

Dyer-Seymour, J., & Battersby, C., (2021). What is most important to focus on now for success after college? Students' responses mirror and diverge from what employers consider essential skills. *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Psychology*. doi:10.1037/stl0000285

Literature Review/Rationale: This study was researching if employers and students agree on which skills are essential in new hires. They also looked to find how the way the psychology major is framed and if it influences the skills and knowledge students cited as important. They used *The APA Guidelines 2.0 for the Undergraduate Psychology Major* as a reference point for their research. Their hypothesis was that when the participants heard their major being described as a list of courses they would be much more likely to list the theories and concepts specific to psychology that were important to learn now for success after college. On the other hand, when students hear their major described as a set of learning outcomes, they would rather focus on skills that those outcomes, such as communication and critical thinking, are important to focus on now for success after college.

Method: Their sample consisted of 221 psychology majors at a small, state university. Each student was shown one of two 1-minute videos of an off camera male asking a woman to explain her previous experience. In one video, she talked about previous courses she took and in the other video she described service-learning experiences as well as her capstone project. At the end of the video two questions were asked to each participant: What do you think is most important to learn in college for success after college and what do you think an employer would like most about this person's response? For the first question that asked participants about what was most important to learn in college for success post-graduation, they used categories from Ciarocco which identified seven different topics to teach in a careers course. These topics included professional opportunities, job hunting, transitions and future planning, etc. For the questions that asked participants about what employers would like best about the target student's response, they created categories using the National Association of Colleges and Employers list of eight career readiness competencies.

Results/Discussion: Their results showed that students and employers have some agreement as well as some disagreement about the skills and knowledge that are important in the workplace. Roughly 90% of employers considered some skills essential such as professionalism, work ethic, written and oral communication, critical thinking, and problem-solving while as few as 1% and only as many as 30% of students even noted those skills. These findings matter because it shows that not many students understand what skills they will need in the workforce after college graduation. It is important for students to understand what skills their employers want for them so they can be successful in their post-graduation life.

Frampton, J., (2019). Uncertainty, selective exposure, and message efficacy during life transitions. *Atlantic Journal of Communication*, 27, 46-61. Doi: 10.1080/1546870.2019.1540420

Literature Review/Rationale: This study involves information utility, uncertainty management, and self-efficacy models developing how individuals select media messages when faced with the transition from college to post college life. They chose to study this because media messages often affect our attitudes and social perceptions and they wondered how these messages also shape key life events. The informational utility model predicts that the experience of uncertainty will lead people to seek out information in the media that can reduce the uncertainty. Self-efficacy refers to the belief about a person's ability to successfully perform an action and in this study successfully perform actions that ensure a happy post college life. They have a few different hypotheses they are trying to develop an answer to. The first one being as uncertainty discrepancy increases, selective exposure to information about the topic of uncertainty increases. The next hypothesis is uncertainty discrepancy serves as a suppressor between uncertainty discrepancy and selective exposure to information related to the uncertainty discrepancy. Their final hypothesis is that outcome expectancies mediate the relationship between uncertainty discrepancy and selective exposure to information related to the uncertainty discrepancy.

Method: The authors of this study used a quasi-experimental research design that allowed their participants to selectively attend to media messages. There were a total of 205 participants and they were asked to answer two questionnaires and the browsing task. The questionnaire consisted of measures of self-efficacy, behavior, uncertainty, and outcome expectancies. The participants browsed a university alumni blog that had four topics for the participants to read about: finance, career, friendship, and romance. Each post had information about how alumni prepared for their transition from college to post college life, how successful their transition was, and any advice they had for current students. The participants ranked information on a scale ranging from 0 to 100 which is how the researchers analyzed their data.

Results/Discussion: The results of this study found that uncertainty discrepancies and selective exposure are positively related. Their second hypothesis that self-efficacy is a suppressor between uncertainty discrepancy and selective exposure was not supported. Their last hypothesis that self-efficacy impacts outcome expectancies was supported. This means that sometimes people desired less certainty than they currently had as well as that uncertainty's impact on selective exposure partially depended on self-efficacy and outcome expectancies. Furthermore, they found that negative messages were important in the sense that they provided information about what to possibly expect in the future, described what not to do during a life transition, and served a self-enhancement motive. This is not the same as the IUM assumption that found that people will seek information from the media about how to successfully adapt to a new situation. If researchers can understand uncertainty's effect on self-efficacy and outcome expectancies, then they can better predict the types of messages people will choose to read when they are facing a life transition, such as graduating from college.

Frohlich, J. R., Rapinda, K. K., O'Connor, R. M., Keough, M. T. (2018). Examining

co-patterns of depression and alcohol misuse in emerging adults following university graduation. *Addictive Behavior Reports*, 8, 40-45. Doi:10.1016/j.abrep.2018.06.002

Literature Review/Rationale: For this study, they aimed to find the difference between high and low risk groups based on joint patterns of depression and alcohol misuse following college graduation. The reason for choosing to do this study is because alcohol use typically peaks in emerging adulthood, such as in college, and many people also develop depression during this time. The theory they used to guide their research was self-medication theory. The hypothesis of this theory states that people often drink alcohol to numb painful emotions. They believe that the transition out of college may be when depression-related drinking strays away from the drinking patterns of non-depressed emerging adults. Post-graduating life may be a potentially stressful and defeating transition as these people may feel lost, have a hard time finding work, are unemployed, and suffer from high levels of negative thoughts. Their hypothesis was at least one group would emerge as high risk given the associations between depression and alcohol problems.

Method: This study recruited undergraduates from two English-speaking universities in Montreal. The researchers used a snowball sampling method by using flyers, online research participant pools, and by giving information sessions to university classes. The participants had to be in their graduating year of undergraduate studies, not have taken off more than one term off from school, and be fluent in English. All eligible participants were given five surveys to complete over the course of a year post-graduation. Every three months, they were given a survey. The Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test and the Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale were used to analyze the data.

Results/Discussion: The researchers found that there were individuals who fell into four different classes. The largest class was made up of people who had relatively low stable levels of depression and low decreasing alcohol misuse over the year after college. The second class included people who had moderate and stable co-occurring depressive symptoms and alcohol misuse. The third class included people who had relatively high stable levels of depression and low stable alcohol misuse which both remained stable over the year after college. The last class included people with high levels of pre-graduation depression and alcohol misuse which both remained stable over the year after college graduation. They found that the largest class reduced alcohol misuse during the year following college graduation. These findings are important because they show that individuals with elevated depression and alcohol misuse before graduation are most likely to maintain these problems after graduation. This is important to know because there could be opportunities to intervene to improve their overall mood and well-being during this imperative time in the college students' lives.

Johnson, A. J., Becker, J. A., Craig, E. A., Gilchrist, E. S., Haigh, M. M., (2009). Changes in friendship commitment: Comparing geographically close and long-distance young-adult friendships. *Communication Quarterly*, 4, 395-415.

Doi:10.1080/01463370903313430

*Literature Review/Rationale:* The purpose of this study was to find how individuals manage their relationships with people in which there is little face-to-face contact and can face challenges such as commitment, relational development, and the concept of friendship. Their study was based on theories of social exchange. The researchers had a few hypotheses which were geographically close friends will report a higher level of commitment than long distance friends, more long distance friends than geographically close friends report a nonlinear trajectory of changes in levels of commitment, long distance friends report more downturns in levels of commitment than geographically close friends, women report more downturns in levels of commitment to friendships than men, and women report more turning points related to changes in levels of commitment to friendships than men.

*Method:* The research stemmed from 100 students (50 males and 50 females) from the University of Oklahoma. Each participant was required to share information relating to one same-sex geographically close friendship and one same-sex long distance friendship. Each participant was part of two interviews talking about each friendship. They also were not allowed to identify if the friends they were talking about were romantic partners or family members. The participants were asked to plot the level of commitment throughout the friendship on a graph, and were given a questionnaire about the friendship after the interview was complete. They used the Retrospective Interview Technique to analyze the data.

*Results/Discussion:* Their research found that people who were in long distance relationships were more likely to show decreasing levels of commitment than those in geographically close relationships. They also found that 81% of the long distance friends in the study indicated that their levels of commitment were rising rather than falling. This research also shows that proximity and frequent face-to-face interactions are not requirements for close interpersonal relationships. This is important for my project because I will be able to demonstrate that friendships from college are still able to be maintained if you move away from each other after graduation.

Kellas, J. K., Baker, J., Cardwell, M., Minniear, M., Horstman, H. K., (2021). Communicated perspective-taking (CPT) and storylistening: Testing the impact of CPT in the context of friends telling stories of difficulty. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 38, 19-41. doi:10.1177/0265407520955239

*Literature Review/Rationale:* This study was guided by communicated narrative sense-making theory. The researchers' purpose was to test the effects of storytellers' communicated perspective taking on the storytellers' well-being as well as evaluations of the storylisteneers' communication skills in the context of telling stories about difficult situations. The study explains the use of social support, effective listening, and communicated perspective taking (CPT) while telling stories. In addition, the researchers deeply explain CNSM theory,

bringing up interactional storytelling, retrospective storytelling, and translational storytelling. This research study specifically aims to test CNSM's proposition 5 to understand the similarities between the listener CPT behaviors as well as the storytellers' perceptions of the first storytelling interaction. Proposition 5 of CNSM theory states that higher levels of communicated perspective-taking predict higher levels of relational health and well-being. Their first hypothesis is that higher levels of CPT will predict higher levels of storytellers' perception of their friend's communication competence, and lower levels of face threatening behaviors following a storytelling conversation about difficulty. Their second hypothesis was that higher levels of CPT will predict higher levels of storytellers' mental health, life satisfaction, positive affect and lower levels of storytellers' negative affect following a storytelling conversation about difficulty.

Method: The researchers recruited participants through communication courses at a large Midwestern university. There were 37 pairs of college student friends; the mean age being 20. Participants were randomly assigned to the role of the storyteller or the listener. The storyteller had to tell the same story 3 days in a row and the story had to be about a difficult life experience. The pair sat together for 10 minutes as the storyteller told their story and the story listener listened. After the 10 minutes was over, participants filled out a survey that would measure their friends' interpersonal communication ability. The participants used Likert-type scales to allow the researchers to analyze the data.

Results/Discussion: The researchers found that higher levels of observed CPT were related to higher levels of tellers' perceptions of friends' communication competence as well as lower levels of their friend's face threatening behaviors. This data supported their first hypothesis. On the other hand, researchers found that higher levels of CPT were not related to teller's psychosocial well-being following the storytelling interaction. This data did not support their second hypothesis. These findings show the importance of the verbal and nonverbal behaviors that are used to validate someone's point of view as well as their sense of self throughout the storytelling process. This will be useful for my project because while making new friends post-graduation, it will be important to use communicated perspective taking while meeting new people or in a new career.

Reddy, S., & Reddy, P., (2014). A comparative study on sources of stress and coping styles between graduation and post-graduation students. *Indian Journal of Health and Wellbeing*, 5(8), 942-947.

Literature Review/Rationale: This study looked to compare the main sources of stress and coping styles between graduation and post-graduation students. Many stressors that students deal with are work overload, relationships with people, loneliness, fear of failure, and time management. It is important for students to develop different coping strategies in order to manage stressful situations in college and post graduation. They hypothesized that these stressors don't just happen the first year of college, but throughout the entire four years and when they graduate.

Method: The authors used a Socio-Demographic Schedule and the Student Stress Survey. The 120 participants included people enrolled for graduation and post-graduation courses. The survey included 40 different questions and the coping inventory included 28 different questions. Some of the coping questions assessed the following coping dimensions: active coping, planning, using instrumental support, using emotional support, venting, behavioral disengagement, self-distraction, self-blame, positive reframing, humor, denial, acceptance, religion, and substance use.

Results/Discussion: Their study found that post-graduation students typically had more stress compared to those in college. This study also found that students enrolled in college typically used coping strategies such as religious activities, humor, and planning. Post-graduation students used less denial and self-distraction coping strategies. This study shows the importance of helping students find ways to manage their stress both while in school and post-graduation. This is important for my project because it shows the levels of stress that students go through when they graduate from college. It also explains different ways students need to learn to be able to cope with their stress in a healthy manner. Since there is so much change in a post-graduation student's life, they need to find ways to be able to cope with that stress.

Stephens, H. M., (2019). Understanding US college graduate migration. *Journal of Geographical Systems*, 21, 509-531. doi:10.1007/s10109-019-00310-5

Literature Review/Rationale: The purpose of this study is to understand the migration habits of college students post-graduation because there is lots of research that shows a link between human capital, educated workforce, and economic growth. This study aims to find if places need to attract more college-educated individuals to increase growth. In order to do this, it is important to understand college graduates' motivations for choosing a location to live. They used other research to understand what makes a place attractive to highly skilled workers. They hypothesized that employment opportunities, housing availability, and affordability will play an important role in college students deciding where to leave post-graduation.

Method: For this study, they focused on the alumni population of California State University, Long Beach which is a large public university located in Long Beach, California. The researchers conducted an online survey. The survey included questions about when the person graduated college, their major and type of degree, where they lived before attending college, where they lived while attending college, if they had any additional degrees, where they live now, where they work now, and their current employment status and occupation. They created a dataset from the results of the survey that were used to determine what factors are important to the location decisions of these college graduates.

Results/Discussion: The researchers found that jobs and school seemed to be drivers of moving outside of California. Housing costs and affordability drove people to other parts of Southern California as well as those who specified that family reasons were also a reason to stay in the Los Angeles area. They also found that people who lived anywhere else before college in

Long Beach are less likely to live in Long Beach after graduation. Additionally, they found students who lived in Long Beach during college were more likely to live there after graduation and less likely to move somewhere else. These results show that college graduates play an important role in the economic growth of regions.

Tian, X., Schrod, P., Carr, K., (2016). The theory of motivated information management and posttraumatic growth: Emerging adults' uncertainty management in response to an adverse life experience. *Communication Studies*, 3, 280-301. Doi: 10.1080/10510974.2016.1164207

Literature Review/Rationale: This study looked to find how the uncertainty management process that emerging adults go through following an adverse event predicts their perceptions of posttraumatic growth. They wanted to find answers to this idea because many emerging adults experience frequent change as they explore different possibilities in love, work, and worldviews. They think it is important to study how emerging adults cope with adverse life experiences because these events could potentially worsen stress as well as interfere with the developmental, occupational, and social tasks associated with young adulthood. They used the Theory of Motivated Information Management to guide their research. TMIM was developed to account for the decision-making process that people go through as they deal with and respond to uncertainty. They used specific terms to describe uncertainty such as interpretation, discrepancy, evaluation, decision, communication efficacy, coping efficacy, and target efficacy. The interpretation phase deals with a person's awareness regarding the amount of uncertainty they process and want about an issue. Discrepancy deals with the uncertainty a person has and how much a person wants. The evaluation phase happens when people assess the potential outcomes of seeking information. Communication efficacy refers to a person's beliefs about if they have the communication skills to completely seek information about the issue at hand. Coping efficacy is when a person's beliefs about their ability to cope with the information they expect to receive. Lastly, target efficacy is figuring out whether the target of the information search has the ability to provide information about the issue. Their hypotheses were aimed to find the discrepancy between the level of uncertainty emerging adults have and the level of uncertainty they desire to have about an adverse event will positively predict a negative emotion about the event. They also hypothesized that emerging adults' outcome expectancies will positively predict their efficacy assessments and their willingness to seek information from a parent in the event of an adverse life experience. Finally, they hypothesized that emerging adults who seek relevant information from their parents regarding adverse events are more likely to experience posttraumatic growth.

Method: Their participants included 215 emerging adults who had experienced an adverse event within the past year. Most of them were enrolled in communication courses at a private university in the United States. The participants were asked to identify the most difficult, adverse, and/or stressful event that they had experienced within the last year. They used structural equation modeling to analyze the data. They were also asked which parent they would

most likely seek information from in response to that adverse event. The last thing the participants were asked about was the severity and importance of the adverse event.

Results/Discussion: These researchers found that uncertainty discrepancies are positively associated with a variety of negative emotions which are associated with outcome expectancies in the evaluation phase. They also found that emerging adults who are coping with adversity-related uncertainty, they experience emotional distress that hinders their ability to gather and cope with related information as well as predicts poorer expected outcomes of information searches which is something that is described in TMIM. Finally, their research showed that uncertainty management prompted emerging adults' well-being in the aftermath of adversity. This means that providing different points of view and problem solving may help emerging adults cope more effectively. This information is very beneficial to counselors and practitioners who work with emerging adults who have experienced these stressful life events. It is beneficial for my project because stepping out of your comfort zone or moving somewhere new can be a stressful life event which should be discussed with someone you trust so you can cope easier.