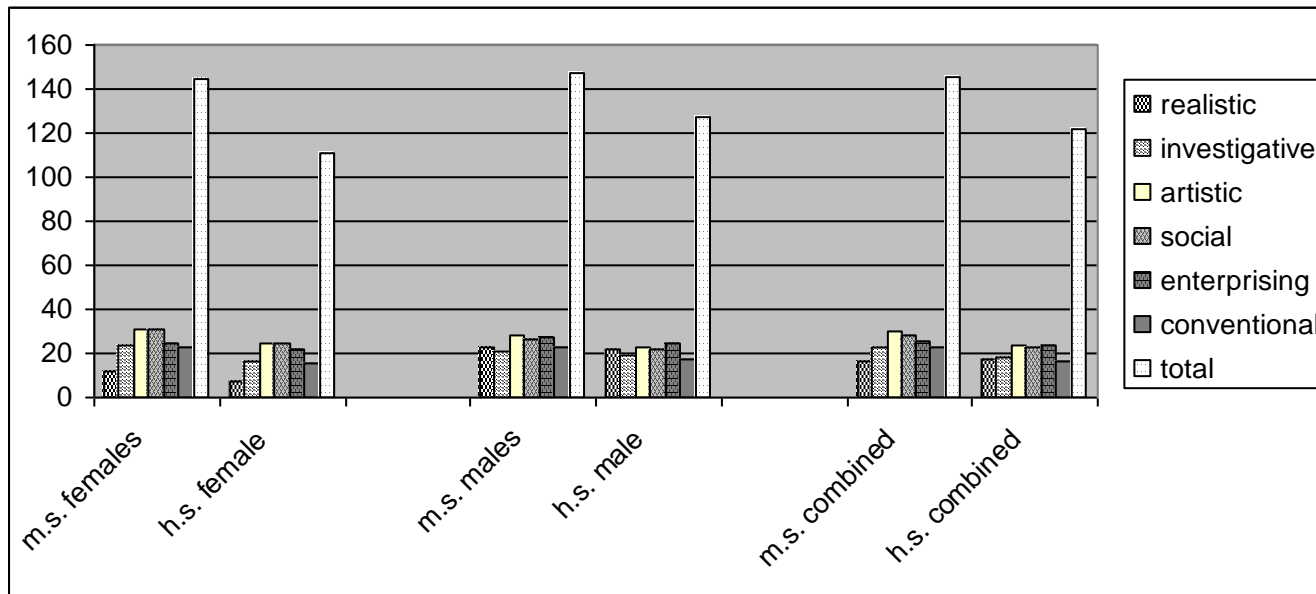
2. Summary codes change slightly over time (ASE to AES), but the changes are only in order of three types for both males and females. Artistic types have the most type stability over time (67% remain an "A").

3. No significant differences between middle and high school students on summary RIASEC Scores when compared longitudinally with paired t-tests.

4. Mean total SDS profile scores appear to decline from middle to high school. However, paired t-tests (N=16) show a slight increase from 119.81 to 122.06, with a t= -.114, -.506 correlation, $p < .05$.

5. The majority of students had high consistency (letters adjacent on the hexagon) in total scores, both at the middle and high school levels.

6. Gender differences noted for Realistic and Social Types at middle school level:

    -   Realistic $\underline{F}$ (1, 89) = 21.854, $\underline{p} < .0001$,
        -   Males had higher mean scores on the Realistic scale ($\underline{M}$ = 22.83, $\underline{SD}$ = 13.70) as compared to females ($\underline{M}$ = 11.78, $\underline{SD}$ = 8.56)

    -   Social $\underline{F}$ (1, 89) = 4.946, $p < .05$

- Females had higher Social scale scores ($M = 30.84$, $SD = 11.80$) as compared to males ($M = 25.98$, $SD = 11.30$)

7. Gender differences noted for Realistic Type at high school level:
   - Realistic $F (1, 15) = 7.789$, $p < .05$,
     - Males had higher mean scores on the Realistic scale ($M = 22.00$, $SD = 11.14$) as compared to females ($M = 7.6$, $SD = 3.13$)

8. Number of middle school aspirations: significant differences by gender (ANOVAS):

	Male (N=40) Mean; standard deviation	Female (N=50) Mean; standard deviation	F (1, 89)	P value
Realistic	3.79; 1.79	1.72; 2.26	22.81	<.001
Artistic	2.09; 2.95	3.32; 2.15	5.12	<.05
Enterprising	3.49; 2.43	5.09; 2.06	11.22	<.01
Conventional	2.30; 1.63	1.61; 1.24	5.17	<.05

9. Longitudinal comparison of Aspiration Summary Codes and SDS Summary Codes by gender:

	Middle (N=90)			High (N=16)		
	Females	Males	Combined	Females	Males	Combined
Aspirations	SEA	SRE	SEA	IEC	SER	SEI
Summary Code	SAE	AES	ASE	SEA	EAS	EAS
Normative Summary Code				SAE	RIE	

10. Congruence between Aspiration Summary Code (first letter) and SDS Summary Code for middle school students was significantly higher for females ($F=5.25$, $p <.05$), with $M=3.14$; s.d.= .87 for females and $M=2.66$; s.d. =1.02 for males. No significant differences at the high school level.

11. Those in high school who had higher total SDS profiles had higher means on feeling excited about school ($M=6.5$; s.d. = .75) as compared to those with medium total profiles ($M=3.5$; s.d.=2.58), $F=9.87$, $p<.01$.

12. 97 separate aspirations were listed at the middle school level (N=90). Most common aspirations included:

	Holland Type	Females (N=50)	Males (N=40)
Teacher	SAE	19	4
Lawyer	ESI	16	10
Singer	AES	16	5
Doctor	ISC	15	10
Nurse	ISR	10	0
Basketball player	SRC	7	13
Football player	SRC	1	22

13. 31 separate aspirations were listed at the high school level (N=16). Most common aspirations included:

	Holland Type	Females (N=4)	Males (N=12)
Actor	AES	2	2
Doctor	ISC	1	2
Singer	AES	1	2
Basketball player	SRC	0	3
Football player	SRC	0	3