Adult Attachment Security as a Predictor of Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy among College Students in the United States

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Abstract : This study examined the association between adult attachment security and career decision-making self-efficacy (CDMSE) among college students in the United States. Previous studies show that attachment security is associated with levels of CDMSE among college students. Given that a majority of studies examining career development variables have used parental attachment measures, this study adds to understanding of this phenomenon by utilizing a broader measure of attachment. The participants included 269 college students (76% female) between the ages of 19-29. An anonymous survey was distributed online via social media as well as in hard copy format in classrooms. Multiple regression analyses were conducted to determine the relationship between anxious and avoidant attachment and CDMSE. Results revealed anxious attachment was a significant predictor of CDMSE (B = -.13, p = .01), such that greater anxiety in attachment was associated with lower levels of CDMSE. When accounting for anxious attachment, avoidant attachment was no longer significant as a predictor of CDMSE (B = -.12, p = .10). The variance in college CDMSE explained by the model was 7%, F(2,267) = 9.51, p < .001. Results for anxious attachment are consistent with existing literature that finds insecure attachment to be related to lower levels of CDMSE, however the non-significant results for avoidant attachment as a predictor of CDMSE suggest not all types of attachment insecurity are equally related to CDMSE. Future research is needed to explore the nature of the relationship between different dimensions of attachment insecurity and CDMSE.
Keywords : attachment, career decision-making, college students, self-efficacy
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