https://www.opressrc.org/content/vocational-psychology-agency-equity-and-well-being

In this literature review, the authors suggested that three themes arose from recent vocational psychology literature promoting (a) agency in career development, (b) equity in the workforce, and (c) well-being in work and educational settings. The authors reviewed research on career adaptability, self-efficacy beliefs, and work volition with the goal of delineating variables that promote or constrain the exercise of personal agency in academic and occupational pursuits. Discussing equity in the workforce, the authors analyzed research on social class and race/ethnicity in career development; entry and retention of women and people of color in science, technology, engineering, and math fields; and the career service needs of survivors of domestic violence and of criminal offenders. The authors also discussed the importance of educational achievement to the self-efficacy of poor or non-college bound youth, and concluded by discussing future research needs such as theory-based intervention testing and the translation of research into practice.

https://www.opressrc.org/content/how-could-differences-control-over-destiny%E2%80%99-lead-socio-economic-inequalities-health

In this literature review the authors explored the concept of “control over destiny,” defined as the ability of people to deal with the forces that affect their lives and control their living environments, and how it relates to socio-economic inequalities in health-related outcomes. Using an iterative literature search approach, they identified the main theories about how differences in ‘control over destiny’ could lead to socio-economic inequalities in health, and conceptualized these at three distinct levels: (a) micro/personal, (b) meso/community, and (c) macro/societal. The authors acknowledged that these levels are interrelated but found little evidence that they had been considered together in the existing literature. The authors concluded that a synthesis of theories could provide a new...
conceptual framework to inform the design and implementation of theory-led intervention evaluations aimed at tackling inequalities in health, especially for groups in low social positions.


https://www.opressrc.org/content/school-or-therapy-two-approaches-empowering-welfare-reliant-women

In this article, the author used ethnographic data from two welfare offices in Contra Costa County, CA, Lewiston and Strafford, to examine the effect of an “empowerment approach” to welfare programs and job placements activities. Each office had a different approach to empowerment. The Lewiston office encouraged participants to pursue education to expand their future work options. The Strafford office emphasized therapeutic services to help participants overcome personal difficulties before they pursued work and education. The author suggested that the two approaches were largely a response by caseworkers to differences in the attitudes and preferences of participants at each site. The author concluded that it is important to understand the racial/ethnic and cultural histories of program participants, to include qualitative information about participants in addition to “outcome” data when evaluating program effectiveness, and to develop culturally relevant approaches to welfare delivery to ensure positive and empowering experiences for participants.


https://www.opressrc.org/content/well-being-outcomes-career-guidance

This journal article examined how career guidance can impact the well-being of clients in both clinical and non-clinical settings. Through a literature review, the author explored both direct effects (e.g., providing emotional support, stress management techniques) and indirect effects (e.g., correlation between poor health and employment) of career guidance on client well-being. The author concluded that career guidance can be similar to therapeutic counseling and suggested its analogous effects on positive engagement in work and learning, which may be associated with health benefits. The author also discussed the implications for practice and identified the need for services in reconciling health and employment objectives.


https://www.opressrc.org/content/understanding-poverty-and-promoting-poverty-alleviation-through-transformative-consumer

Through the lens of transformative consumer research, the authors explored the potential for
expanding society's understanding of how individuals experience poverty and mechanisms for poverty alleviation. The authors expanded on the existing literature and proposed a framework for transformative consumer research focused on felt deprivation and power among those living in poverty. The framework suggested consumer choice, product/service experiences, consumer culture, marketplace forces, and consumption capabilities as areas of research that may provide potential insight into the alleviation of poverty. The authors concluded that future research in these areas will expand pathways for transforming the lives of the poor by alleviating stress, engaging marketplace institutions, fulfilling life aspirations, leveraging trust and social capital, and facilitating creativity and adaptation.

https://www.opressrc.org/content/validation-employment-hope-scale-measuring-psychological-self-sufficiency-among-low-income

In this journal article, the authors examined the validity of the Employment Hope Scale (EHS). EHS was designed to measure empowerment-based self-sufficiency (SS) outcomes among low-income, job-seeking clients. EHS captures the psychological SS dimensions of self-worth, self-perceived capability, future outlook, self-motivation, utilization of skills and resources, and goal orientation as opposed to the more commonly used economic SS in workforce development and employment support practice. Using exploratory factor analysis of agency data from the Cara Program in Chicago, IL, the authors identified two main categories, “Psychological Empowerment” and “Goal-Oriented Pathways”, which validated the EHS framework for SS. The authors concluded by discussing how to further validate this approach in measuring SS and the potential applications within workforce development interventions.


This strategy brief highlighted the Mobility Mentoring (MM) approach, which was created by the Crittenton Women’s Union to help low-income women attain economic independence for themselves and their families. MM is the professional practice of partnering with clients so that over time they acquire the resources, skills, and sustained behavior changes necessary to attain and preserve economic independence. The author discussed the development and individual components of MM and presented success stories and lessons learned from the implementation of the approach. Lastly, the author discussed the possibility of boundary creep when working so closely with clients over extended periods of time and suggested strategies to mitigate those effects.

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