

## **Psychological determinants of decision-making factors concerning the professional career of emerging adults**

The aim of the present dissertation is to analyze the relationship between selected psychological determinants and adaptive and non-adaptive factors in making career decisions. Due to the subject of the thesis, which concerns people who make decisions regarding their career path, the research covered pupils and students aged 18-28 – called by Jeffrey Arnett *emerging adults*. The current labor market requires additional training and changes in employment, which entails many transitions and also many decisions regarding career development, that is why we cannot talk about just one transition from education to employment. Adaptability plays an important role in career development. Career adaptability (Savickas, 1997, 2005, 2011) consists of planning, decision-making (knowing which career path you want to choose), exploring opportunities (looking for different career options) and self-confidence – a sense of being effective (believing that one will succeed in performing all the tasks necessary to achieve professional goals). On the other hand, the adaptability of career decision making is the ability to make career decisions after having carefully analyzed the information needed to make a decision, without unnecessary delays in starting and ending the decision-making process (Gati et al., 2012). Therefore, it is important to have a multi-faceted view of the decision-making process, taking into account many factors that are important for adaptability of the decision-making process.

An important element of psychological career theories is the personality of an individual, their emotional sphere, their aspirations that determine the pace and nature of the transition. The study sought answers to the main research problem, which was formulated in the form of a question: What is the relationship between personality traits, action control, hope for success and future time perspective and the decision-making factors about the professional career in emerging adults depending on the level of education?

In order to detail the main problem of this dissertation, the following research questions have been formulated:

1. What is the relationship between personality traits and the decision-making factors about the professional career in emerging adults depending on the level of education?

2. What is the relationship between the dimensions of action control and the decision-making factors about the professional career in emerging adults depending on the level of education?

3. What is the relationship between the dimensions of hope for success and the decision-making factors about the professional career in emerging adults depending on the level of education?

4. What is the relationship between the dimensions of the future time perspective and the decision-making factors about the professional career in emerging adults depending on the level of education?

The research project was based on the Multidimensional Model for Career Decision-Making Profiles, which is characterized by adaptive and non-adaptive factors involved in making career decisions. Adaptive career decision-making factors include: the speed of making a decision, information gathering and processing, aspiration for an ideal occupation, consulting with others, and the (internal) locus of control. Non-adaptive factors include: reliance on intuition, willingness to please others, willingness to compromise, dependence on others.

Based on this understanding of making decisions about a professional career and their determinants, the following explanatory variables were distinguished: personality traits, hope for success, future time perspective, action control. The research program included a study of 426 people aged 18-28.

The following methods were used:

The NEO-FFI Personality Inventory by P. T. Costa, R. R. McCrae, adapted by: B. Zawadzki, J. Strelau, P. Szczepaniak, M. Śliwińska;

The Hope for Success Questionnaire (KNS) by M. Łaguna, J. Trzebiński, M. Zięba;

Future Time Perspective Questionnaire (FTPQ) by W. Lens, adapted by: M. Cycoń, Z. Zaleski;

Action Control Scale (ACS - 90) by J. Khul, adapted by: M. Marszał-Wiśniewska;

Career Decision Making Profiles Questionnaire (CDMP) by I. Gati, adapted by A. Stachyra-Sokulska.

The results confirm that personality traits, action control, hope for success and future time perspective are related to the individual factors responsible for making career decisions in emerging adults. However, it should be noted that these relationships are more visible in the group of students.



The results also confirmed that personality traits, directly and mediated by action control, hope for success, and future time perspective, are related to adaptive and non-adaptive factors affecting making career decisions in emerging adults. The structural model for adaptive career decision-making factors showed that low neuroticism, low extraversion and conscientiousness are directly related to the latent variable - adaptation factors - in both analyzed groups. Neuroticism is also indirectly related with adaptive factors via action orientation during performance of activities. In addition, conscientiousness and openness to experience through hope for success and planning the achievement of long goals are associated with adaptive factors, and agreeableness through planning the achievement of long goals and action orientation during performance of activities are associated with adaptive factors in making career decisions.

In terms of non-adaptive factors, their direct relationship with neuroticism and low openness to experience can be noticed.

Neuroticism, with the mediating role of action orientation subsequent to failure and focus on current affairs, is associated with non-adaptive factors in making career decisions. Extraversion, through action orientation subsequent to failure and focus on current affairs, is associated with non-adaptive career decision-making factors. Moreover, extraversion is associated with the considered variable explained by focusing on current affairs and hope for success. Agreeableness and conscientiousness with the mediating role of hope for success are negatively associated with non-adaptive factors in making career decisions.

The results may be useful in designing career counselling programs and developing activities with young people making decisions about their career. A theoretical framework has been proposed that integrates the factors so far considered separately, which allowed for a holistic view of the process of making decisions about their career in emerging adults.

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