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## Relationship Between Religious Support, Perceived Barriers And Work Volition Among the Orthodox Jewish Population

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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RELIGIOUS SUPPORT, PERCEIVED BARRIERS AND  
WORK VOLITION AMONG THE ORTHODOX JEWISH POPULATION

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“There are still words left to describe all we’ll become, to tell our story.” – TKG

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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RELIGIOUS SUPPORT, PERCEIVED BARRIERS AND  
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**ABSTRACT**

Work volition as it relates to perceived career barriers for marginalized populations has become a growing area of research in the field of vocational psychology (Blustein, 2004, 2013). Such research through the psychology of working framework (PWF) has focused on highlighting the strengths and challenges of career-development variables for marginalized groups, and identifying coping variables to aid in the development of an individual's working needs. Two constructs that have been supported throughout PWF research, work volition and perceived career barriers, focus on detailing the negative impacts of ethnic and gender discrimination on career development (Duffy et al., 2016; Gee, 2002; Joireman & Stratham, 2005; Yoo & Lee, 2005). In response to Duffy's (2005) call for further inquiry regarding career-development in relation to religious variables, this investigation explored the contextual factor that religious community support has within the Orthodox Jewish community on their relationship with work.

The study sampled 252 Orthodox Jewish people over the age of 18, primarily from the greater Cleveland area. Respondents completed online survey questionnaires distributed through SurveyMonkey.com. A mediated regression model analyzed the relationship between this group's reported perceptions of barrier and work volition, as mediated by religious social support. An additional moderation model analyzed the

described mediated model to determine the extent gender has on the relationship with these factors. Results from the mediation regression indicated that there was a significant relationship found between variables ( $F(2, 249) = -9.56, p < .001$ ). The moderation analysis revealed that there were no significant relationships found based on gender differences for any of the variables relationships: perceptions of barriers, religious social support and work volition.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Interest in researching the significance that religiousness has on many key areas of a person's well being is on the rise. Religiousness, or religion has been operationally defined to include an individual's relationship with their religion, place of worship, or faith community (Miller & Thoresen, 2003). Research has emphasized coping and positive impacts of religion on physical and mental health. Powell, Shahabi and Thoresen (2003) found through a meta-analysis that attendance in weekly religious community events accounted for a 22% decrease in cardiovascular health and a 30% decrease in mortality. McCullough and Larson (1999) found similar impacts of religious belonging on mental health, suggesting a 20% to 60% decrease in the presence of depressive symptoms for those who belonged to a religious group. These findings have been replicated by additional research, detailing the positive impacts that individuals receive from involvement in religious group, such as less depressive symptoms (Fiala, Bjorck, & Gorsuch, 2002), less loneliness (Kirkpatrick, Shillito, & Kellas, 1999), and higher self esteem (Greenway et al. 2003) than those not belonging to a religious group.

Though these desirable outcomes from religious affiliation have been seen as positive coping traits for increased work choice and adaptability (Hayden, Kronholz, Pawley & Theall, 2016; Heo & Kim, 2016), there is a lack of research detailing the impact of religious variables as central constructs in career development literature (Duffy, 2006). In response, this proposal will investigate the influence of religious social support as a mediator of the relation between perceived career barriers and work volition. Previous research has shown the interplay of the relationship and impact that perceived career barriers has with work volition (Duffy, Diemer, Perry, Laurenzi & Torrey, 2011; Duffy, Douglass, Autin & Allan, 2016; Jadidian & Duffy, 2012). What remains to be examined is how religious social support can mediate this relationship. This is pertinent to the sample in the present study. These career variables are chosen due to the theoretical understanding that relates these constructs as tools to understanding the complexities of the career exploration for the marginalized population (Blustein, 2006).

Perceived career barrier represents the expected societal limitations that are placed on a group of individuals, especially impacting marginalized groups (White & Krieger, 2000). This construct has shown to negatively impact an individual's work volition and career choices, based on gender (Cardoso & Marques, 2008; Luzzo & McWhirter, 2001) and race (Gutman, Sameroff, & Eccles, 2002; Landrine, et al., 2006; Williams, et al., 2003). A key finding through the literature has shown that when minority individuals harbor aspects of perceived discrimination they will seek social support from their own identified group (Goffman, 1963; Hobfoll, 1989). Research has shown that social support has been a common response to racial discrimination

(Plummer & Slane, 1996; Seawell, Curtona, & Russell, 2014), physical discrimination (Wagstaff, Carmen, Kim & Al-Riyami, 2015), as well as sexual harassment (Wilson & Yoshikawa, 2004). Although there is minimal research detailing religious social support as a consequence of perceived discrimination, it is nevertheless an expected consequence for minority groups (Hayward & Krause, 2015). Furthermore, as an additional perceived barrier this study will include religious discrimination, specifically anti-Semitism. The concept of anti-Semitism has not directly been associated with perceptions of career barriers in the research. This is a result of the limited scope of research detailing the experiences of the Jewish community. Nevertheless, oppression for a marginalized ethno-cultural group for adherence to minority religious and spiritual beliefs has caused significant impairment to career choice (Fukuyama, Puig, Wolf, & Baggs, 2014). One such group are participants in this research, namely the Orthodox Jewish people.

The relationship between perceived career barriers and work volition can further be explored through the construct of religious social support. Religious support has been operationalized to include factors from the subjective experiences of an individual's relationship with a higher power, also known as God support, and relationships with religious leaders (Fiala et al. 2002). Similar to social support research that focuses on interpersonal relationships, religious involvement contributes positive aspects to an individual's self-perception and positively improve degrees of work volition – ability to choose work despite constraints (Blustein, 2006). This was seen through empirical research that identified religious supports as positively correlated with increased career decision self-efficacy – which measures the degree to which an

individual can successfully complete tasks necessary to determine career despite potential shortcomings (Duffy & Lent, 2008).

## **Career Barrier**

### ***Anti-Semitism***

The essence of anti-Semitism, hostility toward Jews who are prejudged as out-group and others, is an unfortunate reality that is felt by a large percentage of American Jews – some estimates placing this experience affecting between 50-80% of Jews (Chanes, 1999; Halpern, 1981; Rebhun, 2014; Tobin, 1988). Anti-Semitism as an ideology views Jews as a threat, both collectively and personally, in various respects – economic, political, media, social and others (Rebhun, 2014). These negative perceptions of the Jews can manifest in both attitude and behavior, and range in incidents from micro-expressions to overt hate propaganda and public demonstrations. Anti-Semitism has been sourced as a type of oppression from dominant religions and cultures, which impacts self-development and perceived career barriers (Fukuyama, Puig, Pence-Wolf, & Baggs, 2014). In consequence, the Jewish populations feelings regarding perceptions of career barriers, as based on external qualities, can be rooted in this global impact of anti-Semitism. Although there have been a minimal studies outlining the constructs of perceived barriers and religious identity, current research has linked religious ideologies with career development (Gibbons, Hughs, & Woodside, 2015) and educational success (Van Praag, Agirdag, Stevens, & Van Houtte, 2016).

As a result of the prevalence, and almost institutional level of, discrimination against the Jewish people throughout the centuries, these people were circumscribed to specific careers and denied entry into fields of interest. In the twelfth century, Jews

were removed from trading goods, where they previously found wealth and success, and forced into *religiously-forbidden* professions of banking, money lending, and currency exchange (Goldstein, 2012). Further sanctions against the Jews included: restrictions against owning property, joining guilds or crafts, and trading in the marketplace outside of regulated hours of operation, which also carried with it fines and taxes specific to their religion (ibid.). These religiously motivated discriminatory actions continued with variations of practice periodically through the mid-twentieth century. Culminating, largely, with the Nazi occupation in Germany, where Jews were stripped of their titles and no longer permitted to work as dentists, physicians, lawyers, or accountants (Johnson, 1987). As such, the evidence of overt workplace discrimination targeting the Jewish population has provided modern-day Jewish people with perceptions of career barriers that are worthy to investigate.

In recent years, there has been legislation passed to include anti-Israel sentiment and expansion in the overall scheme and definition of hate crime, discrimination, and ultimately anti-Semitism (Kaplan & Small, 2006; Wistrich, 2010). These areas of discrimination have been expressed between Jews and non-Jews as well as Jews and Jews from differing ideological sects in the workplace, residential neighborhoods, applying for governmental services, along with other experiences (Rebhun, 2014). Incidences of anti-Semitism have been on the rise over the past half-century and continue to cause difficulties for this ethnic minority population in feeling a part of the greater tapestry of American culture and opportunities.



### *Personal/Group Discrimination*

There is a noted inverse correlation presented between sentiments of discrimination and age. As pre- and post-holocaust Jews immigrated to America over the first half of the twentieth century, they reported higher incidences of discrimination taking place in acceptance to universities and workplaces (Sarna, 2004). Many Jews expressed being denied interviews for jobs that they were skillfully qualified for, simply due to their Jewish ancestral sounding surname. Later generations of Jews experienced a lull in discrimination during the civil rights era, along with the growing trend toward multicultural acceptance (Wistrich, 2010). Nevertheless, in more recent years investigations have revealed that the more liberal minded, civil rights and equal opportunity supporters have a more negative perspective of Jewish people in contrast to their conservative brethren (Link & Oldendick, 1996). As seen from a variety of studies, there is a continued struggle for American Jews to be able to express their religious identity in a welcomed fashion, due to concerns relating to subtle and overt discrimination.

Although no current studies exist detailing the specifics of the American Jewish group's relationship with work and perceived carrier barriers based on anti-Semitism, there have been several articles from international publications, primarily studying participants in Israel. These investigations focused on participants from unique ethnic and cultural groups: Israeli Jews, immigrant Jews, and Arab-Israelis (Al-Haj, 2003; Habib, King, Shoham, Wolde-Tsadick, & Lasky, 2010; Lipshits-Brazilier & Tatar, 2012). Some of the findings from the research on the topic found that depending on the cultural background and religious affiliations of women will impact their involvement in

work (Baker & Dwairy, 2002), Arab-Israelis have less employment opportunities due to discrimination (Khattab, 2002). Furthermore, this group has a reported strong causal relationship between perceived group barriers from discrimination and perceptions of career barriers (Lipshits-Braziler & Tatar, 2012). These studies recognized the unique characteristics of the Jewish population in Israel, even with the Jewish population representing the dominant group. To date, there is little research detailing the perceived career barriers for the American Jewish experience.

Additionally, there is limited research and understanding regarding the American Orthodox Jewish community's work volition with social support as a contextual resource - based on religious experience. Some of the available studies have identified social support and religious social support to be linked with the ability for individuals to gain internalized social support from religious leaders as well as coping mechanisms for stress, which assists in exploring and choosing work (Duffy & Blustein, 2005; Duffy & Lent, 2008). Religious affiliation and social support has been understood by PWF as a contextual resource that could impact an individual's level of work volition (Blustein, 2004, 2013).

### **Statement of the Problem**

According to current psychological literature, there is a need for additional research and understanding regarding the American Orthodox Jewish population and their relationship with work (Gonen, 2000; Pirutinsky, 2013). A noteworthy distinction for this group is the gender differences approach to career development and exploration. Men will generally delay entry into the workforce to focus on religious studies (Pirutinsky, 2012). At the time of entry into the work force, they will have large

families with significant financial burdens and will be under-educated (Pirutinsky, 2012; Shai, 2006). For women, they will generally take on the financial responsibilities at the early stage of marriage and family development, and behave as the primary breadwinner (Pirutinsky, 2012). These cultural variables provide substance for additional exploration into this group's relationship to work.

Further problems that arise for the American Jewish population are a result of global anti-Semitism and discrimination. Although data has been reported signifying the pervasive aspect of this discrimination (Cohen, 2010), the impact of global anti-Semitism on career development has had limited research to date. Additionally, there has been limited research recognizing anti-Semitism as a perceived career barrier.

With limited understanding of this cultural group, clinicians and researchers who aim at serving this population may be misguided in their approach, causing a disservice to this ethnic-minority population's future career success. The expressed recognition for exploring this research will seek to identify how the acknowledged distinguishable features of this ethnic-minority group's characteristics are bound to the known career concepts of work volition, perceived barriers, and religious support. These quantifiable variables, whose measures will be outlined in a later section, will present an overall perspective into the Orthodox Jewish community.

### **Psychology of Working Framework**

Rooted in part within the traditional applied vocational theories of Parsons (1909), Holland (1997), and Super (1957), the psychology of working framework (PWF) contributes and informs the field of the current social justice context and its impact on the world of work (Blustein 2006, 2013). PWF was developed in response to the

contribution of Richardson (1993), who detailed criticisms regarding limitations of current theoretical approaches and called for a reformation in the field of vocational psychology. Richardson (1993) stated that there should be an emphasis on work over careers, due to a more broad definition of work to not be bound by career and occupational considerations, exclusively. Also, Richardson (1993) explained that research should be tied to an inclusion of social constructionism understandings and an interdisciplinary approach to research on work. Adding to these concerns was the work of Prilleltensky (1997), who instructed psychological researchers and theoreticians to be aware of subjective guiding values and morals, and to provide pathways for these principles to be manifest in the literature. These relevant concerns were the impetus to establish an updated framework with which to conceptualize and enhance the traditional approaches of career development theory to that of the psychology of work.

The core assumptions of PWF include: embracing diverse epistemologies, recognition that work is a central aspect to life and mental health, that vocational research should be relevant to all current and prospective workers and an individualized approach to work-experience outlook, and that work and lived experiences are intertwined. Furthermore, PWF seeks to identify the social, economic, political, and historical influences that are embedded within cultural and relational contexts, and recognizes that the work fulfills three core human needs: power and survival, social connection, and self-determination (Blustein, 2013). These facets may inform the research and analysis of collected data.

## **Core Constructs**

The core constructs that will be explored through this research are work volition, perceived barriers, and religious support. These constructs will be further elaborated to display their independent and interrelated significance for this study.

A primary construct that has been investigated through the lens of PWF has been that of work volition (Blustein, 2006, 2008, 2013; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Schultheiss, 2003). This term is defined as the perceived capacity to make occupational choices despite constraints, and is critical to the process of choosing work that would be most fulfilling in relation to abilities and needs for self-determination (Blustein, 2006). Although most work can fulfill the individual's capacity and need for survival and power, there is a significantly more complex process that aids an individual to determine work that fulfills the need for self-determination (Duffy et al., 2011). The construct of work volition, as it relates within our context of this study, can be understood as Jewish individuals' abilities to make career related decisions despite external constraints.

This construct of work volition has its origins in an important aspect of career development theory, namely perceived career barriers. Perceived career barriers is defined as "the career-related barriers an individual believes currently exist or may be encountered in the future [and] are not necessarily grounded in reality or based on factual information" (Albert & Luzzo, 1999, p. 431). Perceived career barriers may influence individuals to underestimate their own abilities and negatively impact their career options and opportunities. Studies have detailed significant setbacks for ethnic minorities (Luzzo & McWhirter, 2001; Novakovic & Gnilka, 2014) as well as correlated perceptions of barriers with religion and spirituality (Gibbons, Hughs, & Woodside,

2015; Van Praag, Agirdag, Stevens, & Van Houtte, 2016), which has further recommended a better understanding of abilities to cope with these barriers. In relation to our study this construct can be understood as participants' recognition of barriers as a consequence of internal constraints.

In relation to these constructs, of work volition and perceived barriers, is a coping tool and construct, one of which is rooted in the construct of religious support. Religious support is bifurcated to describe an individual's support from their community as well as support from the religious community. Although minimal research has been completed on the particular construct of religious support, there has been wide research on overall support and religion independently. Religion alone has shown an emphasis on meaningful work (Davidson & Caddell, 1994; Lips-Wiersma, 2002), fulfilling a spiritual calling (Duffy, Autin, & Bott, 2014), as well as aided in confidence in career decision making (Constantine, Miville, Warren, Gainer, & Lewis-Coles, 2006; Duffy & Blustein, 2005). The construct of support has been linked to perceptions of career opportunities, educational opportunities and job satisfaction (Harris, Moritzen, & Robitschek, 2001). Lastly, this construct is suggested to be relevant and requiring additional, supportive research in association with career constructs (Duffy & Lent, 2008).

### **Significance of the Problem**

The Orthodox Jewish adherents in America represent a unique subgroup with a percentage as high as 5.9% within an ethnic minority group that has a total estimate of approximately 2% of the total American population (Pirutinsky, 2013; Saxe & Tighe, 2013). The Orthodox adherents have unique lifestyle choices and characteristics that are imbued with cultural leanings based on rabbinic codes and teachings from biblical

verses (Genesis 3:19; Deuteronomy 6:7; Isaiah 66:5; Psalms 55:22). Through an unwavering allegiance to their religion, Orthodox Jews will marry at an average age of 21, spend several years post-marriage focused on raising a family while poring over religious texts, and requiring the financial obligations of being reliant on women, community charity, and/or government support (Gonen, 2000; Pirutinsky, 2013; Shai, 2006). While some women enter the workforce at an earlier age as primary breadwinners for the family, the males tend to delay entry into the workforce until their mid-20s to early 30s (Pirutinsky, 2013). As the males transition from a life of religious devotion to one of financial burdens and secular pursuits, many of these individuals are under-educated and expected to receive higher than average paying jobs to provide for the Orthodox Jewish lifestyle expenses: private school, specialty foods, holidays, etc. (Gonen, 2000; Lowenthal & Rogers, 2004). According to the current literature, there exists a gender discrepancy for this group's relationship with career development.

In parallel to these identified markers, the marginalized Jewish population also experiences societal pressures of anti-Semitic discrimination when entering the workforce. From the global ideological sentiments of discrimination to national discrimination rates, 25% (Rebhun, 2014) to 80% (Tobin, 1988) of Jews in America responded experiencing direct targeting of anti-Semitism in their lifetime. Recognizing that this pervasive discrimination spreads beyond the national portrait, an international Pew Foundation study found that 1/7<sup>th</sup> of the world 's population residing in Muslim majority countries – 50 countries globally, with a combined population of over 1 billion – has 90% of respondents expressing anti-Semitic/anti-Jewish sentiment (Kressel, 2012). This level of pervasive global hatred has created a unique script for the Jewish

population in outlining their perceived career barriers as well as impacting their degree of perceived career barriers on work volition. Based on the available research regarding discrimination and perceived discrimination, the expectation is that these negative sentiments will foster a stronger social support network for this group (Hayward & Krause, 2015; Seawell et al., 2014; Vassilliere et al., 2016). In consequence, this directionality of the present study will be to examine this trend and determine the impact that perceived discrimination has on this group's response to seek religious social support as a tool for work choice.

### **Purpose of the Study**

Therefore, the intended purpose of the proposed study is to provide a model to explore the American Orthodox Jewish group's relationship between perceived career barriers and work volition and the mediated impact on this relationship as found through the degree of religious support. The direct effect of the participants experience in their level of strength for work volition and resiliency of perceived barriers has shown to be associated with varying degrees of social support, as noted in the literature (Duffy & Lent, 2008; Hirschi, Niles, & Akos, 2011; Quimby & O'Brien, 2004; Restubog, Florentino, Raymund, & Garcia, 2010; Wright, Perrone-McGovern, Boo, & White, 2014). Nevertheless, the direct effect with regards to social support through religious involvement on work volition has had minimal research (Duffy, 2005). Additionally, the psychological construct of perceived career barriers will be studied to determine its relationship between religious social support and work volition. Once the relationship of these constructs is determined through the model, the study will address the moderated impact of gender differences within the Orthodox Jewish group. Gender



roles have previously been studied to indicate stronger levels of work volition, stronger levels of involvement within religious involvement, and less impacted by perceptions of barriers for males as compared to females (Cardoso & Moreira, 2008; Cheung, Wu, & Yeung, 2016; Creed, Wong, and Hood, 2009; Duffy, 2010; Lazar & Bjorck, 2015; Lipshits-Braziler & Tatar, 2012; Novakovic & Gnilka, 2015). This study will examine how gender roles will effect the relationship between the aforementioned constructs.

The model for the proposed study is guided by the Psychology of Working framework (Blustein, 2004, 2013), which focuses on how contextual resources influence career development and the importance of a group's experiences of marginalization on work volition (Swanson, 2013). Further, PWF suggests that working is central aspect of life, and that not every group has equal access to every work option (Blustein, 2004, 2013). The hope is that this model will inform future research, aid in the development of appropriate clinical intervention strategies, as well as assist in policies aimed at advancing career development for the Orthodox Jewish community.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study is unique across the pantheon of psychological research, because it provides details on the role of religious support on the relationship between perceived career barriers and work volition, for an ethnic minority population that has relatively little research to date (Pirutinsky, 2013). The study will combine the psychology of working framework along with quantitative measurements of American Orthodox Jews perceived career barriers, work volition scales, and religious support (PBS: Luzzo & McWhirter, 2001; WVS: Duffy et al, 2012; RCS: Fiala et al., 2002). Furthermore, this

research is answering the call of Duffy (2006) to provide additional research concerning religion and spirituality into career-development literature.

### **Summary**

The goal of this project is to determine the impact that perceived career barriers has on work volition as mediated by level of religious community support for the American Orthodox Jewish population along with the identified gender differences. In defining the characteristics of this ethnic minority group, it becomes readily apparent that this group warrants attention and deserves research independent from other minority groups, and certainly from the dominant American culture. The special elements of this group surround financial needs, victimization of global discrimination, and limited resources and tools to be successful in the traditional work trajectory (i.e., education). The proposed research will investigate the aforementioned variables and set to determine a course for forthcoming research, inform clinicians and vocational coaches, unearth descriptive information on the significance of religion as a variable within career-development literature, as well as description regarding this ethno-cultural minority group's relation to work.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter is to review the theoretical and empirical literature to further investigate the associations between work volition, perceived career barriers, and religious community support in regard to the American Orthodox Jewish group.

#### **Theoretical Framework**

The Psychology of Working (PWF; Blustein, 2006, 2013) perspective delivers a framework that expresses the relationship between marginalized populations with fewer privileges than the dominant culture and the outcome of work volition (Duffy, 2016). PWF distills three basic human needs: survival and power, social connection, and self-determination, and recognizes that these can be fulfilled through work (Blustein, 2013). PWF's framework seeks to highlight the significant sociocultural factors that impact subgroups work life experiences, which delivers added insight into marginalized populations attainment and relationship to work (Cole, 2009; Duffy, Autin, & Bott, 2015). Orthodox Jews who are establishing career choices or experiencing career transitions are likely to experience personal setbacks as a result of perceived career barriers based on discriminatory incidences as rooted in their ethno-cultural

identification. Perceptions of career barriers has been experienced as a result of many years of persecutory actions relating to work regulations imposed on the Jewish people (Goldstein, 2012).

These discriminatory perceptions of career barriers can contribute to diminished work volition, as well as associations with long-term, positive and negative outcomes such as binge drinking, increased involvement in social activism and greater academic achievement (Williams, Neighbors, & Jackson, 2003). Furthermore, in recognition of the current pragmatic difficulties facing the Orthodox Jewish group - early marriages, large families, under-education for males, and the necessity for significant financial resources to cover expenses (Gonen, 2000; Lowenthal & Rogers, 2004; Pirutinsky, 2013; Shai, 2006), the Psychology of Working approach (PWF: Blustein, 2006, 2013) is an appropriate theoretical framework for examining these contextual challenges. PWF also is an appropriate vocational theory for conceptualizing religious ideology and the expressed need for work in relation to the need for social connection (Duffy & Blustein, 2005), as will be discussed further.

### **Overview of Career Theories**

The following section will cover relevant career theories, including: Person-environment fit, life span, life space theory, circumscription and compromise, social cognitive career theory, and psychology of working.

**Person-Environment Fit.** Determining and understanding the role of work has been a central tenet of the counseling field since its inception. Especially from the early 1900s, individuals were provided insight into their minimal to moderate levels of choice and vocational decisions (Parsons, 1909). Frank Parsons provided an instructional key

formula for the advancement of work choice and satisfaction, Person-Environment Fit (P-E Fit). This formula, which espouses that an individual can make meaningful and appropriate career choices by understanding and matching his personality (P) and the work environment (E), displays an overview for the field that seeks to assist individuals in obtaining and performing work that ultimately provide a level of meaning and fulfillment (Parsons, 1909; Duffy, Bott, Allan, & Autin, 2014). Through Parson's (1909) contribution, PWF encompassed the theme that work can be complimentary to an individual's life (Blustein, 2006). Recognizing that the work life and the person's attributes are interlinked delivers support to the theme that work can be more than fulfilling a need for survival, but rather can elevate a person's needs for self-fulfillment and determination (Blustein, 2006). During the next cycle - both during and after the Great War and WWII – career psychologists focused on vocational assessment tools. These assessment tools provided individuals with greater knowledge of their individual characteristics and led these veterans and the general public to identified roles in the workforce. An ever-present formulaic expression of the P-E Fit construct can be seen through Holland's (1959) theory of vocational choice model.

**Holland's Theory of Vocational Choice.** Holland (1959, 1966, 1973, 1985, 1997) provided an integrative model that highlighted individual differences of interests that could be applied to a litany of available professions. Holland's classification system delineated areas of interest, beliefs, characteristics, and values into six major personality types: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional (RIASEC: Holland, 1997). These personality code types provide a description of predictive behaviors based on the amalgamated combination of

personality characteristics (Holland, 1997; Swanson, 2013). The expression of an individual's personality can be paired with pre-existing information about professional characteristics, which can assist in guidance and work fulfillment. Holland's (1997) theory is predicated on four core assumptions: 1) most people will resemble their code type, 2) environments can be categorized as resembling code types, 3) people search for environments that will be a good fit, and 4) environment and personality interact reciprocally to create a good match. Holland's theory had a powerful impact on the field of vocational psychology, but did not emphasize the sociocultural intersectionality of factors that impact career choice. It was not long after these first waves of research and practice that a more comprehensive viewpoint was presented through the work of Donald Super.

**Super's Life Span, Life Space Theory.** In this section an overview of Donald Super's life span, life space theory will be provided. Included in this section will be a discussion of themes and terms, such as: stages, self-concept, and career maturity. Super (1957) articulated a developmental approach to career that could provide an identified career stage for individuals depending on their age. At the onset of his theory, stages for career maturity were provided: growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, and disengagement. These stages were seen as representing life stages that were viewed as rungs on a ladder. As revolutionary as his theory was when it was first introduced mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, he continued to develop his theory by expressing that within each maxi-cycle were mini-cycles (Super, Savickas & Super, 1996). In other words, these stages were not to be experienced a single time over the course of an individual's life, but rather multiple times. Later in Super's life, he included an archway

of determinants, which accounted for environmental constructs and feedback for the individual (Super, Savickas & Super, 1996). How a person interacted with work throughout his/her lifespan, how this individual permitted work and life to interplay (a more holistic, comprehensive approach) in turn identified the main theme of Super for the development of the core construct labeled self-concept. As this idea is paramount in the field of vocational psychology, individuals from marginalized populations have a tendency to express weak degrees of self-concept due to discriminatory societal pressures (Blustein, 2003). As a result, PWF focuses on the self-concept and its contextual basis in determining how a person relates to the world of work.

The theory and understanding for self-concept provided the clinician with a focus for the individual (Super, 1953). Through role play exercises and a variety of other skillfully implemented techniques intra- and extra-session, career counselors had the tools needed to be invited into the individual's career and life narrative, which could be useful in identifying career choice (Scharf & Mayseless, 2010). Super's theory continues to be expressed through a wide field of research into the identification of self-concept and recently career adaptability (Rudolph, Lavigne & Zacher, 2017; Super, Savickas & Super, 1996). The introduction of career adaptability indicates how an individual can change with the options provided through the ever-changing field of work. Through the literature and research on career adaptability and self-concept, the PWF model was provided a basis to understand that an individual's work and the intervention strategies that are fundamental to the psychology of working can be shaped by the person's ecological sense of self (Blustein, 2006). The self-concept model that

promotes the work-life interplay permits PWF to further explore and elaborate on the themes of needs fulfillment.

**Gottfredson's Circumscription and Compromise Theory.** Work by Gottfredson in the mid-eighties sought to identify gaps in Super's (1957) theory. Gottfredson (1981, 2005), in her seminal work, identified a theory of circumscription and compromise, which ushered in another dimension within the field of career psychology. Her work, although lacking significant empirical research, suggested that individuals base their career choices on a variety of factors and biases (Marks, Abdallah, Simms & Thompson, 2006). The theory of circumscription and compromise presents a four pronged developmental model that guides career development: 1) growth in cognitive abilities (*cognitive growth*), 2) development of self (*self-creation*), 3) elimination of less favorable choices (*circumscription*), and 4) compromising with current available positions (*compromise*) (Fouad & Kantamneni, 2013). This work emphasized sociocultural and multicultural themes that has ushered in a wave of theories like PWF by Blustein (2006). Blustein (2006) incorporated Gottfredson's theory in relation to understanding the career and work trajectories of the marginalized population with regards to social values and prestige of work choices and the overall occupational landscape (Fouad & Kantamneni, 2013). The PWF expresses a social justice perspective that embraces these ideals and encourages fostering a career development outlook and increasing work volition for marginalized groups based on perceived limitations due to race, religion, ethnicity, culture, physical and mental handicaps, as well as gender.



Gottfredson (1981) also outlined the theoretical life-stage development of circumscription over the initial two decades of life. The stages and the subsequent age ranges are as follows: orientation and size (ages 3-5), orientation to sex role (ages 6-8), orientation to social valuation (ages 9-13), and orientation to unique, internal self (ages 14 and older). As children develop an awareness of occupational differences in relation to their characteristics, they began to eliminate vocational choices. In the second stage, children gain an understanding of the influence of gender on occupational roles. As Gottfredson (2005) described, children learn gender self-concept based on salient distinctions in gender-accepted clothing and behaviors. As a result of this early gender self-concept, there is a circumscription of career choices that do not align with perceived societal expectations. Gottfredson's theory informs PWF in categorizing gender as a marginalized group, with experiences of discrimination that hinder aspects of career exploration and development. This information is instrumental to the current study in determining the effect that gender has in relation to the outcome variable of work volition.

**Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT).** The SCCT (Lent & Brown, 2006, 2013; Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 2000) model provides a framework for understanding urban youth and the relationship between the identified variables: self-efficacy and career success. The SCCT theory postulates that a person's background contextual factors and person inputs influence learning experiences, which later develop into self-efficacy. Person inputs are defined as individual differences of predisposition, gender, race/ethnicity, and health-status (Lent et al., 2002). Background contextual factors are previous learning experiences that help to shape an individual's career choice. Lastly,

proximal factors that correspond to an individual's perceptions regarding supports and barriers to success, both academically and vocationally, is the final variable that assists with career construction.

SCCT is a relevant theoretical construct for providing a depth of understanding into the relationship between career choice, self-efficacy, and a variety of contextual factors, such as socioeconomic status (Hsieh & Huang, 2014), gender (Bergeron & Romano, 1994), and race (Fouad & Byars-Winston, 2005). Individuals from middle or high SES have increased opportunities for educational resources and expectations, access to more occupational role models, and more likely to possess parental support than low SES individuals (Blustein et al., 2002; Turner & Lapan, 2003). These positive attributes and disadvantages could likely control the development of necessary self-efficacy beliefs in determining career choice. The description rooted in an individual's context and sense-of-self can be implemented to understand its unconscious guide in developing an individual's degree of work volition (Blustein, 2006). This overlap between work volition and career decision self-efficacy express similar constructs by focusing on the individual's perception of their own set of abilities. Through remediation via career exploration and other clinical strategies, individuals from marginalized backgrounds can develop a healthier perspective on work as a tool for meaning and need's fulfillment.

**Psychology of Working.** Blustein (2006), in answering a call for change in the field by Richardson (1993), provided a framework with which to explore individual's career choices. Richardson (1993) suggested an interdisciplinary approach to studying vocational psychology. Her recommendations included: an increased focus through the

social constructionist epistemological perspective, the necessity to highlight results that can be directly applied, and an updated description and definition detailing people's relationship with work. Both Richardson's (1993) and Blustein's (2006, 2013) work recognized the imbalance of greater volition and privileges pertaining to career development for some groups over others. These imbalances and the ascribed criticisms established new career developmental theories, which were crafted to foster more adaptive choices for individuals from differing environmental contexts than previous career developmental theories (Brown & Lent, 2013). Researchers shifted their focus from the dominant Anglo-American majority and directed their attention on racial diversity, employing new theoretical approaches such as feminist thought (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987; Harmon & Farmer, 1983) and race-based critique (Smith, 1983). This new wave approach to vocational psychology research identified the imbalance of privileges associated with the in-group members from the middle class and wealthy. Feminist scholars recognized the traditional gender-specific elements imbedded in traditional careers, which placed women in an inferior position for career choices. As a result, females were overlooked as a main aim for vocational research, practice, and individualized theoretical constructs (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987). Additional limitations in the vocational psychology literature were found in relation to racial and cultural diversity literature. As the general field of psychology literature pays heed to the unique attributes for minority groups based on historical oppression and current societal discriminatory practices as a means of psychological challenges, such implications should be included in career developmental theory and practice (Brown & Lent, 2013; Smith, 1983).

Through the informed criticism of vocational theory, previously mentioned, Richardson (1993) and Blustein (2001) penned convincing arguments demanding that the field broaden its focus to be more inclusive of all current and prospective workers. Their works, respectively, describe the limitations of the field as well as charted a course for vocational research to incorporate ideals and themes expressed through social justice and advocacy work that challenge and seek remediation for the imbalance of opportunities. Blustein's PWF recognized and mirrored Maslow's (1964) hierarchy of needs pyramid, in that individuals may be restricted in career choice by the lowest level needs of survival (Blustein, 2006). Through Blustein's framework for PWF and accompanying research (Allan, Duffy & Blustein, 2016; Blustein, Kozan & Connors-Kellgren, 2013; Marfleet & Blustein, 2011), identified three key needs inherent in career choice: need for power/survival, need for social connection, and the need for self-determination (Blustein, 2001, 2006, 2013). These needs can be understood, in order of significance – with survival at the foundation - and based on the individual's level of work volition (elaborated on in the following section).

**Psychology of Working Framework Core Assumptions.** According to Blustein (2013), there are additional assumptions that are relevant to PWF that present a holistic approach to viewing the working experience. A central tenet is that work is both an essential element of survival and an integral component of mental health. Additionally, the individual's experiences of both work and non-work are considered closely intertwined and disruptions from work could impact other areas of well being. As a result, the psychological practitioner should be mindful of the shortcomings, trajectory, and dynamics of the client population and the relationship with work in

addition to traditional ecological framework for clinical work. The client's racial-cultural experience – political, social, and historical contexts, as well as impacts from socioeconomic status, should be considered relevant and pertinent characteristics to be included in the framework of vocational research. Further, no one epistemology should be heralded as more prominent than others in understanding the nature of working.

Although previous theories provide complementary theoretical underpinnings in determining career choices and options, it is specifically through PWF theoretical framework that a more refined perspective emerges. Through PWF there is an acknowledgment of the foundational career choice and development as a consequence of a contextual-specific needs, supports, barriers, etc. Through the blended approach of sociological and psychological theories, PWF develops a holistic interpretation of the struggles that are present for each segment of the population and their individual responses to these struggles in relation to their choices and needs expressed through work (Duffy & Dik, 2009; MacLachlan, 2014). The PWF assumptions suggest that not all people who are interested in working have the same control over their career choices (Blustein, 2013; Duffy, Diemer, Perry, Laurenzi, & Torrey, 2012). The subsequent inequalities stemming from privilege and power permeate the work-related decisions and are most pronounced in the marginalized population. The constructs provided to deliver an understanding of individual and group limitations for work choices can be investigated through work volition and perceived career barriers (Blustein, 2013; Duffy, Diemer, et al., 2012). Work volition pertains to an individual's subjective perspective on their ability to make career choices despite constraints, whereas career barriers refer

to perceptions of constraints that can limit success of career goals (Duffy, Autin, & Bott, 2015).

*Psychology of Working Framework Research.* Allan, Autin and Duffy (2014) examined how social class relates to the experience of meaningful work in relation to the psychology of working framework. In the first study, there were 351 employed adult participants of whom 214 identified as female (61%). The majority of the sample identified as White (82%) and the participant's average age was 35.74 years (SD = 11.64; ages ranging from 18 to 80). Results showed that individuals from higher social classes were more likely to experience work meaning than people in lower social classes. This provides support of PWF approach that recognizes the need for survival as a primary driver to the lower class worker. Regardless of class, participants reported serving others or contributing to the greater good as the primary source of their work's meaning.

Allan, Autin and Duffy (2014) provided a second study where they researched the use of latent, multiple mediator models to test whether the three components of work volition (volition, financial constraints, and social constraints) mediated the relation between social class and work meaning. The recruited sample was 252 participants of whom 49% were males and 51% females with an average age of 33.74 (SD = 12.95; ages ranging from 18 to 81). The majority of respondents reported being racially White (83%). Their results reported that volition and financial constraints fully mediated the relation between social class and work meaning. These results suggest that social class may be connected to work meaning due to work volition - increased volition and

decreased financial constraints. This affirms the PWF model in detailing the social class divide in connection with meaningful work.

Blustein, Kozan, and Connors-Kellgren (2013) investigated work needs by way of a qualitative study on the meaning of work with seven men and six women participants with an average age of 47 (ages ranging from 24 to 62 years). Participants reported being unemployed or underemployed, and from diverse backgrounds. The participants were interviewed to better understand their experiences of job loss and coping abilities. The themes that emerged from the narratives informed the investigators that unemployment was either experienced as a “bottom falling out” situation, or as an opportunity for growth (Blustein et al., 2013, p. 263). The participants, who described unemployment bottoming out, reported feelings of despair, anger, and lacking in preparedness for unemployment, with limited support. For the participants who reported experiencing job loss as an opportunity for personal growth, the investigators noted that these participants were of higher social class and means, with access to financial resources and perceived social support, which bolstered their adaptive coping abilities (Blustein, 2013). This research provided support for the advantages of social means and economic opportunities as a means for coping with challenges and setbacks within the world of work.

### **American Jewish Culture**

In recognizing the limited research regarding the Orthodox Jewish people, it is imperative to define this culture and describe the unique differences from the general American population. The American Jewish people are a broad and diverse group of people that encompass a variety of cultural and ethnic identifications, as well as levels of

religious adherence of Jewish holidays and customs. Regardless of the affiliation and practice, Jews share a common ethno-cultural heritage, history, and a unique set of rituals that unite them (Schlosser & Rosen, 2008). Although comprising a numerical minority of the United States population, with estimates placing their numbers between 5 to 6 million (less than 2% of the population), there has been very little research regarding their involvement and engagement to the world of work (Pirutinsky, 2013). Compounding on this lack of research is the relationship of an even smaller subsection within the Jewish community called Orthodox Jews. The Orthodox Jews generally reside in cloistered communities and adhere to strict religious dogma that encourages limited contact with the outside world (Huppert, Siev, & Kushner, 2007; Pirutinsky, 2013). As a result of their limited contact, they face unique career-related challenges including lack of exposure, limited secular education, restricted self-knowledge, and minimal work experience (Pirutinsky, 2013).

Over the past several decades, there have been independent agencies within major Jewish communities across the United States focusing on developing programs and strategies to assist with career development within the Orthodox Jewish population (Pirutinsky, 2013). There are two major concerns that have been unearthed through these agencies: first is the delayed entry into the workforce of Jewish men/husbands (late 20s to early 30s), while they attend to religious studies; second is the family dependency on women/wives to be the major financial contributors during this early phase of marriage (Gonen, 2000; Pirutinsky, 2013; Shai, 2006). These concerns are further complicated by the cultural expectations for marriage in early adulthood, and obligations for significant financial expenses as a result of large families and private



religious schools (Gonen, 2000; Lowenthal & Rogers, 2004). It has been estimated that the average Orthodox Jewish family will require an additional \$25,000-\$30,000 of discretionary income annually to afford their religious lifestyle (Bubis & Windmueller, 2005). The tremendous financial burden placed on these Jewish families in order to facilitate proper engagement in their non-negotiable set of dogmatic principles has developed a unique context for this subgroup to necessitate achieving higher family income.

### **American Jewish Demographics**

In order to generalize the findings from this study it is important to identify the demographic makeup of the American Jewish people. Currently, there is a lack of knowledge regarding the Jewish demographic information within the United States. This is a result of the limitations that were enforced in the national decennial census questionnaire after 1957, which restricted religion from the items to be surveyed (DellaPergola, 2012; US Census Bureau, 1957). As a result, much information and details relating to our understanding of the Jewish community is rooted in independent, nonprofit agency sponsored special census report data. Since 1957 there have been only 10 major national surveys gathering intelligence and data on the American Jewish community. These surveys range in foci of data collected based on donor specific interest along with quality and cost related concerns (DellaPergola, 2012). As a consequence of these factors, much information regarding the post-1957 American Jewish population has been met with mixed responses from socio-demographers for its veracity in detailing with the Jewish community (DellaPergola, 2012; Smith, 2009).

Although there is a dearth of literature outlining other specific criteria for the American Jewish population, the available statistics outline meaningful trends that highlight the separation of this group from mainstream American averages. Of additional concern for this marginalized group is the contextual factor of global anti-Semitic sentiment and discrimination. Hatred for the Jewish group has been on the rise post-holocaust both nationally and internationally (Rebhun, 2014; Rickman, 2012). Without any justification, rationale, or remedy in place, Jews enter the world of work with a variety of perceived career barriers and sensitivities. According to research by the Annual Jewish Public Opinion Survey, 90% or more of American Jews see anti-Semitism as a serious threat and a current problem (Cohen, 2010). On the contrary, through the National Jewish Population Survey of 2001 (Alper & Olsen, 2011; Kotler-Berkowitz, 2006), American Jews do not feel as outsiders in mainstream American culture. To clarify this discrepancy, researchers have noted that Jews who live in insular, cloistered Jewish communities rely heavily on their within-group ties and feel less like outsiders, whereas those who live outside cloistered communities will feel more like outsiders (Alper & Olsen, 2011). As a result, the perceived barriers as a contextual factor based on anti-Semitism could potentially be seen as different for American Jews based on their geographic location and feelings of religious support.

### **Central Constructs**

The variables that will now be described are perceived career barriers, work volition and religious social support, as these constructs are central to this study. Specific focus on gender's impact on each variable will be provided at the end of each section.

### *Perceived Barriers*

Previous research into the construct of perceived career barriers and work volition has shown significant, correlations between these two constructs (Duffy et al., 2012; Duffy, Diemer & Jadidian, 2011). Career barriers are defined as perceived factors that negatively impact an individual's career path, such as socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, physical or cognitive handicaps, as well as sexual orientation (Duffy, Diemer, & Jadidian, 2011). Perceived career barriers have shown to limit work opportunities through experiences of discrimination, fewer occupational role models, heightened family demands, and limited career options (Adams, Cahill, & Ackerlind, 2005; Blustein et al., 2002; Ladany, Melincoff, Constantine, & Love, 1997; Luzzo, Hitchings, Retish, & Shoemaker, 1999; McWhirter, 1997; Perrone, Sedlacek, & Alexander, 2001; Schmidt & Nilsson, 2006). The experiences of discrimination by a disenfranchised group has shown a strong linkage with the aspects of perceived barriers, as seen through numerous studies, such as: socioeconomic status (D'Anna, Hansen, Mull, Canjura, Lee, & Sumstine, 2018), ethnicity (Holloway-Friesen, 2018), employment status (Staiger, Waldmann, Oexle, Wigand, & Rüsche, 2018) and sexual identity (Lewis, Batra, Misiolek, Rockafellow, & Tupper, 2019). These perceived barriers are viewed as adjusted to an individual's current perceived challenges, such as level of education, skills and job credentials, work readiness, etc. (Danziger et al., 2000). In other words, the more barriers present for individuals the more constraints they will feel in their current positions.

Wettersten et al. (2005) examined the ability of assessed levels of social support, perceived parental involvement, academic self-efficacy, and perceived educational

barriers to predict school engagement and work role attitudes. The participants were high school students residing in rural Minnesota and North Dakota towns. A total of 1,277 students enrolled in high school grades 9 through 12 were 269 boys and 362 girls with the remainder of participants choosing not identify their sex. The sample was predominantly Caucasian (82%), which was followed by a minority group of Native American participants (10%). Of the participants who responded to the questionnaire regarding perceived socio-economic status 248 participants indicated either that “money is tight” or that they had little to no money, whereas 345 (50%) indicated living comfortably or having more money than they needed. Results from their study suggested the importance of contextual factors (SES, social support and parent involvement) and self-efficacy in predicting perceived career barriers and school attitudes. The researchers neglected to report findings regarding male and female participant respondents, which remains a significant limitation for the purposes of understanding career-development gender differences. Regardless, this study emphasizes the necessity to provide additional context information in an effort to understand students’ career-developmental outlook.

Constantine, Wallace, and Kindaichi (2005) examined the extent to which perceived career barriers and perceived parental support predicted career certainty and career indecision. They studied 151 African American upper level high school students from a large urban high school in the northeast United States of whom there were 88 females and 63 males. The mean age of participants was 16.67 years ( $SD = 0.62$ ), with 3rd-year students accounting for 39.1% of the sample and the remainder (60.9%) being 4th-year students. Their results suggested perceived career barriers positively predict

career indecision, and that perceived parental support is positively associated with career certainty. These results affirm contextual importance in career-development constructs for the marginalized population. Further, they showed significant distress between genders, with females having more career indecision than their male counterparts. This provides a necessity for researchers and clinicians to be more holistic in their approach to working with the marginalized population and in recognition of the gender discrepancy.

Lopez and Ann-Li (2006) examined perceived career barriers and perceived social support, coping belief barriers, and career decision-making self-efficacy beliefs in relation to career indecision in three racial/ethnic groups of female undergraduate college students at a large urban university in southwest America. There were 359 female students with a mean age of 24.15 years, who reported being White (42.2%), Hispanic (24.7%), and African American (19.2%). They reported significant findings suggesting that African American women perceive significantly greater career barriers in comparison to both White and Hispanic women. This research provides understanding for the difficulties that marginalized populations, both racial and gender, have with stronger negative impacts on career-development as a result of perceived career barriers.

Gushue, Clarke, Pantzer, and Scanlan (2006) explored the relationship between the social cognitive variables of perceptions of barriers and career decision-making self-efficacy and the outcome variables of vocational identity and career exploration behaviors. They recruited 128 Latino/a urban high school students from a large northeastern city in the United States. Of those recruited, 66.4% were male adolescents and 33.6% were female adolescents. The students' had a mean age of 16.12 (ages

ranging from 15 to 18). The majority of students reported being 10th grade students (46.9%), followed by 11th grade (44.5%). The majority of student participants reported that they were born in the United States (85.9%). The results from their investigation suggested that individuals who perceived fewer barriers had more integrated vocational identity than those who perceived more barriers. Females reported higher levels of gender discrimination and higher degrees of perceived barriers than their male counterparts. Also, higher levels of career decision-making self-efficacy were related to both a more differentiated vocational identity and a greater engagement with career exploration tasks. These gender differences along with the implications regarding the impact of perceived career barriers are relevant and suggest an interest in additional ethnic minority research.

McWhirter (1997) researched ethnic and gender differences in perceived educational and career barriers in a sample of 1,139 Mexican-American and Euro-American high school juniors and seniors from nine high schools in a southwestern, semi-rural area. The participants' self-identified reports indicated that there were majority White/Caucasian participants with 555, followed by Mexican-American/Chicano (482). The mean age of participants was 17.13 years. The Euro-American participants were of significantly higher socioeconomic backgrounds than Mexican-American participants. The results suggested that female participants anticipated more barriers than male participants, Mexican-American participants anticipated more barriers than Euro-Americans, and that these differences were consistent within ethnic and gender groups. As a result, this research provides support

to the current knowledge that being a marginal group may increase degree of perceived barriers. What remains yet to be seen is how this applies to the Jewish community.

Watts, Frame, Moffett, Van Hein, and Hein (2015) investigated the relationships between college student gender, perceived career barriers, and occupational aspirations. They recruited 314 undergraduate students from the southeastern United States. The majority of the participants were women (67%), along with the primary ethnic reported group of Caucasian/White (67%). The majority of the participants reported being between the ages of 18 and 21 years of age (84%; with ages ranging from 18 to 35 years). The participants' years in school were predominately freshmen (59%) followed by sophomores (21%). Their results suggested that women have higher aspirations and more perceived career barriers than their male counterparts. These variables of occupational aspirations and perceived career barriers were not statistically significantly correlated; and women expressed statistically significantly higher responses on both measures. This relationship between gender and career development provides further enhancement to our understanding the gender differences. This study falls short on providing accurate and specific demographic details and also does not account for ethnicity of participants. Without an understanding of ethnicity, participants' responses of discrimination and perceptions of career barriers may be limited.

**Perceived Barriers and Gender.** Cardoso and Moreira (2008) examined self-efficacy in career roles as a moderator between perception of career barriers and career planning with Portuguese students. There were 1,005 participants of whom (58%) girls and (42%) boys (488 in Grade 9 and 517 in Grade 12). The average age was 16.5 years (ages ranging from 13 to 23). The participants were predominately White ( $n = 962$ ).

Their results suggested that Grade 9 girls reporting low self-efficacy were more likely to report perception of career barriers leading to less career planning than the boys. These findings indicate a relationship between perceived career barriers, as based on gender, and the construct of career choice. This supports the current research interest in detailing perceived career barriers interaction with work volition.

Creed, Conlon, and Zimmer-Gembeck (2007) examined the relationship between career status aspirations and expectations, career barriers, academic engagement, academic control beliefs, general ability and literacy. They examined the responses from parents on career aspirations, expectations and perceived career barriers. They recruited 176 pairs of parents and students, age 7 years from primary schools in Southeast Queensland, Australia. The student population was 86 boys (48.9%) and 90 girls (51.1%), with a mean age of 12.24 years. The two schools studied were suburban, in a middle level socio-economic part of a medium-sized city. Adult participants were primarily mothers (87.6%). Children's career expectations were associated with perceptions of career barriers, and a trend towards reading abilities. There was no significant difference between career status aspiration and explorations for boys and girls, or from parents' reports of children – boys and girls. These results suggest that there is no bias or favor toward either gender within career barriers, aspirations, and explorations when children are at an early stage of development.

Creed, Wong, and Hood (2009) investigated the relationship between occupational aspirations/expectations (type and status) and decision-making difficulties, efficacy and career barriers for 498 Chinese high school students. The student sample included 245 (49%) girls, 245 boys (49%), and 8 students (2%) who did not indicate



gender. The mean age of participants was 18.37 years. Students reported their father's education level as a measure of socio-economic status the responses 56% a high school education and 41% of fathers had a primary school education. Students with aspirations/expectations type discrepancies were more likely to be higher achieving females; those with aspirations/expectations status discrepancies had poorer academic achievement, less confidence and perceived more barriers than their male counterparts. This suggests that career-development gender roles and discrepancies between male and female aspirations and perceived career barriers become apparent toward the completion from high school.

Novakovic and Gnilka (2015) examined whether coping efficacy and gender moderated the relationship between dispositional affect – both positive and negative and perceived career barriers. Their study focused on 294 undergraduate students from a large, Midwestern university of which there were 66.3% women and 33.7% men, with an age range from 18-24 years and a mean age of 21.24 years. The sample size racial makeup was 61.4% White followed by 12.9% Hispanic/Latino/a. They reported coping efficacy to have a moderating effect on the relationship between perceived career barriers and positive dispositional affect. Additionally, the results suggested a significant difference between genders where there was a weakening of the negative beta weight between positive affect and perceived career barriers as coping scores increased for women. This differed from male participants where there was a reduction of the positive beta weight between the positive affect and perceived career barriers as coping scores increased. These results reveal that there is significant difference between genders and how they engage in career-development and that women have more

perceived career barriers than men.

Recognizing the breadth of the current literature, there is a significant interest for researchers to focus on the impact of perceived barriers on career development and career choice (Duffy et al., 2006). In spite of the growing trend, however, the current findings are limited in providing a holistic understanding for the ways in which the perceived career barrier construct is fully realized in the career choice context.

Furthermore, the available studies analyze specific contextual aspects of marginalized samples gender and race, which ignores the generalizability of the construct to religion and other marginalized groups. Additionally, the literature seems to primarily focus on the perceived career barriers of the student population, which limits generalizability to other age levels. Lastly, there were no studies found that connect the perceived career barriers with religious identity and support.

### ***Work Volition***

Work volition is a core construct within the PWF, which describes an individual's perceptions of subjective opportunities to choose in career-decision making despite limitations. Work volition is considered to be a perception and is hypothesized to develop from real structural, environmental, and other constraints that are present for individuals who experience greater marginalization through events of discrimination and economic struggles (Duffy & Dik, 2009; Duffy, Diemer, Perry, Laurenzi & Torrey, 2012). The operational definition of this construct is interlinked with additional constructs through the literature, such as the construct of career decision self-efficacy, which is defined as a personal belief of control over career choice (Lent & Brown, 2013) and locus of control variable which is defined as an individual's feelings of ability to

control choices (Hammer & Vardi, 1981). There has been wide ranging research on this construct from relationships with academic satisfaction, sense of control, career maturity, work meaning, job satisfaction, and life satisfaction (Duffy et al., 2014; Duffy, Diemer, & Jadidian, 2011; Duffy, Douglass et al., 2015; Jadidian & Duffy, 2011). Individuals with greater work volition will likely choose meaningful work, whereas decreased work volition may limit an individual's needs for self-fulfillment (Blustein, 2006, 2013).

Duffy, Diemer and Jadidian (2011) examined the relationship between work volition (WVS-SV) and career decision self efficacy, core self-evaluations, locus of control, career barriers, and the Big five personality traits among 312 undergraduate students from a large southeastern university. The sample comprised 32.1% male and 67.9% female students with a mean age of 19.47 years ( $SD = 1.56$ ), of which 61.6% were white followed by 11.4% African American. Duffy et al. (2012) reported finding significant expected directional correlations between WVS-SV and career decision self efficacy ( $r = .41, p < .01$ ), core self-evaluations ( $r = .53, p < .01$ ), locus of control ( $r = .22, p < .01$ ), career barriers ( $r = -.23, p < .01$ ), and the Big five personality traits. The results of which show positive career-development factors to have a significant relationship with the individual's work volition.

Duffy, Bott, Allan, and Autin (2014) examined the role of work volition within social cognitive career theory (SCCT) for students in science related fields. The participant makeup was as follows: 292 undergraduate student participants of which 22% male and 78% female with a mean age of 19.35 years ( $SD = 1.92$ ). Demographic surveys reported 64% were white followed by 11% Asian. They reported that students

with higher levels of work volition endorsed higher levels of science self-efficacy, outcome expectations, interests, and goals. Additionally, they determined that work volition was not a significant moderator, suggesting that varying levels of work volition did not predict students' relationship and strength within the SCCT model.

Duffy, Douglass, Autin, and Allan (2015) examined the work volition of undergraduate students in relation to social class, sense of control, positive affect and career barriers. Their study was completed in two sections, the first study focused on examining the four predictors of work volition. In the second study they researched the temporal relation between work volition with social class, sense of control, and career barriers. The participant makeup in the first study was as follows: 231 undergraduate student participants of which 58.9% female and 40.3% male with a mean age of 19.18 years ( $SD = 1.57$ ). Demographic surveys reported predominately (59.7%) were White followed by (13.4%) Hispanic/Latino/a American. In this study (study 1), results suggested that social class, sense of control, and career barriers were significant predictors of work volition.

In Duffy, Douglass, Autin, and Allan's (2015) second study there were 286 undergraduate student participants of which 82% female and 19% male with a mean age of 20 years. Demographic surveys reported a majority (59%) White followed by (13.4%) Hispanic/Latino/a American. They received a 74% response rate for Time 2, from a participant sample in Time 1 of 395 participants. They reported that Time 1 social class and career barriers predicted Time 2 work volition. Also, Time 1 levels of work volition predicted Time 2 career barriers and general sense of control.

Duffy, Douglass, and Autin (2015) examined the relationship between the four components of career adaptability (concern, control, curiosity, and confidence) and academic satisfaction. In an effort to understand this relationship Duffy et al. (2015) implemented mediator variables of work volition and career decision self-efficacy (CDSE). The participant makeup was as follows: 412 undergraduate student participants of which 28.9% male and 70.4% female with a mean age of 18.9 years ( $SD = 1.5$ ). Demographic surveys reported primarily (57%) were Caucasian and 18.2% were Hispanic/Latino/a American. They reported work volition to significantly mediate the control to satisfaction relationship and that CDSE significantly mediated concern, control, and confidence to satisfaction relations. These results suggest that undergraduate students feelings of career adaptability are in part due to their levels of work volition and CDSE.

Jadidian and Duffy (2011) examined the relation work volition to academic satisfaction and career decision self efficacy (CDSE) in a sample of 447 students at a large southeastern university. The participants were 65.5% female and 34.5% male with a mean age of 18.48 years. Demographic surveys reported 36.9% White and 13.4% African American. The results from their investigation suggest that work volition was moderately correlated with academic satisfaction and strongly correlated with CDSE. Gender and ethnicity were examined to determine their potential moderating effects. It was found that gender was not a significant moderator, but ethnicity was determined to be a significant moderator in the relationship between work volition and academic satisfaction. Specifically, the results indicated that ethnic White participants had a

stronger relationship with work volition and academic satisfaction than other reported ethnicities.

Duffy, Autin, and Bott (2015) investigated mediators that explain the link between life satisfaction and work volition through the framework of person-environment fit (P-E Fit). They studied 280 employed adult participants, of whom 135 women, 145 men with a mean age of 31.96. Participants were predominately White, European Americans (72.9%), followed by (8.2%) African American. Results from their study suggest that the reason work volition related to life satisfaction was due to higher levels of P-E Fit and perceived meaning of work.

Buyukgoze-Kavas, Duffy, and Douglass (2015) examined how the four components of career adaptability (concern, confidence, control, curiosity) related to the constructs of life satisfaction and the level to which work volition and life meaning mediated these relations. They recruited 492 undergraduate students recruited from various departments in a large-public university in the city of Samsun, Turkey. Of the participants, 184 (37.4%) were male and 308 (62.6%) were female. The mean age of the participants was 21.29 years (ages ranged from 18 to 27). They found that all four components of career adaptability were significantly correlated with life satisfaction. Additionally, it was suggested that life meaning and work volition each served as significant mediators between concern, control, and life satisfaction, and none of the adaptability components significantly related to life satisfaction. These findings suggest that concern and control over one's career may link with greater life satisfaction due, in part, to an increased sense of control in career decision making and increased life meaning. They did not find any significant gender difference within this relationship.

Isik (2013) examined the relationships of vocational outcome expectation to social support, which is an environmental factor and locus of control, which is a personal factor. Locus of control variable is a similar construct to that of work volition, in that it is defined as an individual's feelings of ability to control choices (Hammer & Vardi, 1981). The sample of 263 undergraduate student participants were selected randomly from Selçuk University School. Of the students, 112 were female (42.6%) and 151 were male with a mean age of 19.67 years (ages ranging from 17 to 23). The results indicated that perceived social support from family, friends and significant others were positively associated with vocational outcomes expectations, and reported locus of control were negatively associated with vocational outcome expectations. Further, it was found that family support was the unique significant predictor of vocational outcome expectations. Locus of control significantly predicted vocational outcome expectation scores as well. This research provides support for the interaction between the proposed research constructs of work volition and religious social support and their relationship with career development research.

**Work Volition and Gender.** Cheung, Wu and Yeung (2016) examined the relationship between physical and mental constraints (cognitive functioning and adaptability along with ageism) and work volition for aging workers. Additionally they investigated whether general self-efficacy moderated the associations between these constraints and work volition. They sampled 350 full-time working Chinese (aged over 45 years) in Hong Kong were recruited of whom 129 were men and 220 were women (with 1 participant not reporting). The mean age of the participants was 51.9 years ( $SD = 5.2$ ; ages ranging from 45 to 67). The participants were managers or professionals

(26.9%) and frontline workers, clerks, and non-skilled workers (73.1%). Their findings suggested that perceived age discrimination and cognitive constraint were significantly correlated with the construct of work volition. Additionally, they found that general self-efficacy moderated the association between the cognitive constraints as well as perceived age discrimination in the workplace and work volition. These researchers did not study the potential differences found within work volition and gender, which provides a gap in the literature to be explored.

Lipshits-Brazilier and Tatar (2012) investigated ethnic and gender differences in the perception of different types of career barriers among young adults in relation to their views of themselves as individuals and their views of their gender and ethnic group. Further, this study also explored gender and ethnic differences and their efficacy in coping with potential career barriers. The sample was 406 university students of whom there were 156 Israeli-born Jews, 133 Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union and 117 Arab-Israelis. The sample was 62% women and 38% male with a mean age of 24.23. The results from their study suggest that gender and ethnic group perceptions of the different types of career barriers and their sense of coping efficacy differ. The sample of participants rated their perceived group barriers higher than personal career barriers. The perceived career barriers were negatively associated with the sense of coping efficacy and consequently positively associated with non-productive coping strategies. However, the discrepancies were different in each of the three ethnic groups. As expected women groups, across all demographics, rated higher levels of gender discrimination than their male counterparts. These results suggest that women have more difficulties with perceived career barriers than men, and that they have



difficulties effectively coping with the discrimination. The coping efficacy construct is a similar construct to that of the operational definition of work volition.

The current literature detailed above reveals a clear pattern of the direct impact that the work volition construct has in relation to an individual's work and career-development. As these results indicate, work volition can be correlated with social class, a sense of control, and decreased career barriers (Duffy, Douglass, Autin, & Allan, 2015). The levels of an individual's reported work volition are in relation to positive career-development constructs like self-efficacy, self-evaluation, internal locus of control, life satisfaction, and career adaptability (Duffy, Autin & Bott, 2015; Duffy, Bott, Allan, & Autin, 2014; Duffy, Douglass, & Autin, 2015; Duffy, Douglass, Autin, & Allan, 2015), which yields a clearer understanding of interests, goals, and outcome expectations (Duffy, Bott, Allan, & Autin, 2014). Furthermore, current literature indicates that there is an increased benefit for work volition standards existing for individuals from higher socioeconomic statuses, higher educational successes, and being from the dominant racial group, namely European-American (Jadidian and Duffy, 2011). Where the current literature is limited is in providing a relationship of work volition constructs with religious-based variables. Similar to Duffy's (2006) recognition of limited available religion and career-development research and subsequent call for research, there is an expressed need to investigate these constructs in how they relate to one another. Additionally, there is a need to investigate further the relationship between the career-development constructs of work volition and perceived career barriers. Current literature has focused on these constructs' relationships with the undergraduate student population and not on working individuals. Further, the literature does not

reflect on how these constructs relate to an individual community support, as found through involvement in a religious community.

### ***Religious Support***

The general focus of research on the impact of religion has been primarily relegated to the effects on mental health. The identified variables of: community relationship, affiliation, and personal approach with a higher power have shown protective relationships with mental health attributes like depression, loneliness, self-esteem, stress and anxiety, and life satisfaction (Fiala, Bjorck, & Gorsuch, 2002; Greenway, Milne, & Clarke, 2003; Kirkpatrick, Shillito, & Kellas, 1999; Pargament, Koenig & Perez, 2000; Miller & Thoresen, 2003). The relationship that a devotee has with their religious community support has shown to serve as a significant coping mechanism especially during times of crisis and stress (Fiala, Bjorck, & Gorsuch, 2002; Maton, 1989; Stone, Cross, & Purvis, 2003). In a review of the current research between religion and career development theory, Duffy (2006) found limited amounts of literature connecting religion and career-related variables. As a result, there is an expressed need and call for additional research in the field to link these two factors and explore the identified positive aspects of religion on a variety of aspects in career-development.

Duffy and Lent (2008) examined the relationship of religious support to social support, career exploration, and career decision self-efficacy (CDSE) in a sample of 133 undergraduate students involved in on-campus religious organizations at a Mid-Atlantic university. The sample was 67 males and 67 females, with a mean age of 20.56 years. The racial makeup of the sample was predominately White (75%) followed by African

American (17%). Respondents also provided information regarding religious affiliation: 45% were Catholic, 31% were Protestant, and 18% were Jewish. This study removed participants from the study who did not identify religion or reported Atheism. The results from the study suggested that religious support positively correlated significantly with social support and CDSE but was not statistically significantly correlated with career exploration. This study provides a significant basis for the construct of religious support as a means toward meaningful career-development.

Horvath (2015) studied the interaction of calling and religiosity and its influence on workplace cognition and behavior. The study had 233 employed adults with an average age of 32.90 years old with 54.5% women and 45.5% men. The demographic makeup of the participants were predominately 76% White followed by 13% Black. Additionally, highest educational attainment detailed 53.9% participants having at least a bachelor's degree. Lastly, the participants reported religious affiliation: Christian (30.4% Protestant and 17.3% Catholic) and Atheists/agnostics (43.5%). Results from the study suggest that calling and religiosity both predicted an individual's job involvement and hours worked at the job. As a result, religious and spiritual calling has a significant impact on the career lives of the fervent adherents, and should be included in a holistic approach to career-development.

Robert, Young, and Kelly (2006) examined relationships between spiritual well-being and job satisfaction. Their study sample included 200 full-time adult workers - 83 men and 117 women from the northeastern United States. The respondents' mean age was 37.6 years (age range 18-76 years). The predominant racial group was majority White (89.5%). The religious makeup showed the predominant religion of participant to

be majority Christian (78.5%). The results suggest spiritual well-being, religious well-being, and existential well-being to be positively linked to job satisfaction. This indicates the relevance of religion, spirituality, and existentialism to career satisfaction, but recognition of the skewed religious grouping to be predominately Christian limits the generalizability to other religions.

Holt, Wang, Clark, Williams, and Schultz (2013) investigated whether religious social support had a mediating role between religious involvement and physical and emotional functioning, and depressive symptoms. The authors posited that religious social support could potentially explain the relationship between religious involvement and health-related outcomes in African Americans. The sample population comprised 803 individuals, of whom 52.8% were women and 47.2% were men. The average age of the sample was 56.01 years (ages ranging from 21 to 92). The study used a cross-sectional telephone survey among a national probability sample, and data was analyzed using structural equation modeling (SEM). The authors reported that religious behaviors and emotional religious support behaved as an effective mediator in the relationship between emotional functioning and depressive symptoms models.

Duffy and Blustein (2005) examined the relationship between spirituality, religiousness, and career adaptability using a sample of 144 undergraduate students from a private Roman Catholic northeastern US college. The participant pool was 59% women and 41% men with ages ranging from 18 to 22, and differentiated by year in school: freshman 40%, sophomores 19%, juniors 25%, and seniors 16%. The racial makeup of the sample was predominately White participants (80%). Results from the study suggested that intrinsic religiousness and spiritual awareness served as significant

predictors of career decision self-efficacy. Additionally, extrinsic religiousness was found in the study to be a significant predictor of tendency to foreclose on career choices. These results provide an understanding that individuals with a strong spiritual direction and are religious as a result of intrinsic motivation will likely be more capable and confident than the non-spiritual participants in making career decisions and may engage in career exploration.

An additional construct that provides complimentary research support for religious social support is that of social support. Research on social support also indicates its coping, assistance, and positive value in relation to career development and exploration. Research by Hirschi, Niles and Akos (2011) investigated the predictors and outcomes of active engagement in career preparation among 349 Swiss adolescents from the beginning to the end of eighth grade in a longitudinal study. The participant's average age was 14.09 years (age range from 12 to 16 years) with 49.6% females. The vast majority of the student population (81.9%) identified as Swiss nationality. The results showed that self and environmental exploration and active career planning related positively with career decidedness and choice. Additionally, results indicate that more perceived social support and personality variables predicted engagement, which is the precipitating stage for career exploration and development. The support and personality variables impacted outcomes, but only when mediated through engagement levels. This study shows the significant protective impact that social support has on career variables (Fiala et al., 2002).

Wright, Perrone-McGovern, Boo, and White (2014) examined several factors that influenced college students' career decision and academic self-efficacy. The sample

consisted of 486 undergraduate psychology students of whom 291 participants (60%) were women and 195 (40%) were men. The sample was predominately White (76%) with an average age of 19.17 years (ages ranged from 18 to 44). Their results indicated that perceived support and career barriers mediated the relationship between attachment and efficacy in students. As a result, individuals who reported having higher degrees of secure attachment perceived greater social supports and fewer career barriers. Also, these individuals will have higher efficacy in both academic and career domains than those with lower levels of social support. This study suggests the apparent relationship between variables of support and career self-efficacy.

Restubog, Florentino, Raymund and Garcia (2010) examined how types of contextual support influence persistence (reduced academic program turnover). They investigated the roles of career self-efficacy and career decidedness as mediating variables in the relationship between these types of contextual support and persistence. Their study employed a longitudinal design, and recorded responses over three times. They recruited 146 undergraduate students of who there were 30 males (20.5%) and 116 females (79.5%) with a mean age of 17 years. Their results showed that Time 1 student and parent ratings of support and Time 1 number of counseling sessions received were positively related to greater Time 2 career self-efficacy and Time 2 career decidedness. This in turn was associated with Time 3 persistence. This study further suggests the importance of social support in relation to career development self efficacy.

**Religious Support and Gender.** Duffy (2010) studied the relationship of intrinsic religiousness and spirituality to work values. The sample consisted of 265 college students from a large public Mid-Atlantic university. The respondents were

56% female and 43% male, with a mean age of 20.43 years (age range 18-32). They were predominately White (68%) followed by Asian American (14%). The religious makeup of the sample was as follows: 25% Catholic, 18% Protestant, and 17% Jewish. Results from the study suggested a weak correlation between the value of influence and spirituality with valuing service and meaning. This relationship was substantially moderated by gender and as such male respondents indicated higher levels of spirituality related to valuing influence and service and females had no significant relationships with any of the measured constructs. The relationship between these constructs shows a stronger mediated relationship for men over women.

Lazar and Bjorck (2015) examined potential gender differences on the Jewish version of the Religious Support Scale (RSS). The scale was administered to 525 religious Israeli Jews to investigate if there was a difference in gender regarding: (a) the dimensional structure, and (b) the perceived level of religious support. The authors also assessed for social support. A convenience sample of 538 self-identified religious Israeli Jews was recruited from university campuses and religious neighborhoods in central Israel. The sample consisted of 180 (34%) men and 345 (66%) women who ranged in age from 19–74 years ( $M = 30.9$ ). The authors reported that inter-correlation patterns were similar for men and women (Lazar & Bjorck, 2015). Significant gender differences were found in the perception of the level of religious support, where women reported more God support than men. Additionally, there was a significant function weighted positively on God support and negatively on religious community. Religious leader support differentiated between men and women, suggesting that more women than men tended to have higher God support and lower religious community and leader

support (Lazar & Bjorck, 2015). These results indicate the necessity to separate gender in the current investigation.

Quimby and O'Brien (2004) examined 354 nontraditional college women and found robust levels of confidence in their ability to manage the student role and pursue career-related tasks. The participants' average age was 38.1 years (ages ranged from 26 to 68 years), and the sample had an ethnic majority Caucasian (71%) population. The sample was divided into two groups, 160 women who were with a child at home and 194 who did not have children at home. The results indicated that decreased perceived career barriers and increased social support accounted for variance in student reported feelings of increased career decision-making self-efficacy for the sample of nontraditional college women with and without children. The degree of social support added to the prediction of career decision making self-efficacy over and above the contribution of perceived barriers. This study showcases the three variables of social support and perceived career barriers with self-efficacy as the outcome measure. Although this study focused exclusively on women and children, it is important in relation to the present study to understand the gender roles in relation to career development.

### **Summary**

The current literature researching the religious support construct and its relationship with career-development is limited. Research linking the benefits of religion to work and career-development is relatively new – spanning only a couple of decades (Duffy, 2006). The studies presented provide an understanding of the impact that religion, spirituality, and existentialism has on career development, decision, and



adaptability. One major area of concern is the lack of research detailing a more representative sample of demographics that could be generalizable. The majority of the research participants sampled provide roughly 5% or less of ethno-cultural religious groups. This becomes a key approach to detailing the study of religious support within the Jewish population, to understand their inherent nuances and characteristics found in this group. Furthermore, the present studies are limited in their direction of connecting religion with work volition and/or perceived career barriers. In sum, these studies independently are limited in generalizability due to their major focus on Christianity, and collectively are restricted in their research of additional career-development constructs.

### **Gaps in The Literature**

According to the current literature that has been reviewed, there is agreement with the findings of Duffy (2006), who stated that there is a need for additional religious and career research. Currently, there is limited research and this proposal seeks to respond to the psychological community's needs. Further, there is limited career development research relating to the Jewish population (Pirutinsky, 2013), and this study will also be filling such gaps in the literature. Additionally, since the Work Volition Scale (Duffy et al., 2012) is a relatively new measure, there is limited research regarding the construct. In consequence, literature that has been located has been connected via operational definitions, at times.

Regardless of the construct measured, there has been minimal research describing the association between the highlighted constructs of work volition, perceived barriers, and religious social support. As an example, Quimby and O'Brien

(2004) provide a similar study describing the relationship between perceived barriers and social support on the relationship with career decision self-efficacy. This study details a related theme to the current proposal, and links the variables to one another. The study, however, is focused exclusively on an all women's non-traditional student population. These factors make their findings limited in their generalizability, especially to the Jewish sample with gender as a covariate. Additional linkages have been seen in the literature regarding the identified constructs (Cheung et al., 2016; Creed et al., 2007; Creed et al., 2009; Duffy, 2010; Lazar & Bjorck, 2015; Lipshits-Braziler & Tatar, 2012; Novakovic & Gnilka, 2015), yet still the full proposed model linking all three constructs has not been executed.

Additional gaps in the literature exist for those studies not highlighting the gender discrepancies. These studies, some of which focus on career development related concerns, do not adequately provide information regarding the contextual factors that effect the marginalized populations, as noted in PWF research (Blustein, 2006, 2013). Gender, as a contextual variable, has also received limited attention with regards to the addition of ethnicity and religious based discrimination. The proposed study will attempt to identify the impact that perceived barriers has in relation to work volition and ability to make sufficient career choice.

### **Aims and Hypotheses**

The proposed study will test the following:

Based on the above literature detailing the contextual factors of religious/social support and perceived career barriers along with the outcome variable of work volition,

as well as the discrepancies between experiences of genders, this study will provide two aims and hypotheses.

1) The first aim will be to describe the associations among these variables: religious support, perceived barriers, and work volition. Specifically, it is hypothesized that religious social support (RSS) will act as a contextual resource whereby increases in RSS levels will reduce the impact of the perceptions of barriers on work volition levels.

2) The second aim will be to explore the impact of gender on the relationship of religious social support, perceived barriers, and work volition. The expected results from the second research design of a mediated moderation are hypothesized to show a stronger relationship for females over males with regards to perception of barriers and a weaker mediator relationship with religious social support. As a result, females will have a less desired impact from increases in religious social support than their male counterparts, which will negatively impact their work volition outputs. This hypothesis is due to the historical context of women having less confidence and more experiences of marginalization in regards to career development (Blustein 2013; Quimby & O'Brien, 2004). More specifically, gender roles and impacts as seen through the literature with religious/social support (Duffy, 2010; Lazar & Bjorck, 2015), perceptions of barriers (Creed et al., 2007; Creed et al., 2009; Novakovic & Gnilka, 2015), and work volition (Cheung, Wu, & Yeung, 2016; Lipshits-Braziler & Tatar, 2012), which have shown gender differences in each construct.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODS

This chapter includes the proposed research design, participants, data collection measures, procedure, and data analysis.

#### **Research Design**

The research study employed a correlational design that provided details regarding the relationship between the central factors, in order to better understand the attitudes and belief of the sample participants. The online survey included a demographic measure, along with self-report questionnaires that measured: religious social support, perceptions of barriers, and work volition. The surveys and questionnaires provided to the respondents consisted of instruments with acceptable reliabilities and validities.

For the data analysis, two correlational models were used, a mediation model and a moderation model. These models assessed and provided insight into the relationship between the central constructs, as well as identified demographic details. The conceptualization of the model was informed through a comprehensive review of relevant literature and the Psychology of Working Framework (Blustein, 2004, 2013). The research design was constructed to understand the contextual forces impact within

the Orthodox Jewish group's relationship with work volition.

### **Participants**

Participants were 252 Jewish individuals from the Greater Cleveland neighborhood, of whom 162 (64.3%) were female, and 90 (35.7%) were male, they had an average age of 40.76 ( $SD = 13.5$ ). Participants mainly self-identified as White ( $n = 230, 91.3\%$ ), but they also identified as Hispanic or Latin American/Hispanic American ( $n = 2, .08\%$ ) and other ( $n = 20, 8\%$ ). The majority of the participants reported being married ( $n = 202, 78\%$ ), single ( $n = 40, 16\%$ ) and being in a committed/non-marriage relationship ( $n = 10, 4\%$ ). Through 1,000 Monte-Carlo simulations using standard normally distributed dependent, mediator, and explanatory variables, the sample size requirement was set at a minimum of 150 participants. This minimum sample detected an effect of 25%, in roughly 85% of the simulations. By construction, this was similar to a *Cohen's d* statistic, with a detectable effect size falling near the small effect size of 0.2 cutoff, as listed in Cohen (1992). Therefore, the minimum of 150 participants was consistent with standard power guidelines. Similarly, previous studies, with similar research designs met sampling criteria with a sample size of 140 participants (Silva, Chu, Monahan, & Joiner, 2015) and 160 (Wei, Li, Wang, & Ko, 2014) respectively. Therefore, the sample size of 252 participants satisfied the threshold standard power guidelines.

Sample participants were located by direct contact with Orthodox synagogues and Orthodox Jewish schools requesting membership lists as well as social media closed "Jewish only" groups will be targeted (e.g. Facebook), along with personal contacts. The study primarily focused on the Greater Cleveland area, but did not exclude

participants from additional geographic areas that responded as a result of snowball sampling. All participants were over the age of 18 years, identified as Orthodox Jewish, and were employed or seeking employment at the time of the survey response. Individuals who did not meet these inclusion criteria were excluded from providing additional responses to survey items.

## **Measures**

The assessment tools used were as follows: Demographic Questionnaire, Work Volition Scale, Perceptions of Barriers Scale, and Religious Support Scale.

### ***Demographics Questionnaire***

The demographic questionnaire requested following information from participants: race, ethnicity, primary religious identity, Jewish denominational affiliation, age, gender, family size, level of education, and financial satisfaction (Appendix A). The demographic questionnaire allowed the researcher to screen data in order to ensure that participants who completed the survey met all necessary inclusion criteria. It also allowed the principal investigator to control for significantly different demographic factors, when necessary.

### ***Work Volition Scale***

This scale measured participants' level of work volition (Duffy, Diemer, Perry et al., 2012). The concept of work volition describes an individual's perception of their power and control in choosing a career and attaining decent work (Blustein, 2006, 2013). Higher degrees of work volition have been associated with increases in life satisfaction (Duffy, Bott, Allan, & Torrey, 2013) and overall job satisfaction (Duffy, Bott, Torrey, & Webster, 2012). This concept incorporates the variety of constraints that exist within an individual's context, such as financial stress, family pressure, and

discrimination (Blustein, 2013). The more constraints an individual experiences the less likely they are to feel volitional in work choices (Duffy & Dik, 2009). Work volition is an important construct to understand the pressures that an environmental context may have in impacting work choices. This construct's outcome variable was used to determine the relationship from perceived career barriers as mediated by religious social support.

Duffy, Diemer and Jadidian (2011) provided validity evidence for the WVS instrument through 3 studies. In the first study, an exploratory factor analysis was conducted with a large and diverse sample of 379 college students. Their findings reported that the WVS has evidence of reliability with two factors, volition and constraints. The scale had significant internal consistency ( $\alpha = .92$ ). In the second study, they recruited a new 312 college student sample. A confirmatory factor analysis was completed finding a final 16-item scale with strong model fit and internal consistency for both genders and races studied. In the final study, participants performed a test-retest after a period of six-months. The results indicated a test-retest reliability of .73 for the entire scale.

Buyukgoze-Kava, Duffy and Douglass (2015) provided validity evidence of a version of the WVS instrument to be used with Turkish students through confirmatory factor analysis. Through a sample of 492 Turkish students, they determined that a language modification of the instrument fit with original structure ( $\chi^2 (2.70, N=492) = 278.374, RMSEA = .059, 90\% CI = [.051 .067], CFI = .96$ ), and had good internal consistency reliability ( $\alpha = .89$ ). Their research with a sample of 1727 Turkish undergraduate students found WVS to possess adequate criterion validity with scales

measuring career adaptability and abilities ( $r = .34$ ), life meaning ( $r = .40$ ), and life satisfaction ( $r = .35$ ).

Research by Autin, Douglass, Duffy, England and Allan (2017) provided validity evidence for the WVS instrument through a longitudinal study. Their study was conducted over a six-month period with three waves of surveys on a sample of 267 undergraduate college students. The scale had sufficient internal consistency for the time 1 ( $\alpha = .87$ ), for time 2 ( $\alpha = .88$ ), and for time 3 ( $\alpha = .89$ ). Their findings reported that the WVS instrument possesses adequate criterion validity for each wave of surveys with scales measuring social status (T1:  $r = .44$ ; T2:  $r = .40$ ; T3:  $r = .40$ ) and career adaptability (T1:  $r = .33$ ; T2:  $r = .41$ ; T3:  $r = .46$ ).

Duffy, Douglass, Autin and Allan (2016) provided validity evidence for the WVS instrument through two studies. In the first study, they examined potential predictors for work volition with a sample of 231 undergraduate college students. They found criterion validity for WVS in comparison with additional scales measuring work social class ( $r = .25$ ), positive affect ( $r = .29$ ), sense of control ( $r = .63$ ), and career barriers ( $r = -.49$ ). Further, they determined that the scale had sufficient internal consistency ( $\alpha = .88$ ). The second study sampled new 286 undergraduate students and examined their work volition scores at two points during a longitudinal study. They determined that the WVS had good internal consistency at both time 1 ( $\alpha = .88$ ) and time 2 ( $\alpha = .92$ ). Their study found significant criterion validity for WVS in comparison with additional scales measuring child social class (T1:  $r = .19$ ; T2:  $r = .31$ ), current social class (T1:  $r = .23$ ; T2:  $r = .40$ ), sense of control (T1:  $r = .52$ ; T2:  $r = .65$ ), and career barriers (T1:  $r = -.40$ ; T2:  $r = -.47$ ).



The modified scale consists of 13 items and three subscales: Volition (four items), Financial Constraints (five items), and Structural Constraints (four items). Example items include “I feel able to change jobs if I want to,” “Due to my financial situation, I need to take any job I can find,” and “The jobs I would like to pursue don’t exist in my area.” Items are answered on a 7-point Likert-scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Individual response values were combined and standardized to create a single total score for the construct to be analyzed, as in Duffy et al. (2012).

During the development of the instrument, Duffy, Diemer, Perry et al. (2012) sampled 223 employed adults and found total scale scores to demonstrate good criterion validity with expected directionality to core self-evaluations ( $r = .60$ ), locus of control ( $r = .43$ ), as well as big-5 personality items for agreeableness ( $r = .32$ ), neuroticism ( $r = -.37$ ), conscientiousness ( $r = .20$ ), and extraversion ( $r = .23$ ). Additional research by Duffy, Autin, and Bott (2015) through a sample of 278 adults found WVS to possess adequate criterion validity with scales measuring work meaning ( $r = .57$ ) and P-E Fit ( $r = .54$ ). Research with a sample of 206 adults by Duffy et al. (2013) found criterion validity for WVS in comparison with additional scales measuring work self-efficacy ( $r = .27$ ), job satisfaction ( $r = .70$ ), and positive affect ( $r = .28$ ). Duffy et al. (2012) found good internal consistency reliability for the total scale of 13-items ( $\alpha = .84$ ) as well as within each subscale of Volition ( $\alpha = .90$ ), Financial Constraints ( $\alpha = .85$ ), and Structural Constraints ( $\alpha = .88$ ).

### ***Perceptions of Barriers Scale***

The perceptions of barriers scale (POB) was initially developed by McWhirter (1997). The concept of perceived barriers indicates career-related barriers that an

individual perceives to exist currently or in the future. These perceived barriers are not necessarily considered a result of factual information or rooted in reality. Perceived career barriers may influence an individual's assessment of their own abilities, which will therefore cause them to overlook work options and career aspirations (Kenny, Blustein, Chaves, Grossman, & Gallagher, 2003). Further areas of concern have been found to have a negative relation with career maturity, career satisfaction, career adaptability, and vocational identity (Gushue et al., 2004; Jadidian & Duffy, 2012; Rochlen, Good, & Carver, 2009). Recognizing how perceived career barriers can negatively impact career development is important to examine how individuals are affected, along with their abilities to cope with these perceived barriers.

The original POB Scale provided 24-items (8-perceived ethnic barriers; 9-perceived educational barriers; 5-anticipated barriers; 2-overall barriers). The scale was expanded from its original form to include additional barriers that could impact career choice based on contextual factors. Luzzo and McWhirter (2001) designed the current POB as a Likert-type response 32-item survey, with higher scores indicating more perceived career barriers constricting success in work. The 32-items are comprised of two subscales: 11-items assessing Career Barrier and 21-items assessing Educational Barrier. Sample questions from the measure are rate "In my future career, I will probably be treated differently because of my sex" and "My ethnic background is currently a barrier to my educational aspirations."

The survey response values were combined, averaged, and standardized to present a single number, as in Luzzo and McWhirter (2001). Since previous research has determined that there are significant differences between gender and race/ethnicity

(Lopez & Ann-Yi, 2006), this assessment tool was helpful in determining the impact of ethnic identity could on career and educational pathways amongst Jewish people.

Fort and Murariu (2016) sampled 215 adults and found total scale scores to demonstrate good criterion validity with expected directionality for results of POB (Luzzo & McWhirter, 2001) scores to coping with barriers ( $r = -.32$ ), educational goals ( $r = -.41$ ), as well as social support ( $r = -.19$ ). Additional research by Lopez and Ann-Yi (2006) sampled 174 adult Caucasian women and reported that both subscales of career and educational (POB: Luzzo & McWhirter, 2001) to demonstrate adequate criterion validity with social support (career:  $r = -.21$ , educational:  $r = -.40$ ), educational coping (career:  $r = -.33$ , educational:  $r = -.49$ ), and career indecision (career:  $r = .27$ , educational:  $r = .44$ ). Further research by Novakovic and Gnilka (2015) found the scale to demonstrate adequate criterion through a sample of 194 college students. Their results indicated POB to be validated with measures of negative affect ( $r = .20$ ) and coping with barriers ( $r = -.24$ ). Luzzo and McWhirter (2001) determined adequate reliability for the total POB scale ( $\alpha = .90$ ) and within the individual subscales of career barriers ( $\alpha = .86$ ) and educational barrier ( $\alpha = .88$ ).

### ***Religious Support Scale***

Fiala, Bjorck and Gorsuch (2002) developed the 21-item Religious support scale (RSS) that focuses on measuring the influence of religious involvement as a means of social support. This scale is measured using three subscales assessing support from one's religious leaders (Religious Leader Support), religious community (Religious Community Support), and God (God Support). Each subscale contains one negatively worded and six positively worded items, with each item rated on a 5-point scale

(strongly disagree through strongly agree). Individual response values were combined and standardized to create a single total score for the construct that were analyzed, as seen through the research of Fiala et al. (2002) and Lazar and Bjorck (2008).

Previous research has shown that increases in social support increases physiological health (Powell, Shahabi & Thoresen, 2003), psychological health and well being (McCullough & Larson, 1999), as well as lack of social support has been associated with increases in depression and psychological distress (Fiala, Bjorck, & Gorsuch, 2002). Fiala, Bjorck and Gorsuch (2002) used a social support measure from Cutrona and Russell (1987) to validate the RSS on a random sample of 310 church members, which showed significant and acceptable construct validity for RSS (Fiala, Bjorck, & Gorsuch, 2002). Additionally, through their research they determined that RSS demonstrate good criterion validity with expected directionality to social support ( $r = .41$ ), levels of depression ( $r = -.29$ ), and life satisfaction ( $r = .36$ ). Furthermore, the three subscales in the RSS (Fiala, Bjorck, & Gorsuch, 2002) showed internal consistency and reliability for Congregation ( $\alpha = .91$ ), God ( $\alpha = .75$ ), and Leadership ( $\alpha = .90$ ).

Willoughby, Cadigan, Burchinal, and Skinner (2008) evaluated the psychometric properties and the criterion validity of the Religious Social Support Scale (RSS: Fiala, Bjorck, & Gorsuch, 2002). They sampled 1,156 new mothers for the study that were predominantly White (78%) with an average was 27.2 years. Their results indicated that two factors best represented the RSS (Fiala, Bjorck, & Gorsuch, 2002), with God support as the most adequate and providing support through religion. The criterion validity detailed the RSS (Fiala, Bjorck, & Gorsuch, 2002) as associated with both

relational and health outcomes. There were no indications that race moderated the psychometric properties of the RSS (Fiala, Bjorck, & Gorsuch, 2002), nor did race impact the relationships between social support and outcomes. In addition to the sample's objective reports, the researchers provided a qualitative analyses, which indicated that religious social support is a salient construct in the lives of the women studied.

A modification for this scale, which was originally created to measure American Protestant participants, was completed by Lazar and Bjorck (2008) to draw on culturally Jewish relevant lexicon. This modified version of the scale will be used in this study. The instructions added that the term God “refers to the supreme power (HKB”H [a Hebrew acronym for The Holy One Blessed Be He], Hashem, Elokim, Creator, Master of the World, etc.).” The wording and instructions for the Congregational Support subscale and Church Leader Support subscale were also slightly altered for the present sample. Rather than simply translating the term “church” to “synagogue,” participants were directed to consider their immediate religious community instead of previous terminology for members of their church, also relevant spiritual leaders as oppose to church leaders.

These modifications allowed for additional scale usage to be culturally relevant to multiple faiths outside of Protestantism. Lazar and Bjorck (2008) determined that the measure was suitable to be used for Jewish participants with sufficient reliability ( $\alpha = .91$ ). Furthermore, through their research they determined that the modified RSS demonstrated good criterion validity with expected directionality to social support ( $r = .44$ ), levels of depression ( $r = -.41$ ), and life satisfaction ( $r = .33$ ). Further research with

a sample of 525 Israeli Jewish adults by Lazar and Bjorck (2016) found adequate criterion validity with a scale measuring social support for men ( $r = .48$ ) and women ( $r = .42$ ) participants.

## **Statistical Analysis**

### ***Preliminary analysis***

The study set an alpha level at .05 for all significance tests as a minimum criterion as a means of committing a Type I error, rejecting the null hypothesis. Data screening occurred prior to analysis, in order to screen for missing data, and outliers. This was determined based on the application of the Mahalanobis statistics that was used in order to determine whether the responses were significantly outside of the distribution, using the standard deviation cutoffs at 2 or 3 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2014)., No missing data were present in survey responses for this study. Additionally, for the non-binary variables kurtosis and skewness was calculated to ensure that data was close to normal distribution. Results used both adjusted and unadjusted data to display the impact of the logarithmic on the results. In order to determine whether data met standards of the normality of assumption, the skewness for each variable were as follows: WVS (*Skewness* =  $-.46$  *SE Skewness* =  $.153$ ,  $z = .0011$ ), POB (*Skewness* =  $.48$ , *SE Skewness* =  $.153$ ,  $z = .0009$ ) and RSS (*Skewness* =  $-.55$ , *SE Skewness* =  $.153$ ,  $z = .0002$ ). These scores indicated that the results met the normality of assumption standard. Furthermore, Kurtosis scores supported this finding, as well: WVS (*Kurtosis* =  $-.31$  *SE Skewness* =  $.306$ ,  $z = .156$ ), POB (*Kurtosis* =  $-.28$ , *SE Skewness* =  $.306$ ,  $z = .171$ ) and RSS (*Kurtosis* =  $-.32$ , *SE Skewness* =  $.306$ ,  $z = .149$ ). The mean, standard deviation, min and max for all survey items collected within the battery of measures was assessed,

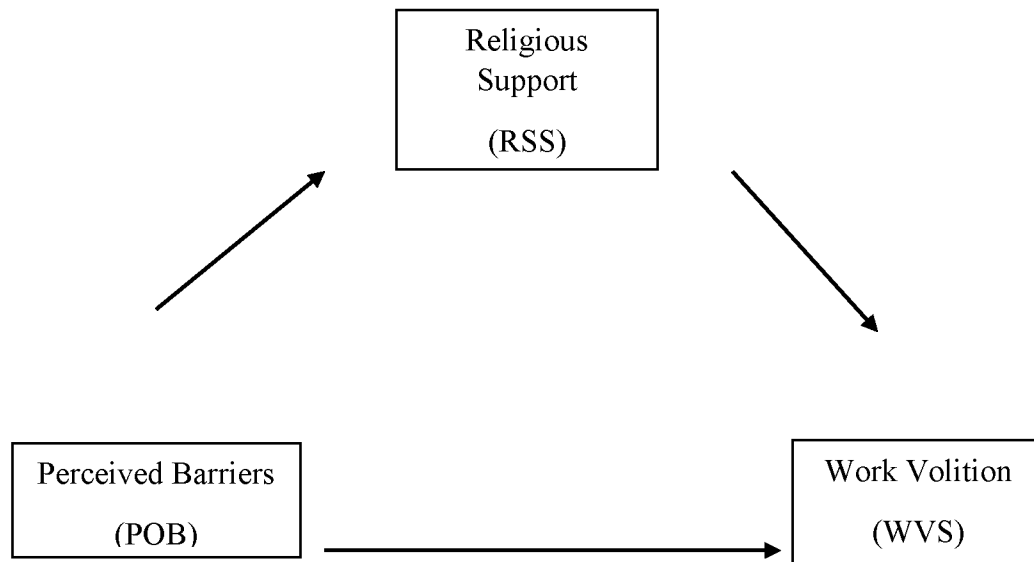
as well. Further, a correlation analysis matrix for the study variables was provided. Additionally, the variance inflation factor (VIF) and Tolerance was used to test for multicollinearity. VIF scores above 10 and Tolerance score less than .1 suggest there may be multicollinearity among the variables (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2014). Results showed a VIF score of 1.128 and Tolerance of .867, which suggested that data did not have multicollinearity. All analysis and calculations will be preformed through the SPSS software package 6.0.

### ***Mediation Analysis***

The initial mediated regression model was analyzed by way of three regression pairs of variables based on PROCESS Model 4 (Hayes, 2013) (see Figure 1.). Through PROCESS an examination using bias-corrected bootstrapping was used. In order to examine the mediation effects, the means of 5,000 estimated indirect effects was computed through the creation of 5,000 bootstrap samples using random sampling with replacement. If the 95% confidence intervals of the indirect effects do not include zero, significant mediation effects would be indicated. For all analyses, predictors and the moderator were standardized as z scores to facilitate the interpretation of the moderation effects. In all multiple regression models, the variance inflation factor value were used to determine evidence of multicollinearity.

Figure 1.

*Mediated Regression Model*



*Figure 1.* Mediation model illustrating the relationship between perceptions of barriers and work volition as mediated by religious social support.

***Moderation Analysis***

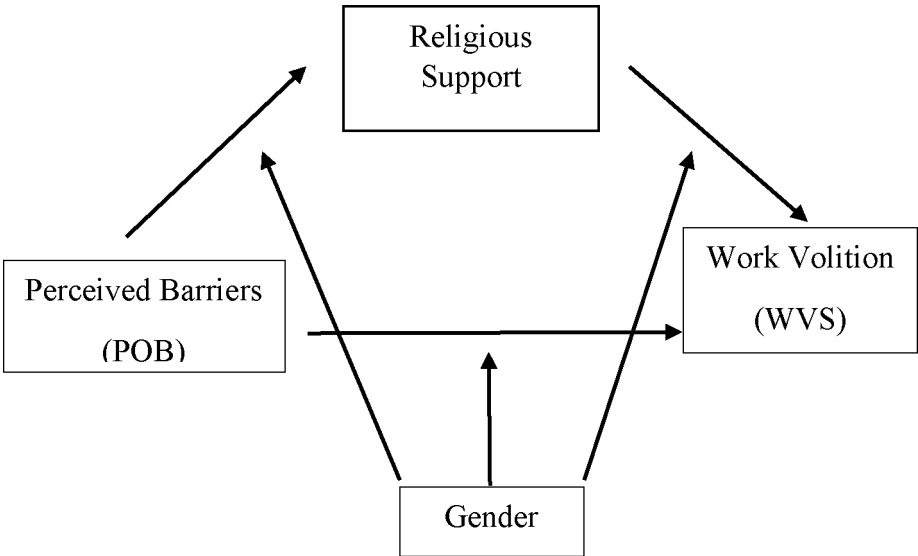
A moderation regression based on PROCESS Model 59 (Hayes, 2013) (see Figure 2.), provided an analysis of the moderated effect of gender on the associations between the independent variable (POB) and mediated variable (RSS) and outcome variable (WVS). Following this procedure for testing moderation effects, the study estimated the aforementioned mediation effect for gender scores and tested for differences from zero through bias-corrected bootstrapping. Furthermore, following Hayes (2013) method for bootstrapping, there was a total of 5,000 simulations and a 95% confidence interval selected for these estimations. If the 95% confidence interval



did not include zero for the 5,000 simulations, it would be determined that the moderation effect is statistically significant at the .05 level. If statistically significant results were found in the model, then additional simple slope analysis would be conducted to determine the impact of gender as a moderator.

Figure 2.

*Moderation Regression Model*



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*Figure 2.* Conceptual moderation model that includes the proposed differences that gender has on the associations between perceptions of barriers and religious social support; religious social support and work volition; and perceptions of barriers and work volition.

Figure 1 shows the conceptual model that was investigated to highlight the impact that religious support has on the relationship between perceptions of barriers and work volition. Figure 2 elaborates on this mediation model and includes gender as a moderating factor to identify the hypothesized gender divide as supported through

research in the Jewish community (Gonen, 2000; Shai, 2006) as well as in the career development literature (Blustein 2013; Cheung, Wu, & Yeung, 2016; Duffy, 2010; Lazar & Bjorck, 2015; Quimby & O'Brien, 2004).

The identified model with each variable was constructed utilizing the tenets of Psychology of Working Framework (Blustein, 2006; 2013). This framework, as instructed by the literature, included these variables and their hypothesized direction of association for the Orthodox Jewish community. PWF was employed for interpretation of the contextual factors as a designed impact of the work volition. The model explored the relationship between responses to Perception of Barriers Scale (POB; Luzzo & McWhirter, 2001), Work Volition Scale (WVS: Duffy et al., 2012), and Religious Support Scale (RSS: Fiala et al., 2002), along with gender as a variable. Gender has been seen through the literature as being a contextual factor for individuals in their relationship with the determined variables, as discussed previously. The use of these analyses provided the study with quantitative data measuring the trends of the participants on scales administered within the questionnaires. The study utilized questionnaires consisting of self-report instruments with acceptable reliabilities and validities.

### **Procedure**

The principal investigator used a web based survey system (SurveyMonkey.com) to collect anonymous Internet self-report responses. In order to solicit participation, the principal investigator connected directly with personal contacts, as well as Jewish community resources from Orthodox Synagogues and school contact lists along with closed Jewish Facebook groups. Solicitation emails contained information regarding

voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, participation eligibility, IRB approval, a minimal and brief description of the project, and a link to the survey webpage. The email also included a request to forward the solicitation email to other prospective Jewish participants who may be eligible and interested in participating. The email also included contact information for the principal investigator, dissertation advisor, and IRB chairperson.

The participant would first complete the demographic questionnaire, followed by the WVS, RSS, and then the POB. The total time to complete the survey took less than 30-minutes. Upon completion, participants were notified that they had completed the survey, which would be accompanied with a “Thank you” message. After data was collected for the critical number set for the study, analyses commenced.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to investigate how the central tenants of the psychology of working framework (PWF) can be applied within the Orthodox Jewish population. PWF (Blustein, 2006, 2013) espouses that marginalized populations have fewer privileges and perceive more career barriers than the dominant culture (Duffy, 2016). The relationship between perceived career barriers and work volition for marginalized populations has been explored and supported through the research (Cole, 2009; Duffy, Autin, & Bott, 2015). The present study examined the construct of religious social support (RSS) as a mediating variable between perceived career barrier and work volition. This study investigated this mediated relationship, along with identifying potential differences between genders, among a sample of Jewish participants ( $N=252$ : 90 males and 162 females) over the age of 18.

The first aim of the present study was to examine the mediation model of perceived barrier to work volition through the mediator of religious social support. Based on the available research regarding coping strategies and tools, it was hypothesized that religious social support would serve as a coping mechanism; such that those with increased perceived barrier would seek out more religious social support,

which is associated with increased work volition. The second aim was to examine whether the strengths of associations between the variables were influenced by gender.

### **Preliminary Analyses**

There was no missing data from the collected sample. Because multiple regression analysis will be conducted, I first examined the assumptions of normality. First, I examined whether there were any outliers in the data. To identify outliers presented in the data, a Mahalanobis distance statistic was calculated with a cutoff score of 13.82, as determined by the table of chi-square statistics set at  $p=.001$ . The results indicated that the highest value in the data was 13.00. This indicates that there is no evidence of any outliers present in the data. Next, I examined whether the data were skewed. Kim (2013) reports a rule of thumb that a skewness value greater than 2 in absolute value represents a substantial departure from normality. The skewness for perceptions of barriers, religious social support and work volition scale variables ranged from -.55 to .48, which indicates that these variables are not skewed. Third, I examined kurtosis of the data. The kurtosis statistic for these variables ranged from 2.67 to 2.68. These results fall within the range of cutoff scores provided by Hahs-Vaughn (2017), which is a range between  $-2/+2$ . Fourth, I examined whether there was multicollinearity in the data. To examine the data for multicollinearity for this model, the cutoff score for *VIF* was set to 2.0 (Hahs-Vaughn, 2017). The reported *VIF* scores for both of the independent variables (religious social support and perceptions of barriers) were 1.13. Therefore, the results indicate that there was no multicollinearity found among the variables.

Next, I examined the internal consistency and reliability of the test battery used (WVS, POB and RSS). The Cronbach's alpha results for this test battery, was as follows: .89 for the work volition scale; .93 for the perceptions of barriers scale; and .89 for the religious social support scale. These scores fell within range of suitable reliability estimates. Means, standard deviations, and Pearson correlations for all the study variables are reported in Table 4.1. I also ran a T-test to determine the difference between genders for each measure, as seen in Table 4.2. The gender score differences were not significantly different from one another.

Table 4.1

*Correlation Among The Studied Variables*

Scale	Mean	SD	RSS	POB	WVS
<b>Religious Social Support (RSS):</b> 21 Items, Avg. Interitem Covariance: 0.81 Scale Reliability Coefficient $\alpha$ 0.9576	85.19	19.31	-	-0.34**	0.38**
<b>Perceptions of Barriers (POB)</b> 32 Items, Avg. Interitem Covariance: 0.50 Scale Reliability Coefficient $\alpha$ 0.9334	133.8	23.37	-0.34**	-	-0.58**
<b>Work Volition Scale (WVS)</b> 13 Items, Avg. Interitem Covariance: 1.14 Scale Reliability Coefficient $\alpha$ 0.8888	66.49	14.75	0.38**	-0.58**	-

*Note.* N=252 \*p < .05. \*\*p < .01. Using bivariate regressions to create t-statistics,

the absolute value of the t-statistic for the correlation between POB and RSS is 5.65, for RSS and WVS it is 6.39 in absolute value, and for POB and WVS it is 11.22 in absolute value.

Table 4.2

*Equality of Means by Gender*

Scale	Gender		Statistic	Bias	Std. Error	Lower 95% CI	Upper 95% CI
POB	Female	<i>N</i>	162				
		Mean	134.40	-.02	1.76	131.00	137.75
		Std. Deviation	22.246	-.090	.913	20.335	23.906
		Std. Error	1.748				
	Male	<i>N</i>	90				
		Mean	131.23	-.06	2.48	126.43	136.14
		Std. Deviation	23.663	-.203	1.730	19.921	26.807
		Std. Error	2.494				
WVS	Female	<i>N</i>	162				
		Mean	66.25	.00	1.11	64.03	68.44
		Std. Deviation	14.143	-.071	.702	12.651	15.407
		Std. Error	1.111				
	Male	<i>N</i>	90				
		Mean	67.02	.01	1.67	63.80	70.28
		Std. Deviation	15.939	-.131	1.094	13.637	17.922
		Std. Error	1.680				
RSS	Female	<i>N</i>	162				
		Mean	83.74	.04	1.56	80.65	86.76
		Std. Deviation	19.905	-.105	1.053	17.751	21.915
		Std. Error	1.564				
	Male	<i>N</i>	90				
		Mean	87.81	.03	1.88	84.06	91.42
		Std. Deviation	18.017	-.132	.872	16.083	19.537
		Std. Error	1.899				



*Note.* N = 252. Using a T-test, means and standard deviation scores for all measures were calculated and indicated that gender differences were not statistically significant at  $p < .05$  level (POB:  $p=.273$ ; WVS:  $p=.693$ ; RSS:  $p=.109$ ).

### ***Mediation Analysis***

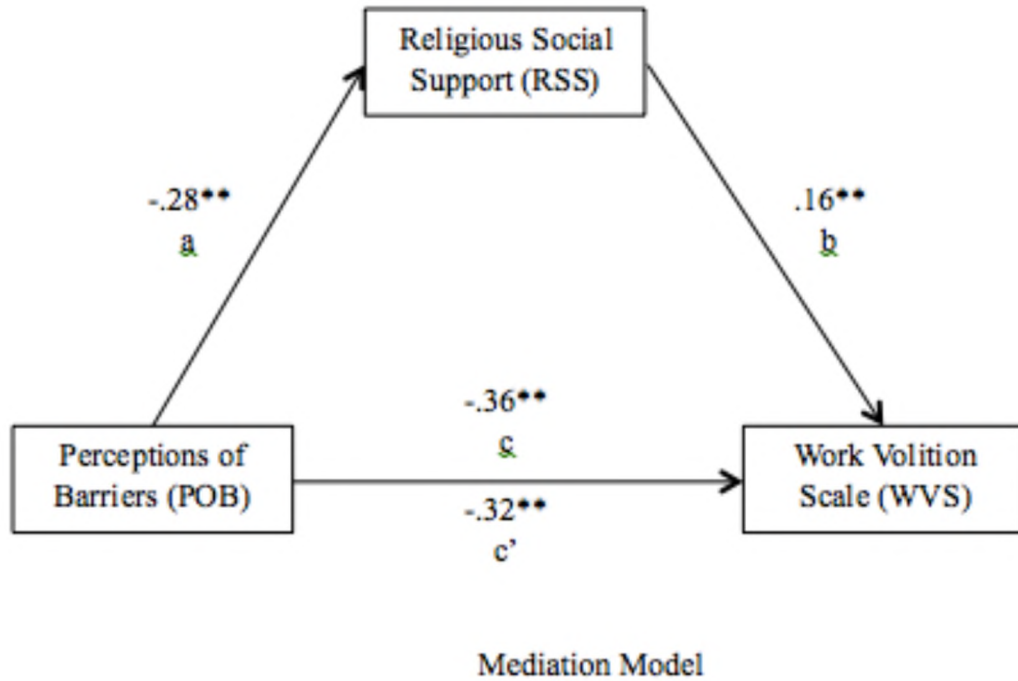
A mediation analysis provides a method for determining whether religious support serves as a mediator in the association between the independent (POB) and dependent (WVS) variable. The procedure and methods for mediation analysis, as outlined by Hayes (2013, 2015), were used to test conditional direct and indirect effects. To calculate the amount of mediation taking place, also known as indirect effect, I determine the total effect as a composite of the direct and indirect effects ( $c = c' + ab$ ). In order to determine whether the effect was significant, bootstrapping techniques were used in order to assess the conditional indirect effect and to calculate the index for mediation. Bootstrapping assists in examining the overall statistical significance and controls for Type I errors. Bootstrapping provides a resampling to determine effect size across a large number of samples, 5,000 in the current study. A 95% confidence interval (CI) was constructed, using a significance threshold at the  $p=.05$  level.

The results, as seen in Figure 3 and 4 (unstandardized and standardized), show that the (path c) relationship between perceptions of barriers and work volition variables was significant ( $F(1, 250) = 125.87, p < .001, R^2 = .33, b = -.36, t(250) = -11.22, p < .001$ ). This means that for every one-unit increase of perceptions of barriers there will be a decrease in work volition output by .36. The (path a) relationship between perceptions of barriers and religious social support variables was significant ( $F(1,250) = 31.94, p < .001, R^2 = .11, b = -.28, t(250) = -5.66, p < .001$ ). This means that for every

one unit increase of perceptions of barriers there will be a decrease in religious social support output by .28. The (path b) relationship between religious social support and work volition variables was significant ( $F(2, 249) = 73.58, p = <.001, R^2 = .37, b = .16, t(249) = 3.81, p <.001$ ). This means that for every one unit increase of religious social support there will be an increase in work volition output by .16. Lastly, the (path c') relationship (i.e. indirect effect) between perceptions of barriers and work volition, as mediated by religious social support variables was significant ( $F(2, 249) = 73.58, p = <.001, R^2 = .37, b = -.32, t(249) = -9.56, p <.001, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.39, -.26]$ ). This suggests that with the inclusion of religious social support as a mediator every one-unit increase in perceptions of barriers will result in a decrease of the work volition score by .32.

Figure 3.

*Mediation Model Analysis: Unstandardized Beta Coefficients*

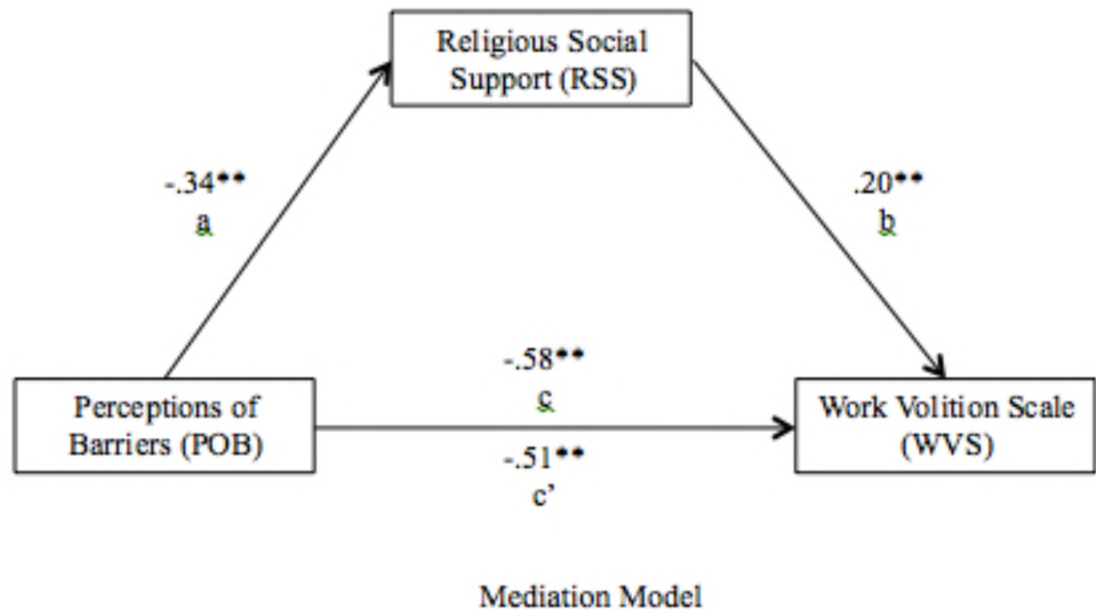


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*Note.* The coefficients are unstandardized beta coefficients.  $*p < .05$ .  $**p < .001$

Figure 4.

*Mediation Model Analysis: Standardized Beta Coefficients*



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*Note.* The coefficients are standardized beta coefficients. \* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .001$

***Moderation Analysis***

In order to evaluate the second hypothesis of a proposed presence of a significant difference between genders, three moderation analyses were performed using PROCESS SPSS macro (Hayes, 2013). Through Model One of the PROCESS SPSS macro, gender was measured as the moderator in three separate pathway relationships: work volition and religious social support; religious social support and perceptions of barriers; work

volition and perceptions of barriers. Model One provides a simple moderation analysis that measures a single moderator variable's ( $M$ ) influence on the size of variable  $X$ 's effect on  $Y$ .

A total of 5,000 bootstrap samples and a 95% CI were selected for these estimations. If the 95% CI for these estimations does not include zero, it is concluded that there was a moderation effect. The results from bootstrap procedure indicate that the moderation effect of gender ( $M$ ) was not significant for each path. For the interaction between religious social support ( $X$ ) and work volition ( $Y$ ), the moderator of gender ( $M$ ) was not significant ( $B=.10, p=.30, CI [-.09, .29]$ ). For the interaction between religious social support ( $X$ ) and perceptions of barriers ( $Y$ ), the moderator of gender ( $M$ ) was not significant ( $B=.07, p=.51, CI [-.13, .27]$ ). Lastly, for the interaction between perceptions of barriers ( $X$ ) and work volition ( $Y$ ), the moderator of gender ( $M$ ) was not significant ( $B=-.09, p=.20, CI [-.22, .05]$ ). This suggests that gender had no significant effects on any of the measured relationships between the variables of perceptions of barriers, religious social support and work volition.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION

The aim of the present study was to investigate the contextual factors that lead to the development of the Orthodox Jewish population's relationship with work. The focus was viewed through the lens of the psychology of work framework (PWF), which highlights the individual need for work and the role that societal constructs play therein; defining an individual's career expectation. Further, PWF espouses the core construct of work volition, which can be understood as an individual's ability to make career-related decisions despite external constraints. As has been noted previously, literature has shown that when minority individuals harbor aspects of perceived discrimination, they will seek social support from their own identified group (Goffman, 1963; Hobfoll, 1989). This study, in consequence, investigated the social support found within the ethno-cultural group of the Orthodox Jewish population which, to date, has had limited available research and data.

In order to accomplish this study, a survey focusing on religious social support was implemented to investigate the mediated impact of ethno-cultural affiliation (religious social support) within the relationship between work volition and the impact

of contextual factors (i.e. perceptions of barriers). Religious social support was identified as a potential mediating factor based on data found within the literature, which espouses the benefits of spirituality, religion and social support on work (Duffy & Blustein, 2005; Duffy & Lent, 2008; Duffy, 2010; Lazar & Bjorck, 2015). The relationship between work volition and perceptions of barriers has already been identified as having a significant inverse relationship; as levels of perceptions of barriers increase, levels of work volition decreases (Krause & Pickelsimer, 2008; Quimby & O'Brien, 2004)

There were two main hypotheses that were set from the outset of this study: 1) That religious social support will behave as a contextual factor for individuals and that higher levels of religious social support will mitigate the relationship between perceptions of barriers and work volition. 2) There would be discrepancies found in the model between gender experiences. The expectation was that females, who have reported higher levels of barriers in previous studies, would report less of a mediated impact and positive contextual basis when including religious social support.

The results from the present study supported the first hypothesis and showcased the importance of religious social support as a contextual variable in perceptions of barriers (POB) and in work volition scale (WVS). This result is similar to the research conducted by Blustein's PWF (2013, 2017), which posits that when there were significant POB, these perceptions negatively influenced one's WVS. This relationship, when moderated by religious social support (RSS) showed that RSS positively influenced one's WVS.

A suggested reason for this result is centered on previous research findings concerning social support, along with RSS (Duffy, 2010), which has found social support to be a positive coping mechanism for individuals (Constantine, Wallace, & Kindaichi, 2005; Gushue, Clarke, Pantzer, & Scanlan, 2006; Lopez and Ann-Li, 2006; Wettersten et al., 2005). The previous research showcased the importance for social support as a coping tool with racial differences, such as found within the research of the Latino population (Lopez & Ann-Li, 2006) and the African American population (Constantine, Wallace, & Kindaichi, 2005). This present study takes the identified coping skill of social support, as found within identified racial disparity, and broadens the coping mechanism to include ethno-cultural disparities, as found within religious identity. The work of Wettersten et al. (2005) similarly provided recognition that social support is a positive coping mechanism for the disenfranchised community members. Their results, however, centered on the young adult population found within the high school environment. This study specifically highlights the importance of social support for the next developmental stages, post-high school. Furthermore, RSS includes additional features of social support beyond the religious community surrounding themes of support from G-d or a higher power (Lazar & Bjorck, 2015), the more involved one is in a religious community, the more support one receives both formally and informally. With positive support from a religious community, including friends, family, mentors, clergy, and G-d, one is more apt to have fewer POB and a more robust and positive WVS.

These results follow the themes presented through PWF, and suggest that when minority groups are negatively impacted by societal constructs, they tend to require the



development of coping mechanisms that aid in their relationship with work. A strong coping mechanism has been found through the development of social support. The Orthodox Jewish community group established meaningful relationships with both their religious community membership and with their spiritual deity. This relationship with G-d is unique in that it highlights the development of meaning with a response achieved through religious observance, without direct feedback.

As for the second hypothesis, which queried whether gender differences would have differing results between variables relationships: POB, RSS and WVS, the current research showed no significant findings for all relationships. These results are similar to previous findings (Jadidian & Duffy, 2011), which identified ethnic factors to be a significant contributor to identity formation (i.e. contextual variable), whereas gender differences were seen to be non-significant.

The result from this investigation, however, is contrary to the hypothesis, which was based on previous research findings that differentiated gender responses (Cardoso & Moreira, 2008; Constantine, Wallace, & Kindaichi, 2005; Creed, Wong, & Hood, 2009; Duffy and Blustein, 2005; Gushue, Clarke, Pantzer, & Scanlan, 2006; Hirschi, Niles & Akos, 2011; Lipshits-Braziler & Tatar, 2012; McWhirter, 1997; Novakovic & Gnilka, 2015; Quimby & O'Brien, 2004; Restubog, Florentino, Raymund & Garcia, 2010; Robert, Young, & Kelly, 2006; Watts, Frame, Moffett, Van Hein, & Hein, 2015; Wright, Perrone-McGovern, Boo, & White, 2014). The results indicated that gender roles were not differentiated by direct involvement within the relationships investigated. This result is a unique departure from the expectations presented through previous research on gender, as previously noted. A possible suggestion for understanding this outcome

could be rooted in the ethnic makeup of the Orthodox Jewish community (Pirutinsky, 2012; Shai, 2006). Orthodox Jewish women differ from typical, non-religiously-affiliated women, likely due to their active religious community involvement. As a result, women may have a defined role in their community and family unit, which affords them increases in coping mechanisms, in relation to non-religious women counterparts. Another possible theory could be that Orthodox Jewish men may self-report based on ethnic contextual factors, perhaps based on visible external identification markers, such as religious appurtenances like skull cap (i.e. yarmulke), beards and long side locks (Pirutinsky, 2012). These self-identification markers may inhibit typical positive findings from previous research that suggests men to have increases in outcomes in POB, RSS and WVS (Cardoso & Moreira, 2008; Constantine, Wallace, & Kindaichi, 2005; Gushue, Clarke, Pantzer, & Scanlan, 2006; McWhirter, 1997; Watts, Frame, Moffett, Van Hein, & Hein, 2015).

### **Implications for Theory**

The Psychology of Working Framework (PWF; Blustein, 2008, 2013) proposes that career decisions and work choices are built upon contextual factors, such as: socio-economic status, race discrimination along with other identified differences. The results from this study provide additional support for the PWF by including perceptions of career barriers found within this ethno-cultural minority group. Previous PWF research (Duffy, Autin & Bott, 2015; Duffy, Perry, Laurenzi & Torrey, 2012) suggests the importance of individual perceived capacity to overcome barriers as a means of increasing work volition. This study provides support of group importance, and social support, as a means of increasing work volition. The Orthodox Jewish community has

shown, geographically, to be surrounding specific locations. This is due to the nature of their religious doctrines, which prevent automobile usage during major holidays. As a result, Orthodox Jewish people will gravitate toward a community that has a synagogue, along with other ritual sites, within walking distance from their home.

The unique quality found within this community has shown the importance of the religious social support feature for the Orthodox Jewish community. As it pertains to the PWF, the discrimination and marginalization found for this group creates a specialized approach to community-wide support and, potentially, a higher work volition outcome. Further individual member features, however, create a nuanced sub-cultural group based on hyper-religious group affiliation, which should be investigated further.

Another aspect of PWF is the importance of choosing work that is rooted in choosing a specific career based on the contextual, psychological and economic variables for the individual. In this study, there is an emphasis found in the psychological aspects found within the perceptions of career barriers. As PWF posits that work is an essential component of psychological health and well-being. As the individual seeks social support they are able to adjust to the mental challenges herein. Furthermore, these psychological concerns provide support for the recent advancement of the Psychology of Working Theory (PWT), or *decent work*, which highlights the importance of a safe working condition, without mental or emotional abuse (Duffy, Blustein, Diemer & Autin, 2016). Through the advancement of the PWF into a theoretical construct, other outcomes from this study highlight the importance of the contextual basis in the development and formation of work choices.

## **Practice Implications**

There are a variety of themes presented in this research that could be useful in a clinician's work. First, how a social support group could include a religious theme, which is an aspect of clinical training that is often times dismissed as a part of the patient's discovery and exploration phase. Through the inclusion of religious experience and expression of daily activities and rites, a client may find a balance in identifying a meaningful coping mechanism that could mitigate negative perceptions and concerns. Religion also includes a feature of spiritual connection with a higher power. This additional understanding could allow for a broader interpretation of the client's experience, which may grant a form of catharsis and coping to be realized not from a person, but from G-d. The clinician should encourage the client to explore ways to connect with their religious community, some supportive tools could include: charitable volunteering, attending worship services, connecting with religious leadership through seminar class offerings and office hours, as well as registering for a mentor-mentee relationship. This research, hopefully, reveals to the clinician that religion is a direct benefit to the client that needs to be explored.

With regards to the research of vocational calling as a spiritual pursuit, the clinician should be mindful of how the client relates to their profession on a higher level (Dik, Duffy, & Eldridge, 2009). When a clinician interacts with a client who is struggling to find meaning in their work, the clinician is encouraged to explore "transcendent summons" to a particular career. The current research further elucidates this aim and highlights the importance that members of the Orthodox Jewish community place on their profession. To many religious adherents, work provides a financial

opportunity to continue practicing their religion and supporting fellow community members to do the same. A clinician should be mindful of how the individual Orthodox Jewish member views his work and encourage ascribing meaning to tasks.

As a clinician develops a meaningful relationship with a member of the Orthodox Jewish community, this research should assist in guidance of the relationship. The clinician should always focus on gathering background history from the client's individual experiences, and should include this as a framework of understanding for the group. Through recognition of the religious social support that is often times shared within the religious community and the direct benefits therein, the clinician will identify how the client's experience is similar and different to the studied group, which could reveal additional foci within treatment planning. Further, gender specific roles within the Orthodox Jewish community should be examined through the framework provided from both PWF and this research. Through this context, additional exploration of client features should emerge to assist in career planning and development.

### **Limitations**

The current study had several limitations that could potentially corrupt generalizability of the findings. Firstly, since the Orthodox Jewish population that was solicited for participation was primarily found within the Greater Cleveland area there might be additional societal/community factors that could cause construct interaction and the findings, as such, may not be generalizable to other Jewish communities. This is based on the understanding that the Orthodox Jewish community absorbs elements of the surrounding cultural milieu and, as such, a community in another region may respond differently. This limitation could present an opportunity for additional research

to explore more pocketed, location-specific, Jewish groups in the future. Secondly, since there have been few studies completed on the Orthodox Jewish population there may be a limitation identified in the saturation of the sample. Though the sample size was determined as having appropriate and significant power size through computational analysis software, the sample size may be insufficient at properly describing the group's unique characteristics. Thirdly, as a result of Orthodox Jews having similarities in career-development (Gonen, 2000; Pirutinsky, 2013; Shai, 2006), there may have been a practical norming of responses that could belie the general responses in relation to overall career-development constructs. In essence, the Orthodox Jewish responses to the constructs (WVS and PBS) that were normed on the generalized American population may be insufficient in describing the Orthodox Jewish relationship with career-development.

Additional limitations could potentially be described through the potential overlap of the constructs of perceived career barriers and work volition. Although these constructs were seen to be separate in overall measurement and descriptive abilities (Duffy et al., 2011), the scales were nevertheless used in association for validation purposes of the WVS and could potentially provide overlap, which could skew results. Nevertheless, precedents have been used to study these related constructs in the past (Duffy et al., 2015), and this limitation may prove futile during data analysis.

Further examination into the study's 252 participants show additional inherent challenges based on similar demographic makeup. The vast majority of the population studied was white (91.3%) and married (78%), which may prevent generalization from findings beyond this population. Further, since the population studied was unique in its

focus and included participants who identified as Jewish, there was no baseline control group from which to deliver additional evaluation of outcomes. This also may have had limitations for establishing generalization from findings to a broader audience. The sample focused on attracting Orthodox Jewish people from the Midwest region, which likely does not accurately depict the inherent challenges of Orthodox Jewish people from more rural and/or urban communities, where this population may experience a different form of perceived barriers and religious social support.

Based on the research design and construct, there are essential limitations that are part of the social science construct. These limitations include the use of self-reports. Similar to countless preceding studies that have employed subjective assessment tools, there always is room for error and exaggeration of self-evaluation. As a result, self-reports are inherently limited. Additional errors in reporting may have also been experienced through the web-based medium used to collect response data. Individuals may have used a mobile interface, which may have additional challenges and complications. These possible errors may have been avoided through the use of paper and pencil techniques. Also, via this medium, a potential sample selection may have arisen based on attending only to those participants with Internet access and basic computer functioning skills. Therefore, through these limitations of sampling, an accurate representation of this populations may not be fully understood. Nevertheless, based on current sampling measures, this research on a population with minimal prior research is beneficial.

A final notable limitation for the current study is that it measured constructs that, although, independently are valid measures and the testing relationships are theoretically

sound, nevertheless these constructs have not been tested in a single model in relation to each other. This follows the additional challenges that were discussed in Duffy (2006) regarding the lack of research connecting religious constructs with career-development variables. This study utilized instruments and measurements that are rooted in similar psychological and career-development related constructs, but these measures (WVS, PBS, & RSS) have not been assessed for their concurrent use, therefore their concurrent relations is unknown.

### **Recommendations For Future Research**

Outcomes from the current study support the theories posited through PWF and previous research. There are additional questions for inquiry that deserve additional attention and awareness that could be beneficial to future research projects. As was previously noted, this study could include additional demographic groups of Orthodox Jewish people, as well as a baseline, control group of non-Jewish people. Through the inclusion of additional groups, sects within Judaism and Orthodox Judaism, and a more ethnically diverse sample, there could be a greater impact in the findings and support of future direction for career counseling intervention measures. Further research should including additional aspects of the gender relationship within the Orthodox Jewish community to better understand the mechanics of their association with world work. The involvement of additional gender research on this topic could reveal additional features and would provide supportive evidence through replication of findings.

Other areas to be highlighted for future research include a specific focus on those respondents who have identified religious intolerance in the workplace. By narrowing the scope of the investigation to these key members, perhaps via qualitative analysis,



emergent themes may exist that could assist in developing an understanding of why and how religious social support is a preferred coping mechanism for these folks, or otherwise. In some capacity, the Orthodox Jewish community has identified to not only receive threats from the majority population, but also from within its own group (Freedman, 2001). There exist many untold experiences regarding this sub sect of a minority group that could benefit from further research and investigation.

The current research identified that there was a negative relationship between the perception of barriers and religious social support. This finding suggests the need for additional research into the overall makeup and characteristics of the population. The basic assumption is that this negative relationship might be a result of certain personality traits for the individuals being investigated. For future research, it would be worthwhile to include a personality inventory to measure these individual traits, which could provide additional understanding for the impact that perceived barriers and discrimination has on the Orthodox Jewish community.

Another aim for future research could focus on a longitudinal study that tracks members from this group to determine the outcome benefits found from religious social support. As has been suggested through previous research (Pirutinsky, 2012), the Orthodox Jewish community has additional expenses that motivate the members to achieve high-income careers. Therefore, a more detailed analysis of this group, as found over a period of time, may reveal added unique qualities for overall career development.

Lastly, future research should focus on the gender roles within the Orthodox Jewish community. Since the gender score outcomes from this study did not support the expected directionality from previous research on the topic (Cheung, Wu, & Yeung,

2016; Lipshits-Braziler & Tatar, 2012), additional research would assist in delivering a more thorough understanding of why this occurred. Perhaps this could be attained through the inclusion of additional scale measures pertaining to gender roles, or by including a qualitative interview process for the population.

### **Summary**

Through this study an important findings have been revealed regarding the Orthodox Jewish community which, to date, is an underrepresented group in research. Findings from this study showcase the insular quality of the religious group and how their involvement with their fellow adherents and G-d may provide imperviousness to the barriers set from the dominant group. Through this contextual lens, a fresh perspective on this group's relationship with work and their community should emerge. The gender roles in this community also have shown to be different than the expected outcomes from previous PWF research, which ultimately highlights additional differences between this group and the dominant society. Whether females in this population feel empowered or males feel less entitlement because of their gender, in relation to typical dominant group norms, this group is relatively unique. This uniqueness should have the capacity to fill additional research pages and assignments for many years to come.

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APPENDIX A

Survey Instruments

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ (Insert numerical value)

Gender (Circle one): Male Female Prefer not to respond

Race or Ethnic Group (Circle one):

Black or African-American

White or European American

Asian/Pacific Islander-American

Latin-American/Hispanic American

Native-American

Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Religious Affiliation (Circle one):

Jewish

Jewish and another religion

Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Jewish Denominational Affiliation (Circle one):

Ultra Orthodox

Yeshivish Orthodox

Modern Orthodox

Orthodox

Conservative

Reform

Secular/no religious practice but still Jewish

Not Jewish

Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Family data

Relationship (Circle one):

Single

In a non-married relationship

Married

Relationship Status (Circle all that apply):

Separated

Divorced

Married multiple times

Widowed

Not applicable

Including yourself, how many people are you financially responsible for? \_\_\_\_\_

(Insert numerical value)

Education (Circle one):

Some Schooling Without High School Graduation

High School Diploma/GED

Bachelor's Degree

Non-Doctoral Graduate Degree

Other Trade/Industrial Certification

Doctoral Degree

Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Employment data

Employment (Circle one):

Not employed

Yes, part-time employed

Yes, full-time employed

Average weekly hours worked: \_\_\_\_\_ (Insert numerical value)

If in a committed relationship with two working-aged adults in the home, how many are employed? (Circle one):

Both full-time



One full-time, one part-time

Both part-time

One full-time, one unemployed

One part-time, one unemployed

Neither employed

Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

How satisfied are you with your financial situation? (Circle one):

Extremely dissatisfied

Dissatisfied

Neutral

Satisfied

Extremely satisfied

How active are you within your Jewish community? (Circle one):

Not active

Somewhat not active

Neutral

Somewhat active

Extremely active

How involved do you feel within your Jewish community? (Circle one):

Not involved

Somewhat not involved

Neutral

Somewhat involved

Extremely involved

What proportion of your friends are Jewish? (Circle one):

None at all

A few are Jewish

Some are Jewish

Most are Jewish

All are Jewish

Approximately how many hours in an average month are spent in Jewish activities:

\_\_\_\_\_ (Insert numerical value)

Have you ever felt discriminated against because of your Jewish identity (Circle one):

Yes

No

Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX B  
INFORMED CONSENT

Dear Participant,

This is a research project being conducted by Adam Cusner, a doctoral student in Counseling Psychology at Cleveland State University. Performed under the supervision of Dr. Graham Stead and Dr. Kelly Liao at Cleveland State University. The purpose of this research project is to examine religious resources that Orthodox Jewish people use in making career decisions with the goal of using this information to better counsel individuals on their career development. The procedures involve completing surveys that should take no longer than 30 minutes to complete.

In order to protect your confidentiality, you are asked to not include any identifying information such as name or social security number. All information collected from the survey will be kept confidential. All data collected will be stored through encryption software and accessible through password protection on both servers and computers. If we write a report or publish article about this research project, your identity will not be disclosed.

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You have the right to not take part at all in this study. Further, once you start the survey, you may stop participation at any time. If you decide not to participate in this study or if you stop participating at

any time, you will not be penalized. There are no direct benefits from participating in this study. If you have any questions about the research study itself, please contact Adam Cusner at: [ACusner@Vikes.CsuOhio.edu](mailto:ACusner@Vikes.CsuOhio.edu), 781 608 1487 or Dr. Graham Stead at: [G.B.Stead@CsuOhio.edu](mailto:G.B.Stead@CsuOhio.edu) 216 875-9712.

If you have questions about your rights as a research subject or wish to report a research-related injury, please contact: Institutional Review Board Office, Cleveland State University; [J.Jeziorowski@CsuOhio.edu](mailto:J.Jeziorowski@CsuOhio.edu), 216 687 3630. This research has been reviewed according to the Cleveland State University IRB procedures for research involving human subjects.

Your decision to participate will imply your informed consent.

I state that I am 18 years of age or older.

I identify as a member of the Orthodox Jewish community.