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Kofler, D., & Chen, C.P. (2015, October). *Career indecision among Israeli and Canadian undergraduate students*. Peer-reviewed poster session presented at the Ontario Psychological Association Summit on Innovation in Psychology, Toronto, ON.

Abstract

The present study examined the relationship between immigration during adolescence and emerging adulthood (EA) and career indecision attitudes in a sample of 37 Jewish Israeli immigrant EA students and a sample of 38 Jewish Canadian-born EA students. On average, Israeli participants were significantly older (22.4 years) than the Canadian participants (20.7 years) and they tended to begin their post-secondary studies at an older age (20.0 years) than their Canadian counterparts (18.7 years). Initial findings indicated that there was no difference in career indecision between the two groups, as measured by the Career Factors Inventory (CFI, Chartrand, Robbins, Morrill, & Boggs, 1990). However, closer examination of the Israeli group revealed that Israelis who had immigrated at an older age reported decreased need to explore their identity, interests, and abilities when it came to career decision-making (lower scores on the CFI's Need for Self-Knowledge subscale), whereas those in the younger Israeli subgroup were more similar to the Canadian group. One possible explanation for these findings is that the large majority (90%) of those who immigrated before age 18 did not enlist in the Israeli Defence Forces, whereas the majority (88%) of those who had immigrated after 18 served in the Israeli military. It may be the case that two to three years of military service enrich and aid in the identity development process of recruits. It would be of interest for future research to investigate the effect "gap year" activities such as military service, volunteer, travel, and internships would have on EA's self-knowledge and career indecision attitudes.