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## **The Influence of Socioeconomic Status and Subjective Social Status on the Career Development of College Students**

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THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS AND SUBJECTIVE SOCIAL  
STATUS ON THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT OF COLLEGE STUDENTS

by

Dylan Ryan Richard

A Thesis  
Submitted to the Graduate School,  
the College of Education and Human Sciences  
and the School of Psychology  
at The University of Southern Mississippi  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of Master of Arts

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## ABSTRACT

Social class is often examined across social science disciplines and contains two distinct parts: socioeconomic status (SES) and subjective social status (SSS). Researchers have established that college students from various SES backgrounds experience college differently, however little research has examined how universities and those that work with college students can help aid the career development of students given their SES. Career development is a broad area of research; therefore, the current study examines a number of career development variables that are key in understanding college students' career development, such as career adaptability, career decision-making difficulty, work values, and vocational interests. All can influence career development in different ways and have been found to be directly related to job satisfaction and positive mental health outcomes. Therefore, the current study examined how SES and SSS interact to predict career adaptability, career decision-making difficulty, work values, vocational interests, and interest-major congruence. Results suggest a significant relationship between social class and the work values of Comfort and Safety. Implications and limitations of findings are discussed.

*Keywords:* social class, career development, college students, adaptability, work values, interests

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## DEDICATION

First, I would like to thank my family who, despite distance, has always encouraged and supported me. I would not be where I am today without their support and encouragement to follow my dreams. I would also like to show my appreciation for my program cohort, who have been supportive throughout this entire process and helped keep me motivated to be the best professional I can be.

This thesis project is dedicated to my late grandmother, Judy Andrepont (Mee-Maw), who always encouraged me to be the best person I can be with unconditional love and positive regard. Through her, I learned how to show true love and compassion for all people, and although she was not able to see this project's end result, I know she would have been proud.

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## CHAPTER I - INTRODUCTION

Social class is often studied to various degrees across social science disciplines, and can be conceptualized both objectively and subjectively through constructs such as socioeconomic status (SES) and subjective social status (SSS). SES is a multidimensional construct that takes income, education, and occupation into consideration, while SSS is associated with someone's perceived standing in society (Diemer, Mistry, Wadsworth, López, & Reimers, 2013). When studied together, SES and SSS can reflect one's overall social standing both economically and socially (Diemer et al., 2013). Social class has been linked to mental health disorders related to mood, anxiety, substance abuse, and psychotic disorders (Holzer, Shea, Swanson, & Leaf, 1986). Specifically, lower SES was more closely related to higher rates of mental health disorders, especially schizophrenia and major depression (Holzer et al., 1986). Despite social class having a negative impact on mental health, little research has been conducted expanding the understanding of how social class affects other aspects of individuals' lives, such as career development.

SES is an objective assessment of income, education, and occupation to understand a person's position in society (Diemer et al., 2013). One major aspect of SES is occupation. As such, SES can influence career choice and thus, shape career development, including educational attainment. For instance, McCarron and Inkelas (2006) found that students from low SES backgrounds tend to have lower educational attainment rates and lower college persistence rates than their higher SES peers. College admission rates are increasing, as evidenced by an overall increase of seven percent for first time freshmen admission applications (Clinedinst & Koranteng, 2017). Although overall applications for admissions are increasing, fewer students of low SES are seen

entering higher education. Hartle (2015) found that between 2008 and 2015, college enrollment of students considered low SES had decreased by ten percent, while total college enrollment had only decreased by three percent. This shows that largely, students from lower SES backgrounds are attending college at a disproportionately lower rate.

Even when students from low SES groups do pursue higher education, these differences across social class tend to follow them into their college career. Generally, the differences in experiences of students across social class are well understood. For example, Walpole (2003) observed that lower SES students earned lower grades in college than high SES peers, despite having similar abilities. Additionally, lower SES students typically have a harder time feeling as if they belong on campus and can experience identity issues as they are adapting to the new university environment, which can lead to a higher likelihood of drop-out due to their lack of perceived social support (Walpole, 2003; Jury et al., 2017). Yet less is known about the career development issues and needs of students across social classes that may play a part in their decision to pursue and persist in higher education. Understanding the career development needs of college students across social class could help inform university communities to further assist students in both attending and persisting in higher education.

The Social Class Worldview Model (SCWM; Liu et al., 2004) may help explain some of the differing experiences of students across social classes. SCWM postulates that people internalize social structures within their social model by identifying both tangible and intangible aspects of their lives (such as financial capital, social capital, and cultural capital; Liu et al., 2004). Capital is generally viewed as something received that can be invested into something else at a later time and place. Capital can be thought of in terms

of financial (e.g. money, status, services), human (e.g. skills, friends, colleagues), or social (e.g. relationships, values, ideals). These various forms of capital make up parts of the tangible and intangible aspects of life. Financial capital is a form of physical capital that can have an influence on one's life. Financial capital is typically in the form of money, goods, and/or services (Coleman, 1988). Financial capital influences decisions made across the lifetime such as emphasizing employment, focusing on monetary gain, and focusing on other means of gaining financial capital (land and goods), all decisions that, in turn, increase overall financial capital (Coleman, 1988). Social capital is a form of capital that involves relationship and networks with other people (Lin, 1999). Across people's lives, the emphasis on certain forms of capital can arise based on their needs and the needs of their family unit (Lin, 1999). An emphasis on accruing social capital would lead someone to explore relationships with people outside of their normal group, gather information from multiple outside sources, and network with others within their career (Coleman, 1988), which may not be the case for all individuals with a similar SES. These experiences can then lead to an increase in social capital in the form of new relationships, new information about the workplace, and new networks (Coleman, 1988).

However, difficulties in the measurement of social class have made research on the effects of social class on career development stagnant and disjointed (Diemer et al., 2013). While SES has been widely agreed upon as an important variable to study, few agree upon a standard method of assessing socioeconomic status (Diemer et al., 2013). This has resulted in some inconsistencies measuring SES, which make comparison across studies difficult. Furthermore, this objective assessment of social class is likely not completely consistent with individuals' perceptions of their own social class, which is

known as Subjective Social Status (SSS; Diemer et al., 2013). For example, although there has been a decline in recent years, most Americans (51%) identify as being part of the middle class, despite 25% of these reporting being of working-class status, categorized by reported incomes below \$30,000 per year (Newport, 2015). Bird and Newport (2017) found that those with college degrees tended to separate themselves from the label of “Working Class” even though their reported income levels were within the “Working Class” bracket. In addition, people across various levels of education (e.g., having less than a high diploma to post-graduate degrees) reported being of middle-class status, which would not be consistent with their actual reported income.

Thus, Adler et al. 2000 argues that SES is an incomplete measure of someone’s standing in society. For example, one may be from a lower SES background, but have been taught values such as the importance of higher education and societal engagement. This would result in a person’s perception that they in a higher social class than their SES would indicate. Limiting research to only assessing SES would miss this key element that may not fully explain individual factors related to career choice and development. Examining both SSS and SES together may give a more complete picture of how social class may affect attitudes and behaviors. While research supports the idea that SES and SSS are two different concepts (Bird and Newport, 2017; Diemer et al., 2013; Newport, 2015), little research has been done exploring the interacting relationship between SES and SSS. Therefore, the current study aimed to explore how SES and SSS affects aspects of the career development of college students to better understand students’ career decision making in college settings and perhaps inform interventions.

## Career Development

College students are at a unique time in their career development and require guidance and support to successfully navigate the world of work. Vocational psychology has seen a shift in career development, in which individuals are more able to consider their personality, values, and goals in making career choices. Therefore, Blustein (2001) calls for more inclusion of cultural variables, individual differences, and narrative approaches in vocational psychology research. According to Blustein's (2001) Psychology of Working Theory, those from low SES backgrounds may experience classism when choosing jobs or when earning education. Blustein (2001) also calls for further research examining those from lower SES, including attempting to tease apart the impacts of social class on career development and choice. Therefore, exploring the following career development variables addresses the recommendations of Blustein's (2001) Psychology of Working theory to further explore the intersectionality of cultural variables and career development. Given their importance in the process of career development, the variables of career adaptability and career decision-making difficulties were addressed in this study. Additionally, the variables of work values, vocational interests, and congruence were also addressed in the current study given their importance as factors that affect career choice.

### *Career Adaptability*

Career adaptability is the ability to use both internal and external resources to cope with expected or perceived career issues (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). More specifically, career adaptability includes attention to four key areas: concern, control, curiosity, and confidence (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). This construct arose from Savickas'

(2002), Career Construction Theory which postulates that people adapt and strive to integrate into their work environment in order to more closely establish person-environment fit, or the match between an individual and his/her work environment. The extent to which someone achieves person-environment fit has an impact on the person's job satisfaction, and even mental health (Edwards & Rothbard, 1999; Furnham & Schaeffer, 1984; Furnham & Walsh, 1991; Lachterman & Meir, 2004). College students, in particular, are at a unique place in developing their career adaptability as they are generally learning about themselves and the workplace throughout their studies, which can lead to higher levels of career adaptability (Creed, Fallon, & Hood, 2009; Duffy, 2010). College students have not begun their careers yet, however the need to be career adaptable is ever growing due to the implications related to solidifying a career path and importance of person-environment fit discussed previously. Additionally, while college students may not be working jobs within their career or major, they are working towards a career (in the form of a college degree). Therefore, career adaptability is an important aspect to college student's career development that the current study will explore further.

Recent research highlights that career adaptability is associated with SSS. Specifically, Autin, Douglass, Duffy, England, and Allan (2017) found that those with higher SSS also indicated higher levels of career adaptability. Autin et al. (2017) postulated that this may be due to those of higher SSS having better access to services and information about careers leading to an increase in career adaptability, however this has not been empirically tested. Higher career adaptability may also be related to higher SSS due to the different emphasis on obtaining social capital at higher levels of social

class, which includes opportunities for modeling, networking, and tangible resources to develop adaptation skills (Autin et al., 2017).

Furthermore, it is likely that SES is also related to career adaptability as lower SES has been shown to relate to poorer career development, as discussed above, however this research question has not been addressed prior to the current study. Additionally, the interaction between SES and SSS may impact students' career adaptability in a unique way. For example, the extent to which a student is career adaptable, may be a function of the interaction between their objective SES and where they see themselves in society. Therefore, the current study aimed to establish if there is a difference in student's career adaptability based on their SES, and whether this relationship is moderated by one's SSS.

#### *Career Decision-Making Difficulty*

One important aspect of career development is the ability to make sound, informed decisions about one's career and the world of work. Models of decision-making typically include a description of a process of consolidating information, considering alternatives, and actually making the decision (Harren, 1979). Gati (1986) argues that problems with career decision-making lies in four key areas: lack of information about the career and alternatives, lack of resources, lack of cognitive ability, and lack of ability to synthesize information and come to a decision. The inability to make career decisions can be impactful to the career development of college students, especially given that many college students start college with the goal of entering a career in mind (Eagan et al., 2014).

It would be expected that those with lower SES and SSS would have increased career decision-making difficulty given fewer mentors, resources, and confidence in

career planning. For instance, Lease (2004) found that students from low SES backgrounds tended to report fewer opportunities for mentorship in college, which can lead to a lack of information. Mentorship, according to Lease (2004), can be done by professors and instructors, as well as family members. This is in line with the idea that those from lower SES groups, who may be holding full-time employment, and those with low SES whose upbringing has de-emphasized the need to seek out mentors may experience more career development difficulties as they have less knowledge of the world of work (Lease, 2004). Furthermore, Sandler (2000) found that college students experiencing financial hardships had lower college persistence rates, which was contributed to a possible lack of connection and feelings of belongingness on campus, adding to a lack of resources and overall difficulties that lower SES students may experience in their career planning. Thompson and Subich (2006) found that lower perceived social status predicted career decision-making self-efficacy, providing further evidence that social status plays a key role in overall difficulties in career decision-making. These findings may further suggest a similar relationship would exist between social class and career decision-making difficulties.

### *Work Values*

Work values are sets of beliefs and ideals that one finds important and expects from their work (Brown, 2002). Work values are studied as an essential aspect of career development and career decisions (Brown, 2002) and generally regarded as a need within the workplace and within one's personal life, therefore people strive to meet these needs (Brown, 2002).

Research on work values was made popular given their emphasis in the Theory of Work Adjustment proposed by Dawis, England, and Lofquist in 1964, and revised by Dawis, Lofquist, and Weiss in 1968. The Theory of Work Adjustment postulates that when people's values and expectations align with their environment at work, people experience satisfaction with their workplace. This is referred to as "correspondence" (Dawis, Lofquist, & Weiss, 1968, p.3). However, when correspondence is not achieved, workplace satisfaction is not achieved, and the individual is less likely to perform well and may result in leaving the job (Dawis, Lofquist, & Weiss 1968). Like employed adults, college students are striving to enter various careers that hopefully allow for correspondence between their values and that of their work environment to occur. Work values can greatly impact the choices that students make about their future careers, therefore knowing students' work values can aid professionals to provide the best guidance and information for students (Duffy & Sedlacek, 2007).

Research into the work values of college students is limited. Duffy and Sedlacek (2007) found that first-year college students tended to report high salary, societal contributions, and prestige as their top work values. Duffy and Sedlacek (2007) also found that those whose parents were in the middle-income bracket typically endorsed intrinsic work values (values that have an internal motivation, rather than an external) highest. However, those whose parents were in the low and high-income bracket typically endorsed extrinsic work values (values that have an external motivation, rather than internal) higher. This shows that socioeconomic status may have an impact on work values.

Since work values originate from needs and ideals, they may be impacted by the emphasis on the accumulation of certain types of capital reflected in different social classes more so than objective measures of social class, such as SES. For example, those that hold work values of Altruism and Comfort may also value accumulating social capital, while those that hold work values of Achievement and Status may also value accumulating financial capital. Because the accumulation of various forms of capital can influence work values, the present study aims to establish a clear relationship between subjective social class (which considers various forms of capital) and work values, while also exploring whether the interaction between SES and SSS impacts work values, and if so, to what extent.

#### *Vocational Interests*

Somewhat related to work values, vocational interests are preferences that one has regarding different tasks and content at work. Vocational interests are most often classified into one of six typologies as described by Holland (1997): realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising, and conventional. Realistic interests typically involve working with one's hands and with things rather than people. Math or scientific interests and interests in working with abstract ideas fall under investigative interests. Artistic and creative abilities and working with ideas falls under the artistic interest domain, while interests revolving around helping others and working with people falls under the social interests domain. Enterprising interests involve leadership interests and working with others in a group. Finally, clerical duties and working with words and numbers are typically conventional interests. These typologies, known as the RIASEC

collectively, inform what vocations and environments one would best fit into (Holland, 1997).

Socioeconomic status has been shown to be associated with different vocational interests. Slaney and Brown (1983) found that those from low SES backgrounds tended to have more realistic vocational interests, while higher SES backgrounds tended to have more investigative interests. This was thought to be due to parental modeling, because those from lower SES backgrounds typically had parents holding realistic jobs, while those from higher SES backgrounds typically had parents working in jobs involving investigative interests (Slaney & Brown, 1983).

Furthermore, SSS is likely also connected to vocational interests. Thompson and Dahling (2012) found that the higher one perceives their social status to be, the more likely they are to obtain learning experiences in investigative, enterprising, and conventional interest areas. Thus, it may be that low SES and low SSS may be linked to more realistic interests due to the same idea of parental modeling, however if SSS is higher, there may be less of a relationship with realistic interests and more of a relationship with other interests, possibly investigative interests. Because SSS stems from one's values and family influence, and these can largely impact interests, the current study aimed to explore whether SES and SSS have an impact on one's vocational interests to better serve those across all levels of SES and SSS.

Among the diagnostic signs of Holland's Theory lies congruence. Congruence is a way of measuring how a person's vocational interests are related to their environment (Holland, 1997). In college students, congruence can be found between students' vocational interests and their chosen college major. Holland (1997) explains that higher

levels of congruence between one's interests and one's environment can lead to workers being more satisfied and even more successful.

Research focusing on college populations has shown that there is a positive relationship between congruence and satisfaction in a chosen major (Allen, 1996). Allen (1996) found that congruence was significantly related to college satisfaction as well as achievement. Congruence with college major can also be a predictor of persistence (Allen & Robbins 2008; Tracey & Robbins, 2006). Allen and Robbins (2008) found that higher levels of congruence between interests and college major, predicted higher college persistence. Similarly, Tracey and Robbins (2006) found that college major congruence predicted grade point average and college persistence over a five-year period. This indicates the importance for students to identify a major that fits their interests in order for them to be successful.

Socioeconomic status has been examined in relation to congruence. Slaney and Brown (1983) found that college students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds tended to have higher congruence, or match, between their own vocational interests and the interests captured in their academic major than those from higher socioeconomic backgrounds. This may be due to the idea that students from low SES backgrounds have to quickly determine what field they want to enter in order to graduate and make money, while those of higher SES may be pressured to pursue majors and careers that will allow them to stay at a high SES, rather than choosing a major or career that coincides with their interests. Slaney and Brown (1983) postulated that higher SES students may be more indecisive about their major than lower SES students. Apart from the study by Slaney and Brown (1983), few have examined the relationship between social class and

college major congruence. In Holland's (1959) Theory of Vocational Choice, he postulated that aspects of one's personal life, including socioeconomic status, could impact a person's selection of a career.

#### *Interactions between SSS, SES, and Career Development*

While SES may be related to certain aspects of the career development variables (such as having a lack of money to pursue one's interests or a lack of opportunities), the emphasis and concurrent acquisition of different forms of capital as assessed by SSS may better explain these variables. Additionally, inclusion of both SES and SSS may lead to a better understanding of how one's objective and perceived social standing may impact career development. This could lead to a further understanding of what career issues (specifically career adaptability and decision-making difficulty) people face as a result of their social class, as well as what interests and values they tend to hold.

As mentioned, SSS is affected by one's emphasis on obtaining social capital. Gathering social capital has been shown to be associated with positive career outcomes such as knowing more about the world of work, building a social support network, and can even lead to promotions and salary increases (Seibert, Kraimer, & Liden, 2001; de Janasz & Forret, 2008; Forret & Dougherty, 2004). Therefore, differing emphasis on social capital across SES backgrounds may explain how SES impacts career development. Families within the same financial class, or socioeconomic status, may have very different emphasis on aspects of social capital, which likely affects their perceptions of their social class. With this idea in mind, measuring a family's socioeconomic status alone does little to understand the value that the family places on social interactions and relationships, and likely subsequent perceptions of one's social

class standing. Because of the independent nature of emphasis on financial and social capital, both SES and SSS should be examined to fully understand their relationship with career development. Financial capital and social capital can vary widely, for example some students may come from families who can afford to pay for college (or receive financial aid to do so), however without the addition of also understanding a college degree as important (a form of social capital) these student may not persist to attain a college degree.

Research examining the experiences of college students reflects this phenomenon of accumulating varies forms of capital. Using longitudinal data from the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP), Walpole (2003) found that students in the low SES category, based on their parents' income, spent less time in student clubs and groups— a form of accumulating social capital— compared to the higher SES students. Walpole (2003) also found that 52% of those from low SES backgrounds reported working more than sixteen hours a week while only 37% of those from high SES backgrounds reported the same thing. Although Walpole (2003) did not measure SSS, this phenomenon may reflect an interaction of SES and SSS. For example, a student from a low SES background and low SSS may feel the pressure to work at least part-time to make money. However, someone from a high SES background and middle to high SSS may not feel this pressure to work and could instead devote time to school work or networking, two things Walpole (2003) argues is important for college student success. These interactions between SES and SSS across students may affect the career development of students, and as well as lasting effects well after the college experience.

Generally, it appears SES and SSS may have an impact on how someone's career develops over time. Yet, very little research into the effect of SES on career development has been done, and research into the effect of SSS on career development is largely absent in the literature. Examining the relationship between SES and career development could help identify areas in which universities tailor interventions to further the career development of growingly diverse student population. Also, establishing the role of SSS in career development could help specify how students within the same SES group experience career development issues differently. Therefore, attention to the role of both SES and SSS, and their interactions, is needed to more fully understand the ways in which social class may affect the career development of college students.

#### The Current Study

The current study aimed to extend knowledge on the career development of college students, particularly in relation to SES and SSS. College serves as an important stage in individuals' career development, therefore identifying potential problems or strengths of different student demographics may be important first steps to developing tailored interventions for students. With the push for higher education attainment across the country, colleges are experiencing an increase of student enrollment (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2016). This increase is likely to include more students from lower SES backgrounds. These changing student demographics may render research on the "traditional" college student less applicable today. This study may lead to understanding students' career development needs by exploring factors that impact career development and factors that impact career choice. To do this, the current study examined how SES and SSS interact to inform students' career adaptability, career

decision-making difficulty, work values, and vocational interests. The review of the literature, suggests individuals of higher SES have the financial and social resources to assist in career planning (Walpole, 2003; Jury et al., 2017), and emerging evidence suggests that perceptions of higher social status (e.g. SSS) may function similarly in affording those of higher SSS more support in the career planning process (Autin et al., 2017; Thompson and Dahling, 2012). Given these assumptions, it was hypothesized that increased SES and SSS would relate to higher levels of career adaptability and fewer career decision-making difficulties. Furthermore, SES and SSS were expected to relate to the work values of Achievement, Altruism, and Autonomy and were not likely to be associated with Comfort and Status, given the increased emphasis on accumulating financial and social capital associated with these values. Additionally, SES and SSS were expected to relate to investigative interests and have an inverse relationship to realistic and conventional interests, given past findings establishing a similar relationship with SES and SSS separately. Finally, it was assumed that higher SES and SSS would relate to greater interest-major congruence. Furthermore, given that individuals may place different emphasis on the building of capital across different levels of SES, it is likely that interactions between SES and SSS affect career development and planning. It was predicted that students reporting lower SES and higher SSS would report greater levels of career adaptability, fewer career decision making difficulties, and greater interest congruence. Based on the review of career development variables mentioned above, the following research questions and hypotheses were generated.

### *Questions and Hypotheses*

1. *How do SES and SSS relate to career adaptability?*

- 1a. SES will explain a significant amount of variance in career adaptability, such that SES and career adaptability are positively related.
  - 1b. SSS will explain a significant amount of variance in career adaptability, such that SSS and career adaptability are positively related.
  - 1c. SSS will moderate the relationship between SES and career adaptability.
2. *How do SES and SSS relate to career decision-making difficulty?*
- 2a. SES will explain a significant amount of variance in career decision-making difficulty, such that SES and career decision-making difficulty are negatively related.
  - 2b. SSS will explain a significant amount of variance in career decision-making difficulty, such that SSS and career decision-making difficulty are negatively related.
  - 2c. SSS will moderate the relationship between SES and career decision-making difficulty.
3. *How do SES and SSS relate to work values?*
- 3a. SES will be negatively related to work values of Comfort and Status.
  - 3b. SSS will explain more of the variance in work values of Comfort and Status than SES.
  - 3c. SES will be positively related to work values of Achievement, Altruism, and Autonomy.

3d. SSS will explain more of the variance in work values of Achievement, Altruism, and Autonomy than SES.

3e. SSS will moderate the relationship between SES and work values, whereas SSS increases, the relationship will strengthen.

4. *How do SES and SSS affect vocational interests?*

4a. SES and SSS will be negatively related to realistic and conventional interests.

4b. SES and SSS will be positively related to investigative interests.

4c. SSS will moderate the relationship between SES and realistic, conventional, and investigative interests.

5. *Does SES and SSS impact college major congruence?*

5a. SES will explain a significant amount of variance in interest congruence, such that they are negatively related.

5b. SSS will explain a significant amount of variance in interest congruence, such that they are negatively related.

5c. SSS will moderate the relationship between SES and college major congruence.

## CHAPTER II – PROCEDURE AND METHOD

### Procedure

Participants were recruited via SONA, a research recruitment program. Data collection maintained participant anonymity throughout the study. Individuals who signed up through the SONA Systems were directed to the online survey host, Qualtrics, to complete the survey measures. Once individuals arrived at the Qualtrics survey, the consent form was presented first, and only once they consented to participate in the study, was the online survey presented. In an effort to obtain high quality data, three directed response items (i.e. “Answer this question as very true”) were included to screen out participants that were not paying attention and responding carelessly, as recommended by Meade and Craig (2012). These questions were interspersed into the study measures. Individuals failing to respond correctly to directed response items were exited from the survey and did not receive incentives for their participation. Additionally, data of those failing to complete 25% or more of a single measure were removed to ensure accuracy of data. The survey took between approximately 90 minutes, and participants received 1.5 SONA points, to fulfill a class requirement or extra credit for applicable courses, upon accurately completing the survey.

### Participants

An initial sample of 334 traditional aged undergraduate students (between 18 and 25 years old) was initially recruited through SONA, (<https://usm.sona-systems.com>), which is an online recruitment system utilized by the University of Southern Mississippi’s Department of Psychology. As a result of the total sample, 43 participants were removed from the study due to failing the validity checks, and an additional 16

participants were removed from the study due to failing to complete at or above 25% of a single measure. Therefore, the final sample consisted of 275 participants, of which 53.5% ( $N = 147$ ) were females, 45.5% ( $N = 125$ ) were males, and 1% ( $N = 3$ ) were other with an average age of 19.53 years ( $SD = 1.58$ ). The sample included mostly single (96.4%), White/non-Hispanic students (61.5%; with 33.1% being Black/African American) who had attended an average of 3.69 ( $SD = 3.23$ ) semesters of college and who reported freshman status (44.4%), with the largest reported majors being nursing (20.7%) and psychology (16.7%). Only 34.5% of the sample identified as first-generation college students (this was operationalized as one's parent(s) or guardian(s) not attending a four-year college) and 50.5% reported currently working. See Table A1 for a summary of sample demographics.

### Measures

Means, standard deviations, and reliabilities of all measures used (when available) are provided in Table A1 in Appendix A.

#### *Demographic Questionnaire*

A brief demographic questionnaire was included that assessed participant's age, race, gender, years in college, declared major, parent's education level, parent's marital status, current grade point average (GPA), family's annual income, and parent's current employment.

#### *Socioeconomic Status*

As discussed above, there are many ways of assessing socioeconomic status. Because focus of the current study was on college students, students' parental SES is typically assessed due to college students typically not being employed, as well as likely

still being partially dependent on their parents financially. Cirino et al. (2002) compared several methods of assessing socioeconomic status and found that the popular measures are all highly correlated with each other. The Hollingshead Four Factor Scale (Hollingshead, 1975) was used to assess SES in a way that reflects the four key areas of SES (parental occupation, parental education, parental marital status, and sex) as discussed in previous literature. Using this method, each category is given a score based on the category scores found in Hollingshead (1975) that are summed and compared to others of the same gender. Parental occupation is scored from 1 being “Farm Laborers/Manual Service Workers” to 9 “Higher Executives, Proprietors of Large Businesses, and Major Professionals” (Hollingshead, 1975). Parental education is calculated with a score from 1-7, with 1 being “Less than seventh grade” and 7 being “Graduate professional training/graduate degree” (Hollingshead, 1975). Marital status is considered by assessing income for both parents (or guardians) or one parent (or guardian), depending on if the parents (or guardians) are married, separated, or divorced (Hollingshead, 1975). This results in a single score ranging from 8 (lowest) to 66 (highest) (Hollingshead, 1975). This measure is widely used, and because there is some subjectivity on the rater’s part, specifically with the occupational code, Cirino et al. (2002) found acceptable interrater agreement ( $\kappa = .68$ ). Cirino et al. (2002) also reported the inter-rater reliability coefficient as  $r = .91$  (correlation between raters scores using the Hollingshead Four Factor Model) for the total sample, which was reported as the highest reliability across different metrics of SES reviewed by Cirino et al. (2002).

The current study used multiple raters who underwent two formal trainings related to the use of the Hollingshead Four Factor Index and occupational codes. Kappa

coefficients were then calculated for both parental occupational codes between the two raters. The current study found kappa values of .59 for the primary parent's occupational code and .66 for the secondary parent's occupational code. While these agreement coefficients were adequate, newer recommendations of interrater agreement suggest this range is weak to moderate (McHugh, 2012). Therefore, discrepancies were settled by the raters and a team of researchers to increase accuracy of subjective ratings.

While much of the current literature tends to focus on low income students, several researchers have found differences in the career development of college students across income levels (McCarron and Inkelas, 2006; Slaney and Brown, 1983; Walpole, 2003). Therefore, the current study did not limit recruiting to only low-income students and collected data from a wider sample. This resulted in a mean annual parental income of \$79,123.61 (SD = \$64,098.13).

### *Subjective Social Status*

Subjective Social Status is a rather new area of focus in research, therefore measures of SSS are still in the early stages of development. Adler et al. (2000) developed a measure that allows participants to place themselves in relation to society. The scale uses the image of a 10-runged ladder accompanied by the numbers 1-10 (1 being the lowest rung, 10 being the highest). Accompanied with the ladder are directions for participants to think about where they stand in relation to the rest of society and place themselves on one of the rungs of the ladder to represent their standing in society. The number of the rung is used to indicate their subjective social standing. Consequently, this scale is a relatively new measure with little psychometric information, however Operario, Adler, and Williams (2004) explored the test-retest reliability and found a Spearman's

rank-order correlation of  $\rho = 0.62$  ( $p < 0.01$ ) for the sample using data from five consecutive months, indicating that there is evidence that this scale is reliable. The original scale asks participants to place themselves on a ladder in reference to both the United States and then again for the entire world. As the current study aimed to answer questions more on the national level, only the question about the participants' place in society in the United States was used. The average SSS for the sample in the current study was 5.77 ( $SD=1.52$ ).

#### *Career Adaptability*

The Career Futures Inventory-Revised (CFI-R; Rottinghaus et al., 2012) was used to assess career adaptability. The CFI-R is a 28-item measure with five scales: Career Agency (CA), Occupational Awareness (OA), Support, Work-Life Balance (WLB), and Negative Career Outlook (NCO). The CFI-R provides statements in which participants respond with how much they agree or disagree with the statement on a scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*) with statements such as “I am aware of my strengths”, “I can establish a plan for my future career”, and “I do not understand job market trends”. In the development of the CFI-R, Rottinghaus and colleagues (2012) found internal consistency reliability estimates to range from  $\alpha = .75$  to  $.88$  across the scales in their validation sample. While the CFI-R is intended to use with multiple populations, the development and validation studies were both conducted with undergraduate student populations, indicating its appropriateness for use in the current study. Internal consistency reliability for the current study was acceptable ranging from  $\alpha = .67$  to  $.90$  across the five scales.

#### *Career Decision-Making Difficulty*

Gati, Krausz and Osipow (1996) developed the Career Decision-making Difficulties Questionnaire (CDDQ) to measure career decision-making difficulty that assesses Lack of Readiness, Lack of Information, and Inconsistent Information across three subscales. The CDDQ includes 34 items with statements that the participant is prompted to mark from 1 (*Does not describe me*) to 9 (*Describes me well*; Gati, 2011). These statements render a total score as well as scores for each of the subscales. The total score has a Cronbach's alpha of  $\alpha = .95$  with an American student population ages 17 to 23 years as reported by Gati, Krausz, and Osipow (1996). Evidence for construct validity has been provided through correlations with counselor judgments across the categories of difficulty assessed by the CDDQ (Gati, Osipow, Krausz, & Saka, 2000), a correlation between the CDDQ and the Career Decision Scale of .82 (Lancaster, Rudolph, Perkins, and Paten, 1999), and actual difficulties of American and Taiwanese students matching the difficulties assessed by the CDDQ (Mau, 2001). Full scale scores were utilized to indicate overall difficulty with making career decisions with acceptable internal consistency of  $\alpha = .95$ .

### *Work Values*

To assess work values, the Minnesota Importance Questionnaire (MIQ; Rounds, Henly, Dawis, Lofquist, & Weiss, 1981) was used. Currently, the MIQ comes in two forms: Ranked Form and Paired Form. For the purposes of the current study, the MIQ Ranked Form was used. This version includes 21 needs statements that are presented in sets of five statements about various aspects of work that the participants must rank from 1-5. Final scores reflect the importance of six work values: Achievement, Comfort, Status, Altruism, Safety, and Autonomy. These six work values was the main focus of the

current study. Additionally, a total of 21 lower order needs are also reported and organized under the six main work values. Rounds et al. (1981) report the reliability coefficients for the MIQ as ranging from  $\alpha = .77$  to  $.81$ .

The MIQ includes a scale of inconsistent responding (Logical Consistent Triad; LCT; Rounds et al., 1981). Rounds et al. (1981) recommends data for those with an LCT score below 33% should be considered inconsistent and invalid. Therefore, the current study removed any cases with an LCT score below this cut-off. This resulted in 27 cases being removed from the analyses that involve the MIQ, resulting in a total of 248 participants to be used in analysis with the MIQ.

#### *Vocational Interests*

Vocational interests were measured using the O\*NET Interest Profiler Short Form (IPSF; National Center for O\*NET Development, 1999) which is a self-report measure, that includes that response options of “like,” “dislike,” and “unsure” to 10 questions that assess each of Holland’s RIASEC types, for a total of 60 items. A summary code is created using scores on the IPSF by adding up the scores across the RIASEC questions and using the three highest types as the code (National Center for O\*NET Development, 1999). Rounds, Su, Lewis, and Rivkin (2010) found acceptable levels of internal consistency ( $\alpha = .78-.87$ ), indicating that the O\*NET IPSF shows evidence of good reliability. The current study found acceptable internal consistency with a range of  $\alpha = .81$  to  $.89$  across the six RIASEC areas. Individuals’ summary code, the highest three scores across the six scales (e.g., RAS), were found.

To evaluate congruence with college major, each college major was summarized into a type code found using Rosen, Holmberg, and Holland’s (1997) *Education*

*Opportunities Finder*. Then, using the Iachan Agreement Index (Iachan, 1984), the individual summary code and college major code of each participant was assessed for congruence. Specifically, the Iachan Agreement Index uses the interest summary code and college major code and matches the letters based on their placement within the type code. For example, an interest code of ISA and a college major code of ISA would result in an Iachan score of 28, while a college major code of AIS would result in an Iachan score of 16. The Iachan Agreement Index scores range from 0 to 28, with 28 representing a perfect match between one's interest code and college major.

### Analysis

Once all participants' data was collected all study measures were scored. After removing all cases noted above, preliminary analyses were run. Alpha coefficients, Kappa (for SES), and descriptive statistics were generated for all variables. Skewness and kurtosis were evaluated to ensure that the data is relatively normal, while also helping to evaluate the general trend of the sample. There were no issues with skewness or kurtosis noted with the independent variables in line with Field's (2013) recommendations, therefore, normality of the data was assumed.

A series of analyses were conducted test study hypotheses. Before results of the analyses were interpreted, all assumptions of multiple regression were tested in order to assume that the results are accurate. In order to examine the relationships of the variables, bivariate correlations were produced for all variables. Bivariate correlations, variable means and standard deviations, and scale reliability coefficients (when appropriate) are found in Table A2.

To test hypotheses 1a-b, 2a-b, 3a-d, 4a-d, and 5a-b hierarchical multiple regressions were used to examine the main effects of SES and SSS on the career development variables (CFI-R, CDDQ, MIQ Values, and IPSF scores). Prior to analyses, the two independent variables (SES and SSS) were centered, by subtracting the sample mean from each participant's score, prior to any analyses to reduce multicollinearity and aid the interpretation of results. The first block of the multiple regression analyses included SES and SSS. To test hypotheses 1c, 2c, 3e, 4e, and 5c the interaction terms for SES and SSS, calculated by multiplying the centered SES and SSS scores for each participant, were entered in the second block to evaluate if SSS moderated the relationship between SES and the various career development variables. Significant interactions were further probed by examining the simple slopes for +/-1 standard deviation and mean for SSS for each regression model where the interaction term was a significant predictor of the dependent variable. Means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations of all variables can be found in Table A2.

## CHAPTER III - RESULTS

### Career Adaptability

A hierarchical multiple regression was conducted to examine the relations between SES and SSS and career adaptability, using the five scales of the CFI-R (Table A3). There were no significant main effects of SES or SSS on any of the scales of the CFI-R. Interactions between SES and SSS were also not significant predictors of scales of the CFI-R. Therefore, Hypotheses 1a, 1b, and 1c were not supported. In the current study and sample, there seems to be no significant relationship between SES, SSS, and career adaptability.

### Career Decision-Making Difficulty

A hierarchical multiple regression was conducted to test the main effects for SES and SSS on career decision-making difficulty, using the total score of the CDDQ (Table A4). There were no significant main effects for SES or SSS on the CDDQ total score. The two-way interaction was not significant, suggesting no moderating effect of SSS on the relationship between SES and overall career decision-making difficulty. Overall, Hypotheses 2a, 2b, and 2c were not supported.

Post-hoc analyses were run to examine the relationship between SES, SSS, and the subscales of the CDDQ (Readiness, Lack of Information, and Inconsistent Information). However, there were no significant main effects across the subscales. Interactions between SES and SSS were also not significant predictors of the subscales of the CDDQ. This indicates that in the current study and sample, there seems to be no significant relationship between SES, SSS, and career decision-making difficulties (both total score and subscale scores).

## Work Values

The main effects between SES, SSS, and the six work values assessed by the MIQ were tested using hierarchical multiple regressions (Table A5). There were no significant main effects of SES or SSS on Achievement, Altruism, Safety, Status, or Autonomy. There was a significant main effect for SES and SSS on the value of Comfort ( $\beta = -.15$ ,  $\Delta F = 3.15$ ,  $p < .05$ ). The relationship was such that as SES increased, endorsement of the value of Comfort decreased. The entire relationship accounted for a total of 3% of the variance ( $R^2 = .03$ ), therefore while significant, this was a rather small relationship.

Additionally, there was a significant two-way interaction for SES x SSS, in predicting Safety work values ( $\beta = -.18$ ,  $\Delta F = 7.72$ ,  $p < .01$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = .03$ ), suggesting a significant moderating effect of SSS on the relationship between SES and Safety work values. Simple slopes analysis for  $\pm 1$  SD and mean were conducted to further probe this interaction and were found to be significant at +1 SD only (95% CI = -.01, -.02,  $t = -3.06$ ,  $p < .01$ ), such that when SSS was above average, higher SES related to lower endorsement of the value of Safety than when SSS and SES were average or below (Figure A1). Overall, these results partially support Hypotheses 3a which predicted a significant negative relationship between SES and Comfort, but not for the work value of Safety. Additionally, Hypothesis 3e was partially supported. While there is evidence that SSS moderates the relationship between SES and Safety, this relationship was not replicated across other work values. Thus, Hypotheses 3b, 3c, and 3d were not supported.

## Vocational Interests

Examining the relations between, SES, SSS, and interests (Table A6), no significant main effects of SES or SSS on any of the RIASEC interests were found.

Interactions between SES and SSS also were not significant predictors of interests. Therefore, Hypotheses 4a, 4b, 4c, 4d, and 4e were not supported. In the current study and sample, there seems to be no significant relationship between SES, SSS, and vocational interests.

#### Interests and Major Congruence

A hierarchical multiple regression was conducted to test the main effects of SES, SES and interest-major congruence, using the Iachan Agreement Index calculated with participants' reported major Holland code and their assessed interest code using the IPSF (Table A6). This analysis includes 255 cases due to inability to calculate congruence for participants with no reported major or did not complete the IPSF.

Examining the relations between, SES, SSS, and congruence (Table A7), no significant main effects for SES or SSS on congruence were found. Interactions between SES and SSS also were not significant predictors of congruence. Therefore, Hypotheses 5a, 5b, and 5c were not supported. In the current study and sample, there seems to be no significant relationship between SES, SSS, and college major congruence.

## CHAPTER IV – DISCUSSION

Overall, results of the current study do not suggest that there are significant relations between SES, SSS, and most career development variables examined, such as career adaptability, career decision-making difficulties, work values, and interests, with a few exceptions. These exceptions include some evidence of significant relations between SES and SSS on the endorsement of work values related to Safety and Comfort.

SES significantly predicted the value of Comfort, such that as SES increases, endorsement of Comfort decreases. This suggests that students from higher SES backgrounds in this sample did not tend to endorse Comfort as an important work value. The value of Comfort is comprised of needs for safe working conditions, independence in work, being busy, having job security, and being paid a fair wage. Therefore, those from higher SES backgrounds may assume that these basic needs will be met by any position they choose (Brown, 2002). This may also explain the tendency for those of lower SES to value these basic needs higher, as it may not be assumed their workplace will fulfill these needs (Brown, 2002). Moreover, this may be due to the emphasis of accumulating financial capital over other forms of capital as discussed previously.

Additionally, there was evidence of an interaction in which SSS moderated the relationship between SES and the value of Safety work, in that when SSS and SES were above average, endorsement of Safety decreased. Those from higher social class (both above average SES and SSS) reported significantly less importance in the value of Safety. The value of Safety on the MIQ is comprised of needs for supportive supervisors and organization, supportive colleagues or coworkers, and adequate training to safely do the job. Therefore, less endorsement of Safety work values suggests that those of higher

SES and SSS suggests that they may not require much support from others in their work environment. This may partially be due to being employed in more supervisory roles or being in a place of power or having additional support outside of the work place, which may include more safe working conditions. Additionally, those of higher SES and SSS may expect the need for further education to increase their qualifications for higher paying positions (to keep them in their current social class) and thus have adequate support and training in their jobs when they start. This may also be due to an emphasis of accumulating financial or physical capital over human and social capital, which is further corroborated by the current findings of a negative relationship between SES, SSS, and values of comfort and safety, which would involve accumulating social capital over financial capital. This also further corroborates Duffy and Sedlacek's (2007) finding that students from both low and high SES backgrounds held extrinsic values (which includes extrinsic motivators such as financial and physical capital). Further, when students are entering college or the workforce from a higher SES or SSS background, they may have already solidified social and human capital (support) therefore requiring a higher emphasis on gaining other forms of capital. This is further supported by the Social Class Worldview Model (Liu et al., 2004), and further corroborated by Walpole (2003) which indicates that students from higher SES backgrounds tend to have more available access to forms of social capital (such as mentoring and connections on campus) that allow them to gather capital of other forms.

Those who work with college students may consider these findings regarding work values when assisting college students in choosing a major or career. However, when working with students from higher SES or SSS backgrounds, it may be important

to explore all values areas, with the idea that students from higher SES may not value Safety or Comfort values as great as those from lower SES backgrounds. The accumulation of financial capital or emphasis of certain values can have an impact on and person-environment fit and thus, overall job satisfaction (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984). This would hold particularly true when individuals who hold work values related to increasing financial capital (such as achievement and status) hold positions within organizations that allow them to fulfill these values. The Theory of Work Adjustment (Dawis, Lofquist, & Weiss, 1968) provides both theoretical and empirical support that this would result in correspondence and therefore increase likelihood of job tenure and job satisfaction. Further, Judge and Bretz (1992) found that students choose jobs that are consistent with their individually identified values. Therefore, assisting students to identify their current work values and to learn how to identify the values of careers can have lasting, important implications on job choice and overall job satisfaction (Dawis, et al., 1968; Judge & Bretz, 1992). These results also reinforce Duffy and Sedlacek's (2007) argument that work values should remain an important consideration in the career development of college students, specifically to help them choose a career that would allow for correspondence to occur to increase their likelihood of remaining in that career and their overall job satisfaction.

### Limitations

One limitation of the current study is that it used a single, cross-sectional sample of traditional aged college students from one southern university. Another possible limitation concerns the measurement of SES. As discussed in the literature review, the measurement of SES is fraught with issues. The Hollingshead Four Factor Index

(Hollingshead, 1975) was used for the current study. While this index has good evidence of reliability and validity and has been widely used, it remains an outdated index. Particularly, ratings of the prestige of jobs have not been updated since the index was created. Therefore, the measurement of SES in the current study is one limitation, and there is a large need for a standardized method of assessing the objective social standing of individuals for both practical and research purposes. Further, the measure of SSS used in the current study was a one-item measure that does not lend itself well to complex interpretation given that it broadly asks participants to place themselves in accordance to where they see themselves standing in society. Additionally, given the average SSS of 5.77 in the current sample, there was a tendency to gravitate towards the middle of the ladder, which further supports the idea that people place themselves in middle class despite being in other classes by objective measure (Bird and Newport, 2017; Newport, 2015). Therefore, the simplicity of the measure of SSS is considered a limitation of the current study.

#### Implications and Future Directions

Many of the hypotheses of the current study were not supported, nonetheless the findings contain remain important for those who work with college students. The results provide more information for those that assist college students in their career decision making, specifically through increasing resources that provide information to students from lower SES and SSS backgrounds. Previous literature supports the idea that students from lower SES backgrounds may need further support to provide information, mentoring opportunities, and campus connections to both increase retention and help inform their time in college and their career development trajectory (McCarron and

Inkelas, 2006; Jury et al., 2017; Walpole, 2003). Additionally, these results suggest that students from higher SES backgrounds may endorse less importance in the values of Comfort and Safety. While individual assessment of values is recommended, having an understanding that higher SES students may not value these as highly as others can provide a framework into helping them along in their major or career.

Studies examining both SES and SSS with similar undergraduate samples in different parts of the United States have found similar distributions in scores (Allan, Garriott, & Keene, 2016; Lewandowski, Gathje, Lovett, & Gordon, 2013; Martin, Smart Richman, & Leary, 2017; Salami, Walker, & Beach, 2017), therefore, the current results may not be unique to the current sample. Career development is a salient variable for college students, however, becoming a college student and remaining enrolled does indicate an overall higher social class and standing in society than what may be seen in a general population sample. Therefore, the results may have been impacted by this, and the ability to navigate or desire to be in higher education suggests some level of increased social standing relative to peers not attending college or pursuing a four-year degree.

Moreover, there was a consistently small amount of variance accounted for by SES and SSS across all analyses. This is evidence that there may be more that impacts career development than these two contextual factors. Therefore, while these variables are important pieces of information when working with college students, such as addressing financial barriers for lower SES students to remain in school, there may be other pieces of information that need to be considered regarding their career development. Other contextual factors may be more salient factors in the career development of college students. Specifically, previous research has suggested variables

such as current financial issues, current employment obligations, access to mentoring, specific measures of social capital, and campus involvement are also important factors impacting the experiences of college students of lower SES (Jury et al., 2017; Walpole, 2003).

The current findings provide some considerable directions for future research. First and foremost, research addressing the measurement of SES would help to unite and solidify studies examining social class. There is an ever-growing need for a standardized way of measuring social class as there is a growing call for more research looking at social class's overall impact across disciplines (Diemer et al., 2013). Research exploring specific contextual variables related to social class such as financial difficulties, employment obligations, and overall emphasis on specific forms of capital may also be helpful to establishing the impact of these variables on college student experiences. Additionally, research exploring the needs of students across social classes will be helpful in understanding what can be done to further help college students develop into their chosen careers. More research examining specific career development theories and the role of social class within these theories may also be beneficial.

In conclusion, the current findings suggest there is a relationship between social class and work values of Safety and Comfort. These findings add to the growing body of evidence suggesting that social class is an important contextual factor impacting students' career development. Suggestions for future research include exploring a more standardized measure of SES, further examining social class's role in established theories in career development, and research exploring needs of students across social classes to further understand the changing demographic of students entering higher education.

APPENDIX A – Tables and Figures

Table A1.

*Demographic Characteristics of the Sample*

Characteristic	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
<b>Participant Gender</b>		
Female	147	53.5
Male	125	45.5
Other	3	1.0
<b>Participant Race</b>		
White/non-Hispanic	169	61.5
Black/African American	91	33.1
Other Racial Groups	15	5.4
<b>Year in School</b>		
Freshman	122	44.4
Sophomore	64	23.3
Junior	54	19.6
Senior	35	12.7
<b>First Generation Students</b>		
Yes	95	34.5
No	179	65.1
Missing	1	0.4
<b>Currently Working</b>		
Yes	139	50.5
No	136	49.5
<b>Parental Marital Status</b>		
Divorced	64	23.3
Married	138	50.2
Single	65	2.9
Widowed/Widower	8	23.6
Characteristic	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Participant age (Range 18-25)	19.53	1.58
Semesters in Major	3.69	3.23
Self-Reported GPA	3.23	.54
Reported Annual Income (N=117)	\$9,039.74	\$8,612.23
Reported Parental Income (N=241)	\$79,123.61	\$64,098.13

Table A2.

*Correlations, Reliabilities, Means, and Standard Deviations for all variables*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
1. HH	†																				
2. SSS	.23**	†																			
3. CFI_WLB	-.02	.10	.81																		
4. CFI_CA	.00	.10	.76**	.90																	
5. CFI_NCO	.02	-.03	-.21**	-.32**	.67																
6. CFI_OA	.00	.12	.46**	.48**	-.04	.77															
7. CFI_S	.04	.14*	.56**	.63**	-.22**	.28**	.79														
8. CDDQ_T	-.02	-.06	-.22**	-.29**	.48**	-.13*	-.26**	.95													
9. Realistic Interests	.04	.05	-.04	-.03	.09	.12	-.27**	.10	.89												
10. Investigative Interests	-.02	.07	-.08	.01	.04	.09	-.12*	.04	.49**	.84											
11. Artistic Interests	-.03	-.10	-.01	-.01	.07	.03	-.04	.06	.24**	.30**	.87										
12. Social Interests	.01	-.03	.15*	.19**	-.02	.05	.09	-.10	.13*	.30**	.42**	.81									
13. Enterprising Interests	.06	.03	.15*	.10	-.05	.15*	-.01	.08	.29**	.22**	.37**	.45**	.81								
14. Conventional Interests	.05	.04	.13*	.03	.08	.12*	-.11	.07	.46**	.27**	.24**	.27**	.46**	.85							
15. Congruence (N=255)	-.03	.12	-.01	.02	-.12	.01	.02	-.04	-.08	.19**	-.06	.20**	.07	-.04	†						
16. Achievement (N=234)	-.09	-.12	-.10	-.08	.02	-.12	-.15*	-.01	.05	.09	.17**	.22**	.13*	.09	.03	†					
17. Altruism (N=234)	.10	.03	-.12	-.13	.04	-.19**	-.07	-.02	.01	.03	.15*	.29**	.14*	-.04	.10	.53**	†				
18. Comfort (N=234)	-.16**	-.07	.02	-.06	.12	-.01	-.18**	.05	.16*	.06	.11	.07	.19**	.21**	-.02	.47**	.41**	†			
19. Safety (N=234)	-.12	-.09	-.01	-.05	-.03	-.07	-.11	-.07	.05	-.10	.03	.03	.11*	.08	.03	.30**	.34**	.53**	†		
20. Status (N=234)	-.08	.02	.00	-.09	-.05	.10	-.18**	.11	.09	.10	.09	.09	.26**	.16*	.06	.52**	.29**	.64**	.34**	†	
21. Autonomy (N=234)	-.12	-.04	-.04	.01	.08	.04	-.12	.04	.13	.11	.15*	.18**	.19**	.15*	.00	.43**	.31**	.54**	.21**	.52**	†
M	46.28	5.77	3.84	3.98	2.25	3.27	3.92	3.62	.25	.38	.40	.53	.46	.25	18.33	1.62	1.18	1.02	.90	.93	.96
SD	11.11	1.52	.72	.58	.80	.71	.70	1.47	.31	.31	.33	.30	.29	.28	7.83	.62	.67	.49	.56	.68	.69

Note: HH=Hollingshead Four Factor Index; SSS=Subjective Social Status Ladder; CFI\_WLB= Career Futures Inventory-Revised Work-life Balance Scale; CFI\_CA= Career Futures Inventory-Revised Career Agency Scale; CFI\_NCO= Career Futures Inventory-Revised Negative Career Outlook Scale; CFI\_OA= Career Futures Inventory-Revised Occupational Awareness Scale; CFI\_S= Career Futures Inventory-Revised Support Scale; CDDQ\_T= Career Decision-making Difficulties Questionnaire Total Score; Reliabilities found on diagonal when applicable, † = not applicable.\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed) \*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table A3.

*Regression results for SES, SSS, and Career Adaptability*

	CFI-WLB		CFI-CA		CFI-NCO		CFI-OA		CFI-S	
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2
Constant	3.84	3.84	3.98	3.97	2.25	2.26	3.27	3.27	3.92	3.92
HH	-.05	-.05	-.02	-.02	.03	.03	-.03	-.03	.01	.01
SSS	.12	.12	.11	.10	-.04	-.03	.11	.11	.14	.14
HH x SSS		.00		.07		.02		.00		.00
$\Delta F$	1.69	.00	1.40	1.25	.21	.07	1.58	.00	2.51	.00
$\Delta R^2$	.01	.00	.01	.01	.00	.00	.01	.00	.02	.00

*Note:* Standardized coefficients reported, HH = Hollingshead Four Factor Index, SSS=Subjective Social Status, CFI-WLB = Career Futures Inventory-Revised Work-Life Balance scale, CFI-CA = Career Futures Inventory-Revised Career Agency scale, CFI-NCO = Career Futures Inventory-Revised Negative Career Outlook scale, CFI-OA= Career Futures Inventory-Revised Occupational Awareness scale, and CFI-S = Career Futures Inventory-Revised Support scale

Table A4.

*Regression results for SES, SSS, and Career Decision-making Difficulty*

	Readiness		Lack of Information		Inconsistent Information		Total	
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2
	Constant	4.29	4.27	3.37	3.31	3.19	3.14	3.62
HH	.04	.05	-.05	-.04	.01	.02	-.01	.00
SSS	-.07	-.07	-.05	-.06	-.06	-.07	-.06	-.08
HH x SSS		.07		.14		.10		.12
$\Delta F$	.62	1.39	.83	4.78	.38	2.64	.54	3.84
$\Delta R^2$	.01	.01	.01	.02	.00	.01	.00	.02

*Note:* Standardized coefficients reported, HH = Hollingshead Four Factor Index, SSS = Subjective Social Status

Table A5.

*Regression results for SES, SSS, and Work Values)*

	Achievement		Altruism		Comfort		Safety		Status		Autonomy	
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2
Constant	1.63	1.64	1.18	1.19	1.01	1.02	.90	.92	.93	.93	.96	.97
HH	-.06	-.07	.10	.09	-.15*	-.16	-.10	-.12	-.09	-.09	-.12	-.13
SSS	-.10	-.09	.01	.02	-.03	-.02	-.07	-.05	.04	.04	-.01	-.01
HH x SSS		-.08		-.10		-.06		-.18**		-.02		-.04
$\Delta F$	2.13	1.54	1.15	2.40	3.15*	.96	2.12	7.72**	.85	.10	1.83	.44
$\Delta R^2$	.02	.01	.01	.01	.03	.00	.02	.03**	.01	.00	.02	.00

*Note:* Standardized coefficients reported, HH= Hollingshead Four Factor Index, SSS = Subjective Social

Status; \* =  $p < .05$  \*\* =  $p < .01$

Figure A1.

Interaction plot of SES predicting Safety Values moderated by SSS

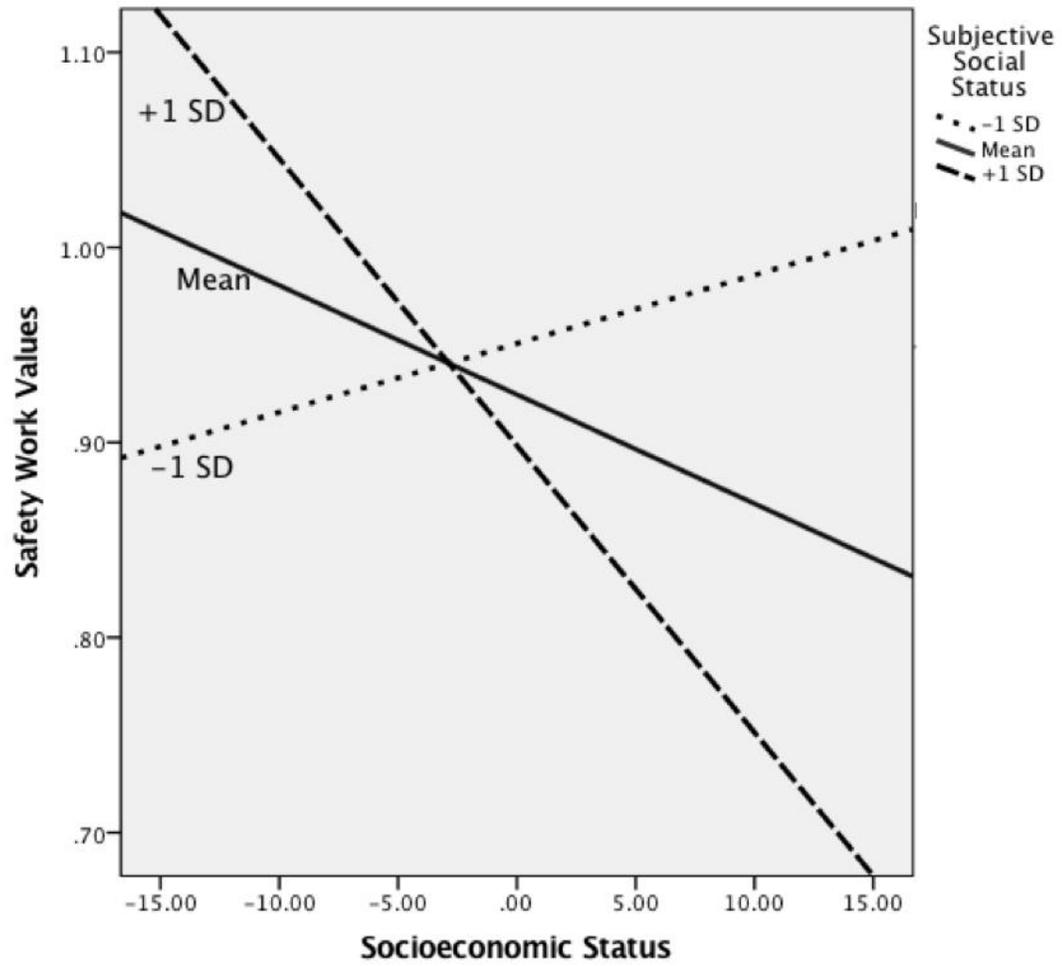


Table A6.

*Regression results for SES, SSS, and Vocational Interests*

	Realistic		Investigative		Artistic		Social		Enterprising		Conventional	
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2
Constant	.25	.26	.38	.37	.40	.40	.53	.54	.46	.46	.25	.25
HH	.03	.02	-.04	-.03	.00	.00	.01	.01	.05	.05	.04	.04
SSS	.04	.05	.08	.07	-.10	-.11	-.03	-.03	.02	.03	.03	.03
HH x SSS		-.08		.08		.05		-.02		-.03		-.01
$\Delta F$	.42	1.65	.80	1.54	1.37	.64	.14	.06	.48	.25	.43	.02
$\Delta R^2$	.00	.01	.01	.01	.01	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00

*Note:* Standardized coefficients reported, HH= Hollingshead Four Factor Index, SSS = Subjective Social

Status

Table A7.

*Regression results for SES, SSS, and Congruence*

	Step 1	Step 2
Constant	18.32	18.40
HH	-.06	-.06
SSS	.13	.14
HH x SSS		-.04
$\Delta F$	2.27	.41
$\Delta R^2$	.02	.00

Note: Standardized coefficients reported, HH= Hollingshead Four Factor Index, SSS=Subjective Social Status

## APPENDIX B – IRB Approval Letter



### INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

118 College Drive #5147 | Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001

Phone: 601.266.5997 | Fax: 601.266.4377 | [www.usm.edu/research/institutional.review.board](http://www.usm.edu/research/institutional.review.board)

### NOTICE OF COMMITTEE ACTION

The project has been reviewed by The University of Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board in accordance with Federal Drug Administration regulations (21 CFR 26, 111), Department of Health and Human Services (45 CFR Part 46), and university guidelines to ensure adherence to the following criteria:

- The risks to subjects are minimized.
- The risks to subjects are reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits.
- The selection of subjects is equitable.
- Informed consent is adequate and appropriately documented.
- Where appropriate, the research plan makes adequate provisions for monitoring the data collected to ensure the safety of the subjects.
- Where appropriate, there are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain the confidentiality of all data.
- Appropriate additional safeguards have been included to protect vulnerable subjects.
- Any unanticipated, serious, or continuing problems encountered regarding risks to subjects must be reported immediately, but not later than 10 days following the event. This should be reported to the IRB Office via the "Adverse Effect Report Form".
- If approved, the maximum period of approval is limited to twelve months.  
Projects that exceed this period must submit an application for renewal or continuation.

PROTOCOL NUMBER: 17100503

PROJECT TITLE: Social Class and Career Development

PROJECT TYPE: Masters's Thesis

RESEARCHER(S): Dylan Ryan Richard

COLLEGE/DIVISION: College of Education and Psychology

DEPARTMENT: Psychology

FUNDING AGENCY/SPONSOR: N/A

IRB COMMITTEE ACTION: Exempt Review Approval

PERIOD OF APPROVAL: 10/06/2017 to 10/05/2018

**Lawrence A. Hosman, Ph.D.**

**Institutional Review Board**

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