Education Journal, 2022, Vol. 50 No. 2, pp. 151–176

The Effectiveness of a Playful Strength-based Career Counseling on Career Adaptabilities and Career Stress Coping of Taiwan College Students

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This study aimed to explore the effects of a playful strength-based career counseling on career adaptabilities and career coping strategies of Taiwan college students. The researcher adopted three playful modes of Six Bricks, Play Box and LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY®, and took strengths as the core strategy to construct a playful strength-based career counseling. The participants consisted of 60 Taiwan college students. The experimental group received a 12-hour playful strength-based career counseling; the control group joined in a 12-hour positive psychology course. The two groups were compared on their scores on the "Career Adapt-Abilities Scale" and "Career Stress Coping Scale" one day and one month after the last session. Data were analyzed by ANCOVA. Besides, the researcher collected the text data of learning logs to explore the connotation of change by content analysis method. The results showed that the playful strength-based career counseling had immediate effects on career concern, career control, career curiosity, problem-focused coping, and had delayed effects on career control, career curiosity, problem-focused coping. There was no significant difference in emotion-focused coping. Qualitative analysis showed that the playful strength-based career counseling had a positive effect on promoting career thinking, positive emotions, and career actions.

Keywords: playful; strength-based; career counseling; career adaptabilities; career stress coping

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Introduction

College students are in the phase of transition from being a learner to a worker. They are filled with worry as they face the uncertainty of their future career life (Wang, 2018). In making career decisions, college students may feel uneasy because of career challenges and uncertainties, leading to feelings of stress. Based on the assumption of stress theory, the development of stress prompts individuals to adopt relative coping strategies. Coping strategies involve cognitive and behavioral adjustment in response to a stressful situation (Gordon, 1998; Lazarus, 2000). Phillips and Strohmer (1983) were the first to incorporate coping strategies in career decision making. They mentioned that career readiness influences the content of a coping strategy.

Career is a study of change, which suggests that students must face not only the choice of career but also changes in trends that may occur at any moment (S. F. Huang, 2016). Savickas (1997) proposed the concept of career adaptability, which is a type of meta-competency for facing the requirements of career changes. Psychological resilience emphasized in career adaptation echoes the direction of positive psychological desire to enhance people's psychological capital.

Strength forms the core of positive psychology. Strength-based counseling is a helping model developed by identifying and using strengths. Strength-based counseling assumes that if a client increases psychological capital, the client naturally has the ability to cope with challenges and problems (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Smith, 2006; Wang, 2013, 2018; Wong, 2006). Related empirical studies have reported improvements in life satisfaction (Rust et al., 2009), sense of well-being (Wang, 2015), self-efficacy, self-growth, and perception of happiness (Wang & Tien, 2011). However, when focusing on the career benefits of this approach, most of these studies did not observe its significant effect on the career dimension (Wang, 2018). Therefore, this issue warrants further investigation.

The current career counseling strategy interventions are still mostly in the lecture, interview, or paper-and-pencil test. In recent years, several scholars have proposed using visual and operational methods, coupled with oral experience sharing, to facilitate deeper and faster career reflection and clarification of career goals. Scholars and practitioners have begun using LEGO® facilitation method to construct career counseling (Harn, 2019; Harn & Hsiao, 2018; Harn & Yu, 2018; Peabody, 2015; Peabody & Noyes, 2017). LEGO® facilitation method commonly used worldwide includes the modes of Six Bricks, Play Box, and LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY®. LEGO® facilitation method is a visual, tangible, and operational "play" model. It employs positive emotions, flow, creativity, and positive social

connection, all of which echo the core concept of positive psychology (Kristiansen & Rasmussen, 2014; Zosh et al., 2017).

Past career studies using LEGO® facilitation method are generally preliminary investigations of a single career level (Harn, 2019; Harn & Hsiao, 2018; Harn & Yu, 2018; Peabody, 2015; Peabody & Noyes, 2017). The benefits of this method to career adaptability and stress coping have not yet been described. The playful strength-based career counseling in this study is a playful model employing Six Bricks, Play Box, and LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY®; it adopts strength identification and use as the core strategy. The objective was to explore whether this playful strength-based career counseling can generate a substantial effect on the career adaptability and stress-coping strategies of college students. More specifically, the study aimed to answer the following questions:

1. Can the playful strength-based career counseling have a significant effect on college students' career adaptation and stress-coping strategies?
2. What is the change connotation of the playful strength-based career counseling for the career development of college students?

Literature Review

Career Adaptability and Stress-coping Strategies

Savickas (1997) proposed the concept of career adaptability which is a type of psychological resource for self-regulation, developing coping strategies and behaviors, and achieving career goals. Savickas (2005) formulated a structural model of career adaptability comprising four dimensions: concern, control, curiosity, and confidence, collectively called the 4Cs. "Career concern" indicates that an individual is aware of the importance of career readiness and taking actions to prepare for it. "Career control" means a sense of control over an individual's career plans and active engagement to career development. "Career curiosity" refers to an interest in career exploration by actively exploring and attempting selves and career environment. "Career confidence" refers to the self-evaluation of performance in successfully completing career practices or vocational choices.

Savickas (2003) proposed a career development model that uses Erikson's character strengths and virtues as framework. By reinforcing strengths, this model can enhance the coping strategies during their career development (Xu et al., 2018). Studies conducted in Taiwan reported that college students exhibit a considerably high level of "career concern"

and low level of "career control" (M. K. Huang & Huang, 2013). In addition, social support, positive emotions, clear career aspirations, and realistic career expectations contribute to the development of career adaptability in college students (Creed, Fallon, et al., 2009).

Studies revealed that coping strategies are effective mediators of career anxiety and career adaptability in the case of career stress. Coping strategies are more positive means of coping with difficulties. Individuals with high level of career readiness mostly adopt positive coping strategies. Frequent constructive coping behaviors can enhance coping efficiency, thereby influencing career adaptability (Crespin, 2006). Hence, career adaptation and stress-coping strategies are related.

Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) psychological stress and coping theory proposed three types of stress-coping strategies: (a) *problem-focused coping* — this strategy involves taking actions, using strategies to correct a situation, and directly solving the problem itself; (b) *emotion-focused coping* — this strategy involves dealing with the emotion that is elicited by a stressful situation, instead of focusing on the problem itself; (c) *mixed problem- and emotion-focused coping* — this strategy entails seeking social support and affective empathy or collecting relevant information that forms the formulation of a coping strategy.

Career-oriented individuals are generally associated with stronger positive sense of control and tend to adopt problem-focused coping strategies. By contrast, non-career-oriented individuals have the tendency to adopt strategies focused on avoiding emotions such as anxiety (Yang, 2004). In addition, being not career-oriented is associated with negative stress-coping response (Creed, Prideaux, et al., 2005). Lazarus (2000) identified that if individuals have a high degree of control over stress about being not career-oriented, they typically adopt problem-focused coping; if they have a low degree of control, they tend to adopt emotion-focused coping.

As indicated by related studies, social support, positive emotions, and career orientation contribute to the development of career adaptability and stress coping. Furthermore, improving strengths is a crucial strategy for increasing career adaptability. Therefore, this study employed strength-based strategy to develop a career counseling that promotes career adaptability and positive coping response of college students.

Strength-based Career Counseling

Strength-based counseling is affected by positive psychology, postmodern thinking, and social constructionism. The connotation of strength-based counseling revolves around identifying, developing, and using a client's strengths (Wang, 2018; Smith, 2006).

Fitzpartick and Stalikas (2008) indicated that the broaden-and-build functioning of positive emotions is the change mechanism of strength-based counseling. Strength-based counseling posits that positive emotions can promote mutual effects among cognition, emotion, and action, thereby leading to change. Ward and Reuter (2011) mentioned that hope elicited in strength-based counseling is a crucial change experience. Setting goals is the first step to eliciting hope, in which the agency to pursue goals and achieve them can be enhanced by thoughts of "what I want" and "what I can do."

Currently, strength-based counseling is used in career development. For example, Schutt's (2007) strength-based approach to career development combined with Cooperride and Srivastva's (1987) appreciative inquiry model of discovery, dream, design, and deploy/destiny (or the 4D method), focuses on the positive side of individuals to assist them with exploring and identifying their strengths (Wang, 2013; Wang & Tien, 2011). Researchers in Taiwan indicated that strength-centered career counseling produced a significant, immediate effect on the personal growth and feelings of happiness among dual career women. If a meaningful career goal can be established, it exerts a positive effect on the client (Wang, 2013; Wang & Tien, 2011). This result resonates with the results of foreign studies, which indicated that having clear career goals facilitates the enhancement of well-being and efficacy (McGregor et al., 2006).

Studies using strength-centered career counseling with adolescents revealed immediate effect and delayed effect on enhancing the well-being of adolescents; however, it did not significantly influence their career aspects (Wang, 2015). A study using strength-centered career counseling on college students revealed that this approach exerted an immediate effect on career calling and self-efficacy, but it did not reveal a delayed effect (Wang, 2018).

Based on the above research results, the effectiveness of strength-based career counseling is manifested in self-efficacy and well-being. The effect of this approach on career aspects has not been significant. Wang (2018) indicated that compared to other career counseling, which typically focused on self-assessed traits, capabilities, and interests, strength-based career counseling places more emphasis on arousing intrinsic meaning and passion in a client. However, strength-based career counseling is seldom practiced in real life, which is probably the reason why its effect cannot be maintained.

In recent years, career counselors in Taiwan and other countries have begun using LEGO® facilitation method in their counseling. The LEGO® facilitation method differs from the traditional strength-based career counseling. It guides participants by using operational and tangible approaches to reinforce their identity, explore strengths, and develop

strength-based strategies. Continuing, we will discuss the three LEGO® facilitation modes of Six Bricks, Play Box and LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY®.

A Playful Approach Based on the LEGO® Facilitation Method

In the list of positive emotions proposed by Fredrickson (2009), "play" is a crucial mechanism for eliciting feelings of joy, amusement, love, and other positive emotions. Six Bricks and Play Box (hereafter referred to as SBPB) is a playful learning method developed by the LEGO Foundation (Zosh et al., 2017). SBPB draws on a holistic approach that emphasizes the importance of physical, social, cognitive, creative, and emotional skills, as well as how these skills influence and support each other. The learning programs of SBPB providing the above-mentioned five skills can be used in the development of core employability in multiple aspects, such as communication, problem solving, teamwork, lifelong learning, self-management, innovation, career planning, cognition, macro perspective, and physical management (Harn & Hsiao, 2018).

The playful characteristics of SBPB are joyful, actively engaging, meaningful, iterative, and socially interactive (Zosh et al., 2017). These characteristics correspond directly to the four elements of well-being of Seligman's (2011) PERMA model. In addition, problem solving and knowledge transfer during the iterative process can lead to achievement. Learning through SBPB emphasizes the importance of physical activity in learning (Zosh et al., 2017). SBPB emphasizes strength-based learning, which suggests understanding and tapping into children's learning tendency (Harn & Hsiao, 2021). This method is similar to strength-based counseling, which utilizes the notion of identifying and using strengths.

LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY® (hereafter referred to as LSP) is a clear goal-oriented "play and work" process, in which LEGO® bricks are used to construct strategies for solving issues in life and work. The Real Time Identity for You in LSP serves to explore self-identity and factors of influence. The Real Time Strategy is aimed at unveiling possible variables and forming coping strategies, which can help individuals to establish their career orientation and develop career coping strategies. The core process of LSP consists of four steps: question posing, model building, storytelling, and reflections. The seven application techniques in the LSP model are building individual models, building shared models, creating a landscape, making connections, building a system, playing emergence and decision, and extracting simple guiding principles (Kristiansen & Rasmussen, 2014).

Nolan (2010) used LSP to assist college students in career development. The 327 participating students in Nolan's study reported LSP as conducive to exploring their career needs, interests, and attitudes and to developing their personal career plan. Peabody (2015) used LSP in play therapy supervision to develop therapist professional identity and institution identity. Peabody and Noyes (2017) employed LSP in reflective practice pedagogy with 29 graduated students and faculty members of occupational therapy. Peabody and Noyes found that the benefits of LSP included: accelerated group cohesion, improved inclusive learning, a language for emotional expression and deeper meaning-making, various learning styles, and accelerated deeper thinking compared to conventional reflective learning.

Harn and Yu (2018) conducted a 3-hour LSP career counseling workshop with 11 Hong Kong junior high school students. The study participants exhibited significant improvement in "career agent" and "career path." Harn (2019) constructed a 6-hour LSP career workshop for college students and graduate students. The study results revealed that "negative emotions" presented significant delayed effect; "critical positivity ratio" was associated with significant immediate effect; and "positive emotions" and "career hope" did not exhibit significant change.

LSP focuses on strengthening career cognitions and neglects the learning of employability skills such as innovation, communication, cooperation, and physical management. These skills are key to preparing for career practices. More recently, SBPB has demonstrated multidimensional effects of career aspects and interpersonal connections in career counseling. Harn and Hsiao (2018) conducted a 3-hour strength-based career workshop using SBPB and LSP with 29 college students. This model produced significant immediate effects on "career agent" and "career path." The model also exhibited the following positive psychological effects: "triggering flow and overcoming challenges," "connecting with the society for a stronger cohesion," and "building toward a comprehension that leads to positivity." It also led to career hope, such as "nourishing strength for a more profound insight," "facing fears and accepting challenges," "reigniting passion and establishing anchors," and "broadened thinking leading to a career shift."

In summary, LSP leads to concrete, diversified, and deeper career thinking, while SBPB develops positive effects in the promotion of positive connections and positive emotions. Therefore, this study integrated two types of playful learning methods, SBPB and LSP, to construct a playful strength-based career counseling model that takes, identifies and uses strengths as connotation. The study is expected to improve students' career adaptability

and positive coping strategies, which in turn can promote their positive psychology and career development.

Method

Participants

In this study, Taiwan college students aged 18–26 years old with no serious emotional disturbances were recruited. The researcher recruited participants for the experimental group by seeking the assistance of two university faculty members. For the control group, convenience sampling was adopted: college students studying positive psychology were recruited to receive four 3-hour sessions of positive psychology course.

The experimental group and control group each consisted of 36 students. Owing to the facilitating model of LSP, one facilitator should lead approximately 12 participants. The experimental group was divided into two sub-groups, each receiving a 12-hour playful strength-based career counseling program over a span of two days. Twelve participants were unable to complete a questionnaire three times; their data were discarded. The valid samples were 30 participants in the experimental group and 30 in the control group. The mean age of the research participants was 19.9 years. This included 38 females and 22 males, with 53 students in the College of Liberal Arts, 2 students in the College of Science, and 5 students in the College of Engineering.

Playful Strength-based Career Counseling

In this study, the playful strength-based career counseling refers to the use of LEGO® facilitation method as the core playful approach, integrating strengths assessment, building, and use to develop a career counseling that increases the career adaptability of college students. The strategies in this study included assessing career orientation, identifying strengths, building strengths, and using strengths. Regarding LEGO® facilitation strategies, Six Bricks was incorporated for career evaluation and physical promotion; Play Box served to visualize gratitude and build strengths; LSP was performed to assist the participants with clarifying and fortifying their self-professional identity and creating career vision and action plans. The proposed career counseling program was carried out for six hours a day, for a total of two days. Table 1 details the playful strength-based career counseling program.

Table 1: The Playful Strength-based Career Counseling

Time	Goal	Intervention Strategy
Day 1	Career pre-evaluation	Using SBPB to build a career mini-figure and career scale representing the career status.
	Skills building	Using LSP to build a model of study life and the ideal professor.
	Career spotlight	Using LSP to build and reconstruct the story of personal life.
	Physical management	Using Six Bricks to engage in physical skills activity.
	Professional identity	Using LSP to investigate the core value of a profession.
	Power of appreciation	Using SBPB to build a career benefactor and gratitude journal.
Day 2	Career vision	Using LSP to build the career that the participants aspire to in the future.
	Career coping	Using LSP to build career challenges and stress-coping strategies.
	Interpersonal communication	Using Six Bricks to engage in social skills activity.
	Entrepreneurship blueprint	Using LSP to build a business model for small groups.
	Strengths reinforcement	Using Play Box for learning reflection and strengths extraction.
	Career post-evaluation	Building a career mini-figure again and repositioning it on the career scale.

The control group attended four sessions of a positive psychology course, which covered strengths, positive emotions, and career hope. This course coverd the changing mechanisms of dominance-oriented career counseling (Cooperride & Srivastva, 1987; Fitzpartick & Stalikas, 2008; Ward & Reuter, 2011) — strengths, positive emotions, and hope — through lectures and discussions. It included the identification and application of strengths, the strategies and practices for the promotion of positive emotions, and the coping of career challenges through the three elements of hope.

Instruments

Career Adapt-Abilities Scale

The present study adopted the Career Adapt-Abilities Scale developed by Tien et al. (2012). This scale is composed of four subscales: “career concern,” “career control,” “career curiosity,” and “career confidence,” comprising 24 items in total, using a 5-point Likert scale. A higher score means a higher level of adaptability. Cronbach’s α was .96 for the overall scale and .84–.91 for the subscales. Regarding validity, the factor loading of each item ranged between .84 and .91. Confirmatory factor analysis showed RMSEA = .078 and SRMR = .049, indicating favorable model fit.

Career Stress Coping Scale

This study adopted the Career Stress Coping Scale developed by Yang (2004). This scale is composed of 34 items: 12 items on "positive problem-focused coping" (item factor loading = .37–.65, explained variance = 14.93%); 11 items on "negative problem-focused coping" (item factor loading = .48–.70, explained variance = 10.49%); 9 items on "positive emotion-focused coping" (item factor loading = .33–.52, explained variance = 5.67%); and 2 items on "negative emotion-focused coping" (item factor loading = .74–.77, explained variance = 4.93%).

Concerning reliability, the Cronbach's α denoting internal consistency was .75 for the overall scale, and .84, .84, .69, and .88 for the four subscales. These results indicate that the scales had favorable reliability. Regarding questionnaire responses and scores, the participants provided answers to their methods of coping with stress from making career choices. A 4-point scale was used. Higher score on a subscale means that the participant frequently uses that kind of coping method. Reverse order was applied to items on "negative problem-focused coping" and "negative emotion-focused coping." The resulting scores were added to the scores for "positive problem-focused coping" and "positive emotion-focused coping."

Learning logs

The participants in the experimental group took photographs of LEGO® models they built on each day and enclosed them in their learning logs. They wrote a summary describing the meaning of their models and their reflection entries.

Procedures

The career counseling program in this study was led by two counseling psychologists who are qualified to be the facilitators of SBPB and LSP. All the participants were required to complete a research consent form before the study. Next, the two facilitators jointly carried out three rounds of the 12-hour playful strength-based career counseling. The researcher, as the co-facilitator, assisted the facilitators and observed the transition of the process to improve the contextual understanding of the subsequent textual data analysis.

The experimental group received a pretest, posttest, and follow-up test of the Career Adapt-Abilities Scale and Career Stress Coping Scale three days before, one day after, and one month after the program was implemented. The experimental group wrote two learning logs each in two days of program execution. The control group received a pretest, posttest, and follow-up test of the Career Adapt-Abilities Scale and Career Stress Coping Scale three days before, one day after, and 45 days after attending the 12-hour positive psychology course.

Data Analysis

This study adopted concurrent triangulation strategy in mixed studies. The experimentation method and thematic analysis were used to perform quantitative and qualitative data analysis. For the quantitative analysis, the two-group quasi-experimental design was employed. The participants in both study groups received the pretest, posttest, and follow-up test of the Career Adapt-Abilities Scale and Career Stress Coping Scale. In excluding the data in which the homogeneity of variance is violated, one-way analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was used to examine the immediate and delayed effects of the playful strength-based career counseling model. The effect of the playful strength-based career counseling was explored through between-group differences with pretest scores as covariates.

Regarding qualitative research, data from the learning diaries were collected and analyzed by content analysis method. Phrases are coded with four sets of English letters and numerical characters. The first English letter represents batch; for example, A, B, and C refer to the first, second, and third batch of participants respectively. The second letter represents gender (M = male, and F = female). The third numerical character represents a participant's number, which consisted of two digits, starting with 01. The fourth character represents the line number of a phrase. For example, A-F-01-02 refers to the second phrase said by a female participant numbered 01 from the first batch. The qualitative data analysis of this study involved data coding, analysis, classification, and inspection, which were performed by the researcher and Master's students with learning experience in qualitative research (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Chen et al., 2010, Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Results

Quantitative Analysis Results

Test of homogeneity

Before ANCOVA, a test of homogeneity of regression slopes was conducted on the experimental group and control group. In the posttest, the career confidence subscale measured $F(1, 56) = 7.98$ ($p = .007$). In the follow-up test, the career concern subscale measured $F(1, 56) = 6.64$ ($p = .014$), the career confidence subscale measured $F(1, 56) = 9.40$ ($p = .003$), and the positive emotion subscale measured $F(1, 56) = 5.16$ ($p = .027$), achieving significant differences. The results indicate that these data were not suitable for ANCOVA. The remaining subscales did not violate the test of homogeneity and were therefore included in ANCOVA.

Immediate effect on the career adaptability and career stress coping

According to Table 2, the results of ANCOVA regarding immediate effect on career adaptability show that after pretest difference was excluded, the posttest scores of the experimental group and control group on the career concern subscale ($F(1, 57) = 14.88$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .21$), career control subscale ($F(1, 57) = 9.77$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .15$), and career curiosity subscale ($F(1, 57) = 14.58$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .20$) differed significantly. The adjusted mean of the experimental group (3.93, 4.05, 4.01) were significantly higher than those of the control group (3.48, 3.67, 3.51). These results indicate that the posttest scores of the experimental group on career concern, career control, and career curiosity were significantly higher than those of the control group. In other words, the playful strength-based career counseling model exhibited an immediate effect on increasing the career concern, career control, and career curiosity of college students.

The results of ANCOVA regarding the immediate effect of career stress coping show that after pretest difference was excluded, the posttest scores of the experimental group and control group on the positive problem-focused coping subscale differed significantly ($F(1, 57) = 37.05$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .39$). The adjusted mean of the experimental group (3.80) was significantly higher than that of the control group (3.29). The posttest scores of the experimental group and control group on the positive emotion-focused coping subscale differed significantly ($F(1, 57) = 9.08$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .14$). The adjusted mean of the experimental group (3.38) was significantly higher than that of the control group (3.37).

A post hoc test indicated a non-significant difference, suggesting that the effect of this difference was not apparent. In other words, the playful strength-based career counseling model exhibited an immediate effect on improving the students' problem-focused coping, but did not significantly affect the students' emotion-focused coping.

Table 2: Pretest and Posttest Mean Scores and Standard Deviation of Both Groups on Career Adaptability and Career Stress Coping

Scale	Experimental group (n = 30)					Control group (n = 30)					Partial η^2
	Pretest		Posttest			Pretest		Posttest			
	M	*SD*	*M*	Adj. *M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	Adj. *M*	*SD*	
Career concern	3.78	.70	3.97	3.93	.55	3.58	.71	3.44	3.48	.64	.21
Career control	3.76	.62	4.06	4.05	.53	3.66	.58	3.65	3.67	.59	.15
Career curiosity	3.91	.52	4.04	4.01	.65	3.83	.54	3.48	3.51	.72	.20
Positive problem-focused coping	3.54	.53	3.78	3.80	.42	3.23	.48	3.28	3.29	.50	.39
Positive emotion-focused coping	3.53	.43	3.56	3.38	.45	3.02	.50	3.26	3.37	.46	.14

Delayed effect on the career adaptability and career stress coping

According to Table 3, the results of ANCOVA regarding delayed effect on career adaptability show that after pretest difference was excluded, the follow-up scores of the experimental group and control group on the career control subscale ($F(1, 57) = 6.43$, $p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .10$) and career curiosity subscale ($F(1, 57) = 9.09$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .14$) differed significantly. The adjusted mean of the experimental group (3.93, 4.05) were significantly higher than those of the control group (3.63, 3.67). These results show that the follow-up test scores of the experimental group on career control and career curiosity were significantly higher than those of the control group. In other words, the playful strength-based career counseling model exhibited a delayed effect on increasing the college students' career control and career curiosity.

The results of ANCOVA regarding delayed effect on positive problem-focused coping show that after pretest difference was excluded, the posttest scores of the experimental group and control group on the positive problem-focused coping subscale differed significantly ($F(1, 57) = 33.01$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .37$). The adjusted mean of the experimental group (3.60) was significantly higher than that of the control group (3.37). These results show that the follow-up test scores of the experimental group on problem-focused coping were significantly higher than those of the control group. Therefore, the playful strength-

based career counseling model exhibited a delayed effect on improving the students' problem-focused coping. In other words, the playful strength-based career counseling model produced a significant delayed effect on college students' career control, career curiosity, and positive problem-focused coping.

Table 3: Pretest and Follow-up Mean Scores and Standard Deviation of Both Groups on Career Adaptability and Career Stress Coping

Scale	Experimental group (n = 30)					Control group (n = 30)					Partial η^2
	Pretest		Posttest			Pretest		Posttest			
	M	*SD*	*M*	Adj. *M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	Adj. *M*	*SD*	
Career control	3.76	.62	3.95	3.93	.68	3.67	.58	3.59	3.63	.67	.10
Career curiosity	3.91	.52	4.08	4.05	.65	3.83	.54	3.64	3.67	.71	.14
Positive problem-focused coping	3.54	.53	3.75	3.60	.58	3.23	.48	3.22	3.37	.60	.37

Qualitative Analysis Results

According to the quantitative research results, the playful strength-based career counseling model has some effects on career adaptation and stress-coping strategies. Qualitative research was then conducted to explore the connotation and context of its change. Through the analysis of textual data, it can be summarized into three major themes.

Develop career thinking from multiple perspectives through specific visual rubbing

The limitations and the diversity of shapes and forms in LEGO® bricks building frequently impart new realizations and perceptions to the participants. After LEGO® models are built, stories are told metaphorically, enabling the participants to embark on in-depth reflections and unveil the different meanings or endless possibilities behind the LEGO® models.

When the participants used LEGO® bricks to build their past, present, and future life stories as well as a model of their professional identity from different perspectives, the final models clearly presented the context of time and also multiple viewpoints of professional identity. In addition to events that are meaningful to the participants, the contexts of the people and events as well as the environment around them all gradually emerged. This activity greatly enhanced the macro and micro integration and analysis of personal career,

which facilitated a more accurate manifestation of the relationships among past experiences, current situations, and future outlooks as well as multidimensional perspectives on professional identity:

> The "present" model is my favorite. Amazingly, compared to the "present," the "past" and "future" models were not very specific. When I presented these models, my explanation was slightly far-fetched, like the "past" has blurred, the "future" is uncertain, and only the "present" is real and most controllable. (B-M-02-03)

> Core value and external value are equally apt. That is, the past and present are combined and linked. Aspirational value is the study of history combined with multimedia designs or cultural and creative designs but slightly distanced from the core. These aspects need to be refined by yourself. (C-M-05-18)

> A lion symbolizes danger and difficulty; a ladder symbolizes the road to success; a trophy is a goal; an opened treasure chest is the reward. (A-F-02-19)

> I can use LEGO® bricks directly to more clearly show what I can be in the future. This is also fun and more distinct, and then making connections at the end enables me to better understand myself. (B-F-07-13)

> Leaving strengths (crown); goal (flag); dice (the will to face unknown challenges) to transform an obstructing bridge into a smooth pathway (resistance → helping hand). (A-M-01-07)

Promote positive psychology by deepening gratitude and hope

Building brick models enabled the participants to feel a sense of achievement and joyfulness. Adjusting and reframing the models also made the participants feel empowered to rewrite their story and create prospects. The activity empowered the participants to freely select LEGO® bricks and build LEGO® models, thereby concretizing an idea in their mind to present it before their eyes.

When the participants examined the brick models with their eyes, thinking and speculating in the mind, they returned to the most unforgettable moment of appreciation in the past. The participants were also reminded of their original purpose and looked ahead of the bright, grandiose goals and prospects. They translated them into words to tell stories of

appreciation in life or about their future career vision model, once again releasing the positive emotions of gratitude and hopefulness filling inside them:

> I gained some confidence because of LEGO® bricks. "Oh, I can build with LEGO® too!" After all, I have never played with LEGO® bricks, so at first, I was worried. However, when I presented my first work, I felt extremely happy. (C-M-01-07)

> The mini-figure represents my mother. The tiger next to her represents my dog. Below is a colorful stage, and above it is a light green brick, signifying that my mother has relinquished a lot of things. She often sits on the light green sofa at home, choosing to be with us. (A-F-01-05)

> Because of her, I changed from a cold person into a more sensible, understanding person and I became more expressive of myself, like a blue LEGO® bricks transforming into a warm-colored round LEGO® bricks. Because of her, I learnt to be more flexible. I no longer only worry when facing things. I am able to slowly learn to view everything with a playful heart, instead of amplifying them. (C-F-02-09)

> In the future, I might encounter a number of choices and many obstacles. However, after crossing the protected bridge, I will definitely see the light at the end of the tunnel again. (B-M-09-12)

Promote multiple career skills to promote positive career actions

The teamwork task with Six Bricks enabled the participants to experience and reflect on the importance of relationships in life, as well as how we cooperate, support, and help others. When facing challenges, one must cooperate with others and solve problems together. If the perception or meanings therein can be unraveled, this would be conducive to the development of positive emotions and accumulation of psychological capital.

Participants have enhanced their diversified career skills such as innovation, problem solving, communication, teamwork, and physical management through visual, operational, and real experience:

> My mini-figure sits between the starting point and the midpoint of the bridge, which signifies my firm stance in taking the first step. However, this is only the beginning. The dangers across the bridge are all challenges on my career path. Standing at the starting point also implies that a career has no end. (B-M-12-01)

> Because my mini-figure was unstable, it could only be placed in an area with a stable foundation. The starting point was overly crowded. I could only place it at the less-crowded end point, which also means that I need to be pushed by an external force to reach the end. (B-F-12-04)

> As the "career scale" activity proceeded, everyone thought of ways together how to build the bridge. It was exciting. I was not that nervous anymore. Although my expression is still not very clear, I did my best to take the next step, didn't I? I must continue to work hard during tomorrow's activity. Fighting! (C-F-10-24)

> Building a bridge with bricks is already difficult, connecting the bridge from two ends of different combinations is more difficult. While guaranteeing that the bridge does not collapse, this activity tests team cohesion and rapport. This also suggests that a person may not have a choice and may be forced to be in a certain position; however, the changes thereafter require the person and the team's collective efforts. (A-M-04-20)

Discussions and Recommendations

By employing three types of LEGO® facilitation method — Six Bricks, Play Box, and LSP, as well as a counseling strategy that assesses, develops, and builds strengths, this study developed a playful strength-based career counseling for college students. The objective was to enhance the career adaptabilities and career stress coping of college students. The characteristic of this counseling model is a "playful" approach to strengthening the career strengths and career practices of college students. This approach involves the development of career capabilities through a tangible, visual, operational, and experiential process. The proposed model can be considered an innovative positive psychological practice, representing a groundbreaking significance for the diversity of career counseling. In this section, the results of this study are discussed, and practical and research implications are proposed for future researchers.

Discussions

Conventional career counseling programs typically involve interviews and tests. The playful career counseling approach developed in this study is integrated with a wide range of activities, such as dynamic collaborative tasks, physical activities, building concrete models,

and building team consensus. It provides college students with different methods to explore their career options and cultivate employability.

The results pertaining to career adaptation revealed that the proposed model exhibited immediate effect on career concern, career control, and career curiosity. The model produced significant delayed effects on career control and career curiosity. Past studies concerning strength-based career counseling have reported improvements in life satisfaction (Rust et al., 2009), sense of well-being (Wang, 2015), self-efficacy, self-growth, and perception of happiness (Wang & Tien, 2011), indicating that a playful strength-based career counseling strategy affects different career aspects.

The results of this study showed that the immediate and delayed effects on the career control and career curiosity of college students were consistent, indicating that the students were able to actively explore their career paths and exert stronger control over their career plans. A study conducted in Taiwan (M. K. Huang & Huang, 2013) reported that college students are associated with a low level of "career control." The counseling model proposed in the present study provides a feasible solution to weaknesses commonly found in the career adaptation of college students in Taiwan.

Previous studies (Crespin, 2006; Lazarus, 2000) revealed the relationship between coping strategies and career adaptability. As mentioned above, the college students who participated in the playful strength-based career counseling program presented significant improvement in career control. The study results also showed significant improvement in positive problem-focused coping; however, no changes were observed in emotion-focused coping. These results are consistent with studies asserting a relationship between stress coping strategies and individual sense of control. A higher level of perceived control is associated with a tendency to adopt positive problem-focused coping strategies. In other words, the playful strength-based career counseling model encouraged the students to confront problems, propose possible solutions and action strategies, and take actions to achieve their career goals.

The qualitative results of this study are consistent with findings of previous studies on LEGO® facilitation career counseling methods (Harn, 2019; Harn & Hsiao, 2018; Harn & Yu, 2018; Nolan, 2010; Peabody, 2015; Peabody & Noyes, 2017) in the following areas: facilitation of career exploration, development of career hope, deeper career thinking, positive empowerment, professional identity, broadened diverse thinking, and clearer career goals and visions.

In addition, the results of the present study also revealed positive effects on social connection and universality. Regarding career development, the results of this study demonstrated not only a single-level effect on career hope, but also positive influences on career adaptation and coping strategies. The qualitative results also presented positive psychological effects such as positive emotions, hope, social connection, and positive empowerment, all of which are the crucial change mechanism of strength-based counseling. Moreover, the key factors promoting career adaptation were also identified: positive emotions, positive traits, social support, and clear career goals, all of which are vital factors for strengthening career adaptation (Creed, Fallon, et al., 2009; M. K. Huang & Huang, 2013).

An examination of possible reasons shows that LSP provides a tangible, visual, and operational exploration model that facilitates the clarification of career goals (Harn, 2019; Harn & Hsiao, 2018; Harn & Yu, 2018; Peabody, 2015; Peabody & Noyes, 2017). According to past studies, having clear career goals can effectively improve efficacy (McGregor et al., 2006; Wang, 2013). LSP uses metaphors to clarify career issues, increase the participants' career concern, thus encouraging them to positively confront career challenges. Previous strength-based counseling is focused on discussing existing strengths. By contrast, the playful career counseling model offers the real-time opportunity to identify and build strengths. This is the establishment and application of visible strengths.

Career exploration using SBPB not only visually broadens career displacement, but also generates a positive effect on the interpersonal connections during the process of cooperation. Failing tasks and making repeated attempts are all aimed at nurturing the participants' resilience. In a limited career scale space, the participants realized that career life is uncontrollable, prompting them to contemplate the possibility of self-location. While striving for a position on the scale, the participants "coped with change" and engaged in a reflective thinking of a new career model, which helped the students to think more flexibly and respond positively to the "change" in their career. As said by one of the participating students:

> Because my mini-figure was unstable, it could only be placed in an area with a stable foundation. The starting point was overly crowded. I could only place it at the less-crowded end point, which also means that I need to be pushed by an external force to reach the end. (B-F-12-04)

In summary, the playful strength-based career counseling approach exhibited positive psychological effects on social connection, positive emotions, and strengths assessment and building. In terms of career, this approach exerted positive effects on career control, career concern, career curiosity, and problem-focused coping. Specifically, the playful strength-based career counseling approach creates real-time visible experiences and learning opportunities for career development and positive psychology. In contrast to traditional strength-based counseling, the playful strength-based career counseling offers different exploratory and practical models for college students. In the next section, the limitations of this study and recommendations for subsequent researchers are described.

Recommendations

The playful strength-based career counseling approach is an innovative positive psychology practice contributing to positive psychology and career development. This study still has several limitations. In terms of data analysis, the data of this study regarding the dimensions of career concern, career confidence, and positive emotion-focused coping did not pass the test of homogeneity. Therefore, ANCOVA was not performed on these data, which prevented the study results from showing the complete results of the measured variables. Future studies could use an adjusted model to demonstrate the effects of the data that were not subjected to ANCOVA. Besides, the possible influence of time was not included in the study. Multiple factorial ANOVA could be considered in future studies to explore the effects of other possible variables. Secondly, this study adopted a research sample from a single region, whether it has extended benefits in different regions remains to be explored. In future studies, culturally diverse groups could be included to examine the efficacy of this model.

Finally, concerning research design, this study adopted a two-day 12-hour workshop design. Further investigation is required to determine whether this design can be converted into a group counseling model and whether its effect can be transferred. Subsequent researches could employ a group counseling model and add different applications to counseling practices. In this study, two types of LEGO® facilitation method — learning by playing SBPB and the gamified model of LSP — were used; however, an effect analysis on these two types of method was not performed. In future research designs, LEGO® facilitation method from different systems can be distinguished and the method of the traditional interview strength-based counseling can be added to conduct effect discriminatory study with different methods.

The participants' learning diaries were collected as qualitative data for analysis; the results obtained can only be used to examine the content of change. In future, a focus group interview approach can be incorporated to explore the process of change and determine key change events. Through qualitative research results, in addition to expanding the contextual understanding of the impact of quantitative research, the characteristics of the response can be seen. For example, when Taiwanese college students face uncontrollable situations in their careers, the propulsive force of social connection, and the compromise between group interests and self-position, it seems to show some characteristics of "self" in Chinese context. In the follow-up researches, the cultural perspective can be integrated to further explore the changed cultural context.

Based on the results of this study, the following suggestions are made for career counseling practice. First, career counseling for college students can integrate playful approach and positive mental models. Existing career counseling or strength-based counseling mainly involves interview and tests, coupled with other mediums in practice. However, few counseling practices employ systematic and theoretical playful approaches to explore career options and develop capabilities in a tangible, visual, operational, and practical manner. The results of this study showed that the playful strength-based career counseling model is associated with multiple career capability-building methods, which exert an effect on career development and positive psychology. The playful strength-based career counseling provides a source of inspiration for career counseling models.

Second, career counseling should focus on the development of multiple career skills. This study focused on discussing not only the meaning of career, career goals, and professional identity, but also the cultivation of vocational skills such as physical management, communication skills, innovation capability, and interpersonal cooperation. The findings can serve as a reference for career counselors to integrate and cultivate career exploration and employability skills, thereby increasing career agency. Career counseling not only assists students to think more clearly about their career, but also relates to guiding students to see a more complete career scope with a broader perspective, because career development is affected by three dimensions: environment, individual, and the world of work. Therefore, multiple contents should be considered when formulating a career plan. In doing so, more comprehensive career assistance can be provided.

Acknowledgments

The author would like to thank the Ministry of Science and Technology for financially supporting this research.

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樂玩取向優勢職涯輔導對台灣大學生生涯適應與生涯壓力因應的效果

韓佩凌

摘 要

本研究旨在探究樂玩取向優勢職涯輔導對台灣大學生生涯適應與生涯壓力因應的效果。研究者運用六色積木、遊玩箱和樂高認真玩三種不同樂玩模式，以優勢為核心的策略，建構樂玩取向優勢職涯輔導方案。研究對象為 60 名台灣的大學生，實驗組實施 12 小時樂玩取向優勢職涯輔導，對照組施予 12 小時正向心理課程。比較兩組在實驗結束一天後和一個月後，在生涯調適量表與生涯壓力因應量表得分的差異。另外，研究者蒐集實驗組的學習日誌，以內容分析法來探究改變內涵。研究結果發現樂玩取向優勢職涯輔導對於生涯關注、生涯控制、生涯好奇、積極問題焦點因應具有立即效果；對於生涯控制、生涯好奇、積極問題焦點因應具有延宕效果，在積極情緒焦點因應則未達顯著差異。質性分析結果顯示，樂玩取向優勢職涯輔導具有促進生涯思維、正向情緒、生涯行動的正向效應。

關鍵詞：樂玩取向；優勢本位；職涯輔導；生涯適應；生涯壓力因應

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