

A counselling model of career guidance for youth

Sanda Nicoleta Popescu •

Abstract

The dynamics of the labour market are characterized by several important aspects such as: the emergence of new trades and the disappearance of others, the emergence of the phenomenon of technology, of the tendency to replace the human activity with the computerized activity in many fields, the replacement of office work with telework, the replacement of the physical space of professional activity with the virtual space. According to these considerations, the school should provide support to adolescents by applying counselling strategies in their choosing of a career. The novelty compared to the previous studies is that the present research provides a dynamic perspective in counselling adolescents on the approach of a career, which is based on a quadric-dimensional model, founded on four determining vectors for the career decision-making: identification of the problem, analysis of the individual profile, analysis of the socio-economic environment and projection of the career plan (involving the completion of some activities), which can be achieved over time whenever indecision or any other change occurs. The counselling model sets out an applicable approach whenever the adolescent faces fluctuating occupational interests against the background of social and economic uncertainties plus the prospect of a poor self-knowledge of their own resources but also an insufficient analysis provided by the school in relation to the labour market. This research is advancing the hypothesis that counselling and guidance services are supposed to be valued as important by most educational factors. From this perspective, in the descriptive study undertaken, we engaged the methodology of the questionnaire and observation and the results obtained reinforce the idea that school is the main factor that can determine the career success of the adolescent. The quadri-dimensional model of counselling the adolescents in choosing a career can be an effective tool in terms of the ratio of the results obtained from the application to the effort involved.

Keywords: model, career, decision, adolescents, guidance

Introduction

The career involves a dynamic process over time, both at the individual, subjective level and at the organizational, objective one. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has defined the term “career guidance” as “services and activities intended to assist the individual, at any age and at any point throughout his or her life, to

• PhD student, University of Bucharest, The Doctoral School in Psychology and Educational Sciences.
sandapaduraru@gmail.com



make educational, training and occupational choices and to develop his or her own career.” (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2009)

In the literature (Luca, 2002) we talk about career guidance, career counselling and career education, concepts that are not synonymous. Career guidance is a very broad “umbrella” concept that encompasses both information, counselling, education and career evaluation. (Zunker, 2016) Career counselling is a psychological intervention, aiming to solve a specific career problem such as indecision, anxiety or academic dissatisfaction at some point. (Zunker, 2016) Career counselling is performed by the school counsellor teacher. The activity of a form tutor is rather an educational intervention, namely career education, which is meant to develop in advance certain skills and abilities of adolescents for the development and management of their own career.

In the Romanian education system, psycho-pedagogical assistance and school and vocational guidance services are provided through county centres and school psycho-pedagogical assistance offices (CREAC, Ministry of Education, Research and Youth (MERY), 2011) In the psycho-pedagogical support offices operating in schools, school counsellor teachers work with at least 800 students or 400 preschool children or in groups of schools/kindergartens. (MERY, 2011) Counselling and career guidance activities are also carried out by the form tutor who has a very important role, in addition to the organisational and administrative one, to inform the adolescents about their careers. We can intuit here certain limits in the actions of career counselling and guidance that a form tutor can have from the perspective of a summary training or even specializations held in this field. Through the optional subjects included in the curricular area “Counselling and guidance”, activities can be provided by a teacher who may or may not have psychological training. In view of the above, we believe that the school should have the primary role in performing career counselling and guidance for adolescents, through specialised individuals, with a number of students enabling the effectiveness of educational and psychological intervention. (www.edu.ro, 2019)

In this paper, we will address a model of counselling for facilitating the decision-making of the adolescents in the process of choosing a career by suggesting as a starting point an analysis of the needs of the adolescent age in relation to certain educational levers which would ultimately lead to a synthetic picture of the individual profile and its anchoring in socio-economic reality. The novelty in comparison to the previous studies resides in that the present research provides a dynamic perspective on the adolescents’ counselling on the approach of a career, which is based on a quadri-dimensional model, promoted by four determining vectors for the career decision-making: problem identification, analysis of the individual profile, analysis of the socio-economic environment and projection of the career plan (a temporal dimension that gives dynamics to the counselling program).

Theoretical foundation

Adolescence is a broad topic of discussion and reason for a great volume of research, especially for pedagogues and psychologists, but is often marked by conflicting opinions. In literature (Sampson, Peterson, 2004), the concept of career is presented as dynamic and complex, defined as a set of personal roles of the individual, throughout his/her active life, successive roles, following different trajectories over time. The career is not only about the individual's skills and abilities, but also about the opportunities he/she has, the choices he/she makes, the goals he/she sets for him/herself. (Lemeni, Tarau, 2004) The career decision refers to a process in which the adolescent is put in the position to select a career alternative from a series of variants available at a given time. (Bubany, Krieshok, 2017) In order to prevent all dysfunctionalities regarding a wrong decision on a career, we consider that the process of career counselling and guidance of the adolescents has a special role. The concept of career counselling and guidance of the adolescents encompasses all services and activities for the purpose of assisting an individual of any age and at any point throughout his or her life in order to be able to decide in terms of education, training and occupations, for the development of his or her own career. (Beach, Connolly, 2005) Over the past 30 years, in Romania, throughout the string of reforms in the field of education, counselling and guidance have occupied an important place so that they have been introduced as a curricular area. Within the School Curriculum for Counselling and Guidance for the Higher Secondary Education Level (Ministry of National Education (MNE), 2001) five general competences are provided for, three of which are aimed at specific professional guidance skills on the analysis of personal resources in drawing up a career plan, identifying and integrating communication and interrelationship skills in personal and professional development, building a school and professional career development plan. Even before 1998 there were concerns about the introduction into the national curriculum of objectives related to the school orientation of students. At that time, the school and professional guidance activity was taken over by the County Centres for Psychological-Pedagogical Assistance (CCPPA) (MNE, Order No. 5286/09.10.2006 for the approval of the Counselling and Guidance Programme, 2006) These centres began their activity with the beginning of the 1991-1992 academic year. Before 1991 there were School and Vocational Guidance Laboratories. These institutions were subordinated to the County School Inspectorates, under the guidance of the Institute of Education Sciences, and were based in the Teaching-Staff Resource Centre. By Order of Minister No. 3064/18.01.2000 (MNE, Order No. 3064/18.01.2000 on Guidance, 2000) details are brought regarding the two distinct directions through which the school and vocational guidance is achieved in the Romanian education system: through curricular activities (in counselling and guidance activities) and through extracurricular activities (especially in Psychological-Pedagogical Assistance Centres/Cabinets). Since 2005 "County Centres for Psychological-Pedagogical Assistance" appear (CCPPA) (OM no. 5418/2005). The main objective of the CCPPA activity is to create all the prerequisites for the harmonious development of the

personality of students/young people with a view to their integration into school, social and professional life. With this objective, CCPPA provides psycho-pedagogical counselling and school and professional guidance services through county centres and psycho-pedagogical support offices (www.edu.ro, June 2019).

School and vocational guidance becomes a necessary component of contemporary education based on the free economy, being a complex pedagogical action which ensures the training of the workforce and future specialists.

In Romania, school and professional orientation is carried out according to the national curriculum, in school or other educational institutions, through offices and laboratories of counselling, school and professional guidance. Outside the school, part of the complex process of school and professional guidance is carried out through the media (radio, television, internet), in the family but also through children's and youth organizations, etc. (MNE, Order No. 3638/11.04.2001 on the implementation of the framework plan for education in the school year 2001-2002, 2001)

The decisions that the adolescents make today have a different pace, the trajectory changes in career occur against the background of continuous adaptations to new working environments. (Birle, Perte, 2009) Decisions are related to school dropout, to today's reality, the adolescents are perceiving as increasingly difficult the usefulness of the school in their personal success. Therefore, there are changes in the perspective of the adolescents in relation to the trajectory of their own educational and professional career. In a more recent study by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Institute (FES, 2019) on a sample of around 10,000 adolescents and young people aged 14 to 29 in Europe, the main issues underlying the choice of a career by adolescents are analysed. The decision of the adolescents to proceed to a particular career depends very much on the socio-economic situation in the European area and is certainly particularly affected by the economic recession and the financial crisis in Europe. It has been found from analyses and research undertaken that the impact of the economic and social crisis in Europe is greater on adolescents than on adults, in particular in terms of their employment opportunities. (Betz, Taylor, 2001) The study also reveals that the nature of career choices in adolescents is greatly influenced by the country's education system, the way in which the difficult or easy transition from school to work is carried out, the vocational training system, the type of institutions on the labour market (fixed-term employment contracts, minimum wage, etc.).

Analysing the results of a study carried out in 2014 at national level by "D&D Research," "eJobs," and "Samsung Electronics Romania," which had as a main objective the identification of the fields and professions preferred by the Romanian adolescents, we noticed that, regardless of the field to which Romanian adolescents were oriented, there are significant differences in terms of their preferred professions and the real possibilities of the Romanian labour market. (D&D Research, 2014) There is even a saturation in certain areas, and as a result the adolescents are forced to engage in areas other than those for which they have trained in school, case in which they need expert

counselling in this regard. The survey was carried out on a sample of 8000 adolescents aged between 16 and 18 years from the following cities: Arad, Baia Mare, Bistrița Năsăud, Timișoara, Brăila, Buzău, Iași, Piatra Neamț, Roman and Suceava. (Samsung Study, under the name “Trends of Tomorrow” and the study performed in 2014, by D&D Research, eJobs and Samsung Electronics România, named “Tendințele viitorului” (Trends of the Future)).

Following the social experiences within the family, school, community and cultural context, the adolescents acquire their work values and naturally begin to become curious and wonder what occupations might allow them to implement their work values. The adolescents are beginning to be interested in that type of occupation which would cause people to look at them with admiration, what job would help them earn a lot of money, or what kind of job would optimize their opportunities to develop as a person. The process of translating the knowledge about work, preferences and values that someone has about work involves making good decisions about the occupational directions that someone follows. A recent study (FES, 2019) analyses the educational and professional career situation of adolescents and young people in Romania from the perspective of the factors influencing their career choice. The study, funded and conducted by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Foundation (FES) in 2018 and completed in 2019, shows that there is a significant correlation between the social status of the adolescents, the socio-economic indicators, the educational level of their parents and the place of residence (urban or rural). (FES, 2019) Therefore, the independent variables resulting from studies that investigated their influence in terms of reasons and career choices – the high school's chain/profile, the high school's background, the family environment, are considered to be important in finding a job. In addition, the adolescents also list: educational level, luck, knowledge and relationships. All these results from the research undertaken, as well as many other socio-economic and psychological considerations, lead us to consider that a program of counselling adolescents in order to choose a career is necessary and mandatory for the current conditions. In today's socio-economic conditions, the most common paradigm regarding the counselling of the adolescents in choosing a career is the one based on the constructivist perspective in education, which puts the individual at the centre, as an active part of his/her own construction. The approach of the learning process thus becomes a construction in itself, through the direct participation of the individual, through research, search, interpretations, structuring, reflections, correlations, its own meanings, having an “educational purpose of a formative nature.” (Baban, 2009) Along with the development of newer theories in counselling, centred on individual differences, there are also theories that propose alternative ways of working which consider the contextual aspects and offer different perspectives. (Amundson, 1995) The counsellors become co-authors of the career counselling and guidance process, they support the development by helping the adolescents to acquire the skills needed for a new phase of their lives. Another approach is that of theorist B. Law, who proposes the method of biography in career counselling. The link between learning and

career decision-making was analysed by Law and Watts in the development of the New-DOTS model, which focuses on learning about Self, Opportunities, Decision and Transition. (Watts, 2000) The authors suggest that the most important factors in the occupational choice are the interpersonal exchanges that take place in social contexts. Maree and Morgan (2012) underline the idea that the professional life of the individual is the result of the developments in the world economy, and the activity of career counselling must consider quantitative and qualitative approaches, the development of a theoretical basis, evaluation tools that allow the individuals to become responsible for their actions, to adapt to new requirements, make decisions in new contexts. (Esbroeck, 2001) From this perspective, the counselling process carries out the activity of structuring for understanding the problem, of using metaphors for discovering different meanings, asking constructive questions, creating a plan to achieve the goal, using narrative techniques, activities of composing a chapter of a person's life, creating personal projects. M. Coleman (2000) proposes the application of a socio-dynamic counselling strategy, based on three stages: cooperation in the working relationship built; counselling activity seen as a teamwork of two persons; the use of dialogue in finding solutions to problems. The coordinates of the organisation of a counselling programme are: the time allocated to the programme, the objectives pursued, the contents, the working strategies, the way in which the counselling activities are organised and performed, the assessment of the results obtained and the feedback received from the beneficiary. According to the latest models of counselling, an effective program for advising the individual in choosing a career travels through the following steps: analysis of the need for counselling (identification and assessment of needs) resulting in an agenda of the counselling program (objectives, activities, working methods, resources involved, ways of motivating the individual), the design of the counselling program, the development of the counselling program, its implementation, assessment of the programme. (Ali McWhirter, 2005). In a study conducted by Multon, Heppner and Lapan (1995) the stability of goals in relation to the preparation for decision-making in 196 high school students, aged 14 to 18 years, was investigated. The aim of the study was to explore the factors that will influence the decision-making process, namely the career indecision and planning the professional future. These factors are: the students' background, group of friends, gender difference and the specifics of the school profile followed.

In his research Erdei (2001) lists several factors influencing the choice of a professional career: school, family, economic units, media and specialized institutions.

The model of counselling approached by us in this paper aims to facilitate the decision-making act of the adolescents in the process of choosing a career by suggesting as a starting point an analysis of the needs of the adolescent age in relation to certain educational levers which would ultimately lead to a synthetic image on the individual profile and its anchoring in the socio-economic reality. In this research we considered as variables the factors influencing the career decision: intrinsic – motivational factors in

career choice and extrinsic factors in career choice – gender difference, family environment of origin, higher secondary education chain/profile, higher secondary education background (rural, urban).

The model is based on the constructivist approach in career counselling and has as a novelty element compared to previous studies the dynamic perspective in the act of counselling, allowing reconsiderations of each stage within the proposed quadri-dimensional model. The model is based on four determinants for the career decision-making: problem identification, analysis of the individual profile, analysis of the socio-economic environment and projection of the career plan (a temporal dimension that gives dynamics to the counselling program).

Methodology

In the context presented above, the general objective of the research is to describe and validate a model of counselling for the selection of a career by the adolescents, to evaluate the implementation of this model of counselling in order to become replicable, transferable, and to guide future practices. This model is based on the identification of the intrinsic-motivational factors of the career choice but also of the extrinsic factors of the career choice – family, higher secondary education chain/profile, higher secondary education background (rural, urban). Therefore, we intend to investigate the motivational sphere of the career choice for students in the final grades of urban and rural high schools, the theoretical and technological chain/profile of training. In particular, we aim to identify the professions to which these teenagers are oriented. This research is a descriptive study, undertaken between October 2018 and June 2019 in state education institutions in both urban and rural areas.

The variables of the research are structured as follows: independent variables (environment of origin and the profile of the high school; the gender of the participants; class) and dependent variables (reasons in choosing a profession and type of profession chosen (professional field); profession/ field of activity of the parents).

The central hypothesis of the research consists in the assumption that the application of a quadri-dimensional counselling model based on the identification of the problem, the analysis of the individual profile, the analysis of the socio-economic environment and the projection of the career plan leads the adolescent to make a career decision in accordance with his/her occupational interests. This research takes into account the following working hypotheses:

1. We assume that the system of needs and interests expressed by the adolescents greatly influences the decision-making process in choosing a professional career;
2. There are differences in career choice according to the school's background environment.
3. There are differences in career choice according to the family environment
4. We assume that the profession of the parents influences the choices that the adolescents make in relation to their professional career.

5. We assume that there are differences between the reasons for choosing the career in function of the high school profile followed.
6. We assume that there are gender differences in the motivational factors of a career choice.

Participants

The research was attended by 279 teenagers from Romania, enrolled in the rural mass education system (Dâmbovița), urban environment (Bucharest): “Aurel Vlaicu” National College in Bucharest and Cojasca Technological High School in Dâmbovița County, Tărtășești Technological High School in Dâmbovița County, and Nucet Technological High School in Dâmbovița County.

As a sampling procedure, the (pseudo-random) convenience sampling was used, by selecting the subjects from the students of the higher secondary classes from two rural and urban areas in the south-east region. The sample of the subjects is characterized by a balanced weight in the environment of the origin of the adolescents (rural environment - 136 respondents and urban environment - 143 respondents), the gender of the participants and their age (15 - 18 years). From the point of view of the age variable, the calculated average is 16.7 and the calculated standard deviation is 1.3. In terms of variables, the following aspects will be taken into account: the distribution of the students by high school/school class; gender membership; age; the student's residence environment: urban/rural; the level of culture/education of the parents; the parents' profession. The sample structure is shown in the table below:

Table 1. Descriptive statistics for adolescents' sample (independent variables)

| | <i>N</i> | <i>Percent</i> |
|---|----------|----------------|
| School Supply Chain | | |
| Theoretical | 143 | 51,25% |
| Technological | 136 | 48,75% |
| School Profile | | |
| Real | 64 | 23,27% |
| Humanist | 79 | 28,72% |
| Natural Resources and Environmental Protection | 68 | 24,37% |
| Technical | 68 | 24,37% |
| Specialization | | |
| Mathematical-Informatics | 64 | 23,27% |
| Philology | 79 | 28,31% |
| Agriculture | 38 | 13,62% |
| Textile and Leather Industry | 31 | 11,11% |
| Mechanics | 37 | 13,26% |
| Food Industry | 30 | 10,75% |

| The Geographical Environment of Origin | | |
|---|-----|--------|
| Urban | 143 | 51,25% |
| Rural | 136 | 48,74% |
| Gender | | |
| Male | 145 | 51,97% |
| Female | 134 | 48,02% |
| Age | | |
| 15-16 years old | 104 | 37,27% |
| 16-17 years old | 93 | 33,33% |
| 17-18 years old | 82 | 29,39% |

Research methods/instruments

The collection of the data necessary for the research was carried out with the help of two tools: "Questionnaire for school and professional options in adolescents" (Tomşa, 1999) and "Holland's Interest Inventory" (Holland, 2009). "Questionnaire for school and professional options in adolescents" (Tomşa, 1999) is structured into 15 questions with answers of choice or of the open-question type which aimed at highlighting certain aspects of the process of choosing a career path (studies and professional fields) by adolescents in grades IX-XII. The first part of the questionnaire is dedicated to demographic questions. This segment is followed by questions about the choice regarding an educational path, the nomination of the higher education institution the courses of which he/she would attend, the argumentation regarding the choice of a field of study. Subsequently, information was requested regarding the choice of a future profession, the reasons for the decision or the indecision to choose a profession. The results obtained following the application of the test will guide us in approaching a program of counselling of the adolescents in their choosing of a career. The last part of the questionnaire refers to the way in which the adolescent perceives the influence of the family on the decision to choose an educational and professional path. The adolescent expresses his/her agreement or disagreement with the parents' choices regarding his/her possible career, motivated by certain aspects which the subject should formulate.

The second instrument, J. Holland's Inventory of Interests, is based on the fact that interests represent preferences for certain types of tasks of the activities performed by an individual. (Holland, 2009) The six dimensions of the model are: realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising and conventional.

Procedure

In the second part of the research, depending on the results of the application of the two instruments (questionnaires), as a result of the conclusions drawn, we proposed and applied a formative counselling programme for 30 adolescents from both rural and urban areas, randomly designated from the large sample of 279 adolescents, who were given

the two research instruments. The career counselling program applied by us ran over 38 hours, distributed over a 10-week period. The program was applied by the school counsellor teachers, with the support of the form tutors.

The career counselling program meets the needs of self-knowledge and self-motivation of the adolescents in the process of understanding and raising awareness of the importance of one's own potential in trying to build relationships with others and a successful professional career. The counselling model applied is based on the objective of supporting the adolescents in the decision-making process on an educational and professional career, to prevent the phenomenon of indecision, being correlated with the hypothesis according to which we assume that the application of a quadri-dimensional counselling model based on the identification of the problem, the analysis of the individual profile, the analysis of the socio-economic environment and the projection of the career plan (time dimension), determines the best career decision reached by the adolescent at some point in life. Please observe in the following the stages of the quadri-dimensional model for the counselling of the adolescents in choosing a career applied in the research.

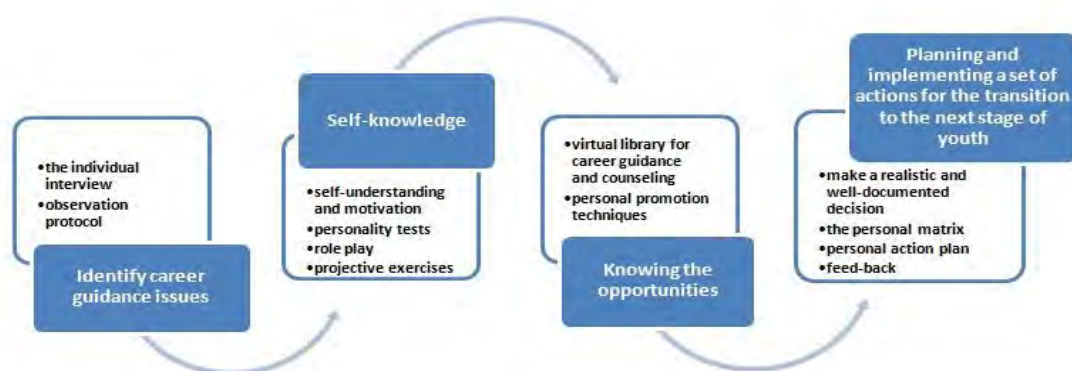


Figure 1. The four-dimensional model of career guidance for youth

The proposed counselling model has the following stages:

1. Identification of the career guidance problems faced by the adolescent. The tool used was the individual career guidance interview and the school counsellor captured the information in an observation protocol. (Rotaru, 2002)
2. Self-knowledge - self-understanding and motivation. The working tools used were: "Star of my messages;" "Questionnaire on aspects regarding somebody's own person (Self-concept questionnaire);" "Map of the heart;" "The Tree of Personal Achievement;" "The Story of Childhood;" "The story of my roles (a projective exercise);" "Myers-Briggs Type Indicator" personality inventory (Prem, 2006); a

Career test that measures the adolescent's proximity to certain areas of activity (<https://www.careerexplorer.com/career-test/>)

3. Knowledge on opportunities: understanding the labour market and the opportunities offered by the legislation in force. In this stage the “Virtual Library of Career Guidance and Counselling” was established with the help of the counsellor teacher. An interactive workshop was supported by a recruitment specialist in which personal promotional tools and techniques were presented and used (letter of intent, CV, business card, personal portfolio).
4. Planning and implementing a set of actions for the transition of the adolescent to the next stage. In this stage, the “Personal Matrix” was structured, which led to the realistic and well-documented decision. This stage was a feedback provided following the application of the previous stages. The adolescents in the sample developed the action plan for their career. This tool constituted the way to assess the effectiveness and effectiveness of the.

Results

The processing of data was performed in SPSS Statistics 17.0 for Windows.

Depending on the nature of the hypotheses, we calculated different statistical indices. In order to be verified, in the case of correlational hypotheses (hypothesis 1 which states that “the system of needs and interests expressed by the adolescents greatly influences the decision-making process in choosing a professional career” and hypothesis 4 which states that “the profession of their parents influences the choices that adolescents make in relation to their professional career.”), we calculated the Pearson correlation coefficient (r). This indicated that there is a correlation between the variables included within the hypotheses. The value $r[0.6]$ indicates a good, statistically significant correlation ($p < 0.001$). Therefore, the system of needs and interests expressed by the adolescents greatly influences the decision-making process in choosing a career.

Table 2. Averages, standard deviations and t test for Holland interest indicators (N=279)

| Measured variable | s.s.c. | a | s.d | t | d |
|-------------------|-----------------|-------|------|-------|------|
| Realistic | Congruence | 17,30 | 9,67 | 0,873 | 0,14 |
| | Consistency | 16,80 | 8,42 | 2,786 | 0,21 |
| | Differentiation | 7,42 | 3,78 | 0,732 | 0,78 |
| | Identity | 7,89 | 4,97 | 0,378 | 0,83 |
| Investigative | Congruence | 20,62 | 8,86 | 2,321 | 0,43 |
| | Consistency | 20,12 | 8,53 | 0,456 | 0,48 |
| | Differentiation | 17,57 | 7,18 | 0,921 | 0,35 |
| | Identity | 15,89 | 4,33 | 0,357 | 0,28 |
| Artistic | Congruence | 20,40 | 9,90 | 4,038 | 0,42 |
| | Consistency | 15,76 | 4,78 | 4,731 | 0,38 |

| | | | | | |
|--------------|-----------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | Differentiation | 17,23 | 6,98 | 3,082 | 0,27 |
| | Identity | 18,23 | 5,43 | 2,782 | 0,48 |
| Social | Congruence | 26,74 | 10,39 | 0,711 | 0,59 |
| | Consistency | 22,14 | 7,89 | 0,782 | 0,62 |
| | Differentiation | 24,08 | 9,97 | 0,832 | 0,81 |
| | Identity | 23,14 | 8,45 | 0,473 | 0,85 |
| Enterprising | Congruence | 24,25 | 9,39 | 0,276 | 0,54 |
| | Consistency | 23,78 | 8,69 | 0,653 | 0,78 |
| | Differentiation | 20,46 | 7,78 | 2,823 | 0,42 |
| | Identity | 20,78 | 7,91 | 3,016 | 0,567 |
| Conventional | Congruence | 21,42 | 9,97 | 4,342 | 0,657 |
| | Consistency | 21,39 | 9,83 | 4,089 | 0,765 |
| | Differentiation | 20,67 | 9,03 | 3,789 | 0,549 |
| | Identity | 19,48 | 8,54 | 2,456 | 0,643 |

A first analysis of the data collected following the application of the “School and Vocational Options Questionnaire” resides in the correlation of the adolescents' choices with the interests expressed and the professions of their parents, grouped by categories, according to the European classifications established by Classification of European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations (ESCO). These data are correlated to verify the hypotheses 1, 3 and 4, respectively, “the system of needs and interests expressed by the adolescents greatly influences the decision-making process in choosing a professional career;” “there are differences in career choice depending on the family environment” and “the profession of their parents influences the choices that adolescents make in relation to their professional career.”

We have chosen seven categories according to the current professions, which can be included in each category, as follows: the category in which the use of the word predominates as a form of expression, named *Words* category; another category in which search and experimentation activities predominate, called the *Experimenting* category; the category of the professions involving organization, meticulousness, structuring, called the *Organizational* category; a category that includes activities oriented on achieving the objectives and on the efficiency of the resources, called the *Business* category; another category in which the professions rely on interrelationship, communication skills, called the *Social* category; the penultimate category of professions based on physical activity, called the *Physical* category, and the last category, represented by the arts, the *Art* category. (European Commission, 2017) The table below shows the degree of consistency between the professions of the parents and the choices made by the adolescents according to the interests expressed. In order to clarify the direction of the correlation (the existence of statistically significant differences) between the two nominal variables (hypothesis 4) we resorted to the cross-tabulation table and the calculation of the Chi-Square coefficient (χ^2).

Table 3. Cross-tabulation - Correlation among the dependent variable: the profession chosen by the adolescent / the profession of the parent

| <i>Parents</i> | <i>Words</i> | <i>Physical</i> | <i>Experimenting</i> | <i>Organizational</i> | <i>Business</i> | <i>Social</i> | <i>Art</i> | <i>Total</i> |
|--------------------|--------------|-----------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|---------------|------------|--------------|
| <i>Adolescents</i> | | | | | | | | |
| Words | 4 | 6 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 18 |
| Art | 5 | 39 | 3 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 0 | 71 |
| Physical | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 14 |
| Experimental | 4 | 12 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 31 |
| Organizational | 6 | 15 | 6 | 15 | 10 | 9 | 7 | 68 |
| Business | 6 | 14 | 9 | 12 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 52 |
| Social | 2 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 10 | 2 | 25 |
| Total | 29 | 91 | 28 | 43 | 29 | 37 | 22 | 279 |

The conclusions in Table 3 indicate the fact that there is not a constant of the adolescents' options regarding the orientation in their professional career, the subjects following, more or less, the parental model.

Table 4. Chi-Square Tests

| | Value | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-Sided) |
|--------------------|--------------------|----|-----------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 5,303 ^a | 2 | 0,71 |
| Likelihood Ratio | 5,352 | 2 | 0,69 |
| Linear-by-Linear | | | |
| Association | 5,211 | 1 | 0,22 |
| N of Valid Cases | 279 | | |

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 24,00.

The results may be correlated with the profiles of the educational institutions where the teenagers being part of the sample of our research study. From this perspective, we can conclude that the most appreciated categories of professions are in descending order: Art, Organizational, Business, Experimental, Social, Words, Physical. In other words, urban and rural adolescents choose crafts such as: cartoonist, painter, designer, visual arts specialists, architect, singer, director, musician, composer, dancer, choreographer, TV producer or professions such as: accountant, statistician, administrator, financial auditor, bank clerk, assistant manager, treasurer/cashier.

At the other pole, of the low preferences, there are trades such as: agricultural worker, car mechanic, repairer, driver, farmer, plumber, electrician, technician, forest ranger, guard, carpenter, locksmith, merchant, mine worker, ship captain,

policeman/woman, tapestry worker, veterinary assistant. It is a reality Romania has been facing in recent times, that in most cases the form of higher secondary education followed by the adolescents does not correspond as a preference for a future career with the profession they choose.

In order to verify the hypotheses 2,3 and 5 on the influence of the profile of the high school and the environment of origin of the adolescents, on the system of reasons existing in the process of choosing a profession, we used the Student's t-Test for independent samples. We took into account the two categories of subjects determined by the profile of the high school and their background (urban/rural), to highlight the importance given by the adolescents to each of the 8 reasons in choosing a professional career.

Table 5. Averages, standard deviations and t test for motivation in choosing a career for rural and urban youth

| Measured variable | N | e.o | a | s.d | t | d | |
|---|----|-------|----|-------|-------|-------|------|
| I think I know better in this profession | 29 | urban | 20 | 23,47 | 8,34 | 4,032 | 0,47 |
| | | rural | 9 | 20,91 | 2,34 | 3,819 | 0,45 |
| It is a better paid profession | 87 | urban | 41 | 25,94 | 22,79 | 3,791 | 0,53 |
| | | rural | 46 | 29,92 | 22,81 | 5,534 | 0,57 |
| I am concerned about this profession | 38 | urban | 17 | 38,43 | 23,21 | 3,082 | 0,43 |
| | | rural | 21 | 45,78 | 24,81 | 2,782 | 0,48 |
| I follow my parents' advice | 23 | urban | 15 | 38,14 | 2,17 | 0,711 | 0,35 |
| | | rural | 8 | 27,29 | 3,18 | 0,782 | 0,28 |
| I follow the advice of my teachers | 12 | urban | 8 | 33,42 | 2,71 | 0,832 | 0,42 |
| | | rural | 4 | 21,17 | 2,84 | 0,473 | 0,38 |
| I follow the advice of the teacher counsellor | 18 | urban | 12 | 32,14 | 2,97 | 0,276 | 0,27 |
| | | rural | 6 | 22,14 | 3,85 | 0,653 | 0,48 |
| This profession is practiced in the city | 3 | urban | 2 | 17,29 | 4,89 | 2,823 | 0,59 |
| | | rural | 1 | 13,45 | 3,21 | 3,016 | 0,62 |
| I will achieve better in life | 69 | urban | 28 | 29,45 | 43,52 | 3,051 | 0,81 |
| | | rural | 41 | 24,72 | 44,16 | 3,958 | 0,79 |

It is noted that in an overwhelming proportion the adolescents are motivated in choosing a career by the gains obtained from practicing a profession. This reason is followed by the possibility of higher achievements in life and the interest in a particular career. On the opposite pole there are reasons such as the place where a trade can be practiced and the advice of the teachers or of the counsellors. According to the data obtained, it was found that there are certain significant differences in relation to three of the eight reasons, namely: gain - $t(279) = 3.89$, in this case $p < 0.01$; achievement in life -

$t(279) = 3.95$, and $p < 0.01$; prestige, concern/obtaining a status - $t(279) = 5.53$, and $p < 0.01$; skill - $t(279) = 4.03$, in this case $p < 0.01$.

To verify the hypothesis in which we assume that there are differences in the configuration of reasons according to the chosen profession, we present in the following table in which we recorded the options of the adolescents for motivating the choice of profession (career area):

Table 6. Descriptive statistics for the dependent variable - the reasons for choosing a profession

| Reason | N |
|---|-----|
| I think I know better in this profession | 29 |
| It is a better paid profession | 87 |
| I am concerned about this profession | 38 |
| I follow my parents' advice | 23 |
| I follow the advice of my teachers | 12 |
| I follow the advice of the teacher counsellor | 18 |
| This profession is practiced in the city | 3 |
| I will achieve better in life | 69 |
| Total | 279 |

In the case of the assumption that the high school profile influences the reasons supporting the choice of the profession, the results of the research indicate that in most cases, the higher secondary education chain/profile followed by adolescents does not correspond as a preference for a future career with the profession they choose. There is thus a considerable gap between the work environment chosen by the adolescent and the educational environment that influences him/her to a small extent in his/her career choice. There are trades that will find it increasingly difficult to attract occupants because of the migration of the population from the countryside to the major cities.

Table 7. Averages, standard deviations for school supply chain and career decision making

| | <i>N</i> | <i>Percent</i> | <i>a</i> | <i>a.s.</i> | <i>F</i> | <i>f</i> |
|----------------------------|----------|----------------|----------|-------------|----------|----------|
| School Supply Chain | | | | | | |
| Theoretical | 143 | 51,25% | 58,27 | 7,81 | 3,693* | 0,91 |
| Technological | 136 | 48,75% | 56,43 | 7,70 | | |

* $p < 0,5$

The analysis carried out highlights the fact that the subjects belonging to theoretical high schools considered all eight reasons for which there were notable differences as being more important than those belonging to high schools with a technological or industrial profile. These multiple differences indicate a higher motivation present among students in theoretical high schools for choosing a profession by exploring more possible alternatives than among the students from a technological or industrial profile. The students in theoretical high schools are more orientated towards pursuing a career as a result of an exploratory activity. The students from the high schools with a technological/industrial profile are already to a greater extent oriented towards a certain career, indicated by the industrial – technical profile of the class to which they belong, and the range of professional options accessible to them is smaller.

For the analysis of the interaction between the high school profile and the decision/indecision on an area to which each of the 8 motivational factors relates, we used the Univariate Anova analysis.

A single interaction effect was shown to be significant, on the dimension of the status/concern towards the field, career: $F(3,322) = 4,79$, $p = 0,02 < 0,05$.

In order to verify hypothesis number 6, concerning the highlighting of the influence of the gender of the subjects being the objective of this analysis on the reasons for choosing a profession, we proceeded to compare the importance given to each motivational factor by the female gender subjects with that granted by the male subjects. Following the analysis, we found that there are significant differences in three of the eight reasons, namely: “pleasure to perform a profession” – $t(279) = 2,27$, $p = 0,02 < 0,04$; “material advantages, remuneration” – $t(279) = -2,44$, $p = 0,01 < 0,05$; “the status conferred by a particular profession” – $t(279) = 4,28$, $p < 0,01$;

The degree of influence depending on the gender of the extrinsic motivation is shown in Table 8. The average values are higher for women, which indicates a higher perception of the degree of influence of extrinsic motivation on the choice of a profession. For the analysis of gender differences regarding the influence of the extrinsic motivation on the career choice we calculated the contingency coefficient X^2 , which shows that the gender differences are statistically significant for most factors.

Table 8. The degree of influence of extrinsic motivation depending on gender and the contingency table with estimated frequencies for χ^2

| | Salary | Achievement | Prestige | Statute | Material advantages | Competences | χ^2 |
|--------|--------|-------------|----------|---------|---------------------|-------------|----------|
| Male | 4,34 | 4,24 | 3,70 | 3,01 | 3,48 | 3,73 | 3,8 |
| Female | 4,50 | 4,32 | 4,02 | 3,31 | 3,58 | 3,96 | 4,2 |

As regards the implementation of the feedback phase provided following the implementation of the counselling programme, the 30 participating adolescents developed the career action plan. This tool was the means of assessing the effectiveness and the efficiency of the counselling programme implemented. The assessment followed quantitative indicators, which provided accurate and measurable comparisons, as well as qualitative indicators, which highlighted a description of the characteristics of the counselling programme. We have defined the efficiency of the counselling programme as the ratio between the resources (material, human, financial) involved and the results obtained from the implementation. In the following we present the results in percentage obtained by the 30 teenagers. 95% of the teens developed the career action plan.

Table 9. Evaluating the efficiency of the proposed counselling model

| Indicators | Percent |
|--|---------|
| The ability of short self-characterization with a clear definition of personal interests and motivations | 93,3% |
| Clarity of defining objectives | 90% |
| Clear definition of existing alternatives in the decision-making process | 100% |
| Staging the action plan and determining completion times | 96,6% |

The effectiveness was defined in terms of the opinions of the beneficiaries (the 30 adolescents) regarding the effects of the implementation of the counselling programme. We measured by means of a questionnaire the level of satisfaction of the 30 adolescents with the counselling program followed. The measurement of the adolescent satisfaction refers to the reactions, opinions expressed by them in response to the involvement in the counselling programme in order to make a decision on their own career. The five categories of questions were structured as follows:

1. Administrative aspects: problem solving, quality of the proposed tools, quality and accuracy of the information provided (on the web, brochures, leaflets, virtual

- library, etc.), quality of the tests applied online (accessibility, availability of information, design, accuracy, novelty);
2. Learning resources and spaces: educational spaces (equipment, access, timetable, technique used, resources);
 3. Learning contents: the topic addressed in courses, the relevance and usefulness of information, the development of the ability to work in a team, the development of the communication skills, the development of the ability to learn and understand new things, the development of the skills to work with a specialized software, the development of problem solving skills, critical spirit, creativity;
 4. The didactic process: clear and appropriate communication of concepts, topicality and usefulness of the concepts, interactive methods, adaptation of the contents to the students' learning needs and possibilities, efficient use of new technologies (e-mail, electronic content support, use of video projector, etc.),
 5. Evaluation methods used (feedback provided)

In the following we present the table with the results collected from the application of the satisfaction questionnaire.

Table 10. Evaluating the efficiency and effectiveness of the proposed counselling model

| Measured variable | very | | relatively | little | |
|-------------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|--------------|
| | satisfied | satisfied | satisfied | satisfied | dissatisfied |
| Administrative issues | 96,6% | 3,3% | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Resources and learning spaces | 93,3% | 3,3% | 3,3% | 0 | 0 |
| Curricula | 100% | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching process | 96,6% | 3,3% | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Assessment | 100% | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

The results showed that on average 97% of the adolescents participating in the career counselling programme expressed positive reactions to the usefulness of the programme.

Discussions and conclusions

Following the application of the research tools, certain important conclusions emerge for the application of a model of counselling of adolescents regarding the option on a career.

The system of needs and interests expressed by the adolescents greatly influences the decision-making process in choosing a career. The need for self-knowledge of one's

own areas of interest and skills for a particular activity was greater. In a correlation of the categories of professions chosen by the adolescents with the results of the interest inventory, we see a 36.8% consistency between desire, interests and motivation for a particular profession involving certain activities.

In the course of our research we have noted the phenomenon of indecision as a consequence of a state of personal inadequacy (interests, skills, values, motivations) to the social requirements. This aspect indicates that the professions of the future will be preferred by the adolescents insofar as they coincide with the individual's talent and skills, with the pleasure and motivation to approach a particular field. Other researches confirm that career choice indecision tends to be a characteristic of the adolescents exhibiting a high level of emotional instability, who are externalists, tend to see life as being determined by chance and less by their own actions and efforts and who are often less motivated to engage in decision-making that concerns their own development opportunities. (Starica, 2013)

The adolescents determined towards a career attach a significantly greater importance to the status offered in the choice of the profession than those who are undecided. In the case of the students belonging to theoretical high schools, the status conferred by a particular profession is added to the other two motivational dimensions that separated the determined from the undecided, namely the safety and certainty of the future and the comfort of a big gain. The results of other researches indicate that the adolescent chooses the referential adult (who may or may not belong to the same family) conditioned by the two variables (social valorisation and the level of the revenues obtained). (Oprisor, 2016)

It is noted that in an overwhelming proportion the adolescents are motivated in choosing a career by the gains obtained from practicing a profession. This reason is followed by the possibility of higher achievements in life and the interest in a particular career. At the opposite pole there are reasons such as the place where a trade can be practiced and the advice of the teachers or of the counsellor.

The average values are higher for women, which indicates a higher perception of the degree of influence of the extrinsic motivation on the choice of a profession.

Regarding the parental model, it is not a constant of the adolescents' option regarding the orientation in their professional career, the subjects following, more or less, the parental model. There is research that admits the same conclusion, that the professional orientation of the young individuals does not follow the parental model (Oprisor, 2016)

The higher secondary education chain/profile followed by adolescents does not correspond as a preference for a future career with the profession they choose. There is thus a considerable gap between the work environment chosen by the adolescent and the educational environment that influences him/her to a small extent in his/her career choice. There are trades that will find it increasingly difficult to attract occupants because of the migration of the population from the countryside to the major cities or outside the country.

It is a reality Romania has been facing in recent times, one in which, in most cases, the form of higher secondary education followed by adolescents does not correspond as a preference for a future career with the profession they choose.

Following the application of the questionnaires, there was a growing need to understand the problems the adolescents face in the process of choosing a career, because this process is not only important from the perspective of employability but especially from the perspective of investing time and effort in what it means a wise decision which could influence the whole life of the individual. A study undertaken under the Comenius Sectoral Lifelong Learning Programme indicates that the students perceive that the need for self-knowledge is the most important, followed by the need for support in making a career decision, then the need for information on school offers and the world of work and the need to develop personal promotion skills. (Education and Career Guidance, 2014) Therefore, an information system regarding the dynamics of the labour market to guide the adolescents and create for them a vision on the globalisation of the labour market leads to the shaping of viable career options and finally to the documented decision-making. A counselling programme can lead to better academic results by understanding the role of knowledge circulated within various fields of study, increases the motivation for learning, thereby increasing the possibility of achieving high scores on national knowledge tests. The implementation of a career counselling programme builds a positive school climate by amplifying the vision of the role of the school in the becoming of the individual, contributes to broadening the students' horizon in relation to the labour market and career-related notions, builds a better relationship between students and between students and teachers (as part of the counselling team), the latter being valued as "advisers." The programme of counselling among adolescents regarding the choosing of a career applied in the second part of the present research proves to be useful and replicable due to the following aspects:

- It is facile to apply and contains computerized samples with immediate interpretation;
- It is accessible and can be extended to the lower secondary school cycle;
- It has a projective and temporal component, can be reconsidered whenever the adolescent requests;
- It is a tool within the reach of the school counsellor, who can create a portfolio for each teenager;
- It entails minimum application costs;
- It builds a better relationship between students and between students and teachers, the latter being more valorised.
- It is based on the valorisation and activation of the individual counselled, as part of the process of building his/her own career.
- It is carried out by specialized individuals, with a number of students which enables the effectiveness of the educational and psychological intervention;

- It can be accessed through online interaction modalities, both synchronously and asynchronously.

References

- Ali, S. R., McWhirter, E. H., Chronister, K. M. (2005). Self-efficacy and vocational outcome expectations for adolescents of lower socioeconomic status. A pilot study. *Journal of Career Assessment*, 40-58.
- Amundson, N.E. (1995). An interactive model of career decision making. *Journal of Employment Counseling*, 11-23.
- Baban, A. (2009). *Consiliere Educationala- Ghid metodologic pentru orele de dirigentie si consiliere*. Cluj-Napoca: Editura Asociatia de Stiinte Cognitive din Romania.
- Badescu, G. , Sandu, D., Angi, D., Greab, C. (2019). *Studiu FES despre tinerii din Romania*. Germania: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.
- Beach, L.R., Connolly T. (2005). *The psychology of decision-making: People in organizations*. London: Sage.
- Betz, N.E., Taylor K.M. (2001). *Manual for the Career Decision Self-Efficacy Scale – Short Form*. Ohio: Dept of Psychology- The Ohio State University.
- Birle, D., Perte A. (2009, vol.XV 2). Personality-environment congruence and its implications in career decision. *Analele Universitatii din Oradea*, pp. 112-134.
- Bubany, S., T., Black, M., D., Krieshok, T., S., McKay, R., A. (2017). College Students' Perspectives on Their Career Decision Making. *Journal of Career Assessment, European Commission*, 177-197.
- Career Explorer. (n.d.). Retrieved from www.careerexplorer.com: <https://www.careerexplorer.com/>
- Coleman, M. (2001). *A table constructivis principles for guiding sociodynamic counseling practice*, www.sociodynamic-constructivist-counselling.com.
- Comission, E. (2015, 2). *ESCO*. Retrieved from www.ec.europa.eu: <https://ec.europa.eu/esco/portal/occupation>
- Erdei, M., Mihaltan, I. (2001). *Ingradirile politice si religioase ale Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane din Transilvania de la inceputul secolului al XI lea si pana la inceputul secolului XX*. Oradea: Editura Universitatii din Oradea.
- European Commission. (2017). *Classification of European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.
- Holland, J. L., Fritzsche, B. A., Powell, A. B. (2009). *SDS Self directed search. Ghid profesional de utilizare*. Bucuresti: O S Romania.
- Holland, J. L., Fritzsche, B. A., Powell, A. B. (2009). *SDS Self directed search. Manual tehnic*. Bucuresti: O S Romania.
- Lemeni, G. M. (2004). *Consiliere si orientare. Ghid de educatie pentru cariera*. Cluj Napoca: Editura ASCR.
- Luca, M. R. (2002). *Elemente teoretice si metodice pentru consilierea in scoala*. Brasov: Editura Universitatii Transilvania.
- Maree, J.G., Morgan, B. (2012) *Toward a Combined Qualitative-Quantitative approach: Advancing Postmodern Career Counselling Theory and Practice*. *Cypriot Journal of Educational Sciences*, vol. 7, (4), 2012, pp. 311- 325
- MEN. (2000). *Ordinul Nr. 3064/18.01.2000 privind Orientarea*. Bucuresti: MEN.
- MEN. (2001). *Ordinul Nr. 3638/11.04.2001 cu privire la aplicarea planului cadru de invatamant anul scolar 2001-2002*. Bucuresti: MEN.
- MEN. (2006). *Ordinul Nr. 5286/09.10.2006 pentru aprobarea Programei Consiliere și orientare*. Bucuresti: MEN.
- MEN. (2005). *Ordinul Nr. 5418/29.08.2005*, Bucuresti: MEN.
- Multon, K.D, Brown, S.D., Lent, R.W.(1995). *Relation of self-efficacy beliefs to academic outcomes: a meta-analytic investigation*, în *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 1991, pp. 30-38, volum 38

- OECD. (2019). *www.oecd.org*. Retrieved from *www.oecd.org*: <http://www.oecd.org>
- Oprisor, V. (2016, 3-4 16). Impactul profesiei parintilor asupra orientarii in cariera a adolescentilor. *Revista de Psihologie*, p. 47.
- Organizația pentru Cooperare și Dezvoltare Economică. (2009). *Policy on educational issue*. Paris: OCDE.
- Prem, K. (2006). *Myers-Brigs Personality Type Indicator - MBTI. Career Enhancement*. Wisconsin: Committee University of Wisconsin-Madison.
- Research, D. (2014). *Trends of Tomorrow*. Bucharest: D&D Research.
- Rotaru, A. M. (2002). *Consiliere si orientare*. Craiova: Editura Arves.
- Sampson, J., Peterson, G., Lenz, J., Reardon, R. (2004). *Career Counseling and Services. A cognitive information processing approach*. Pacific Grove: Brooks/Cole.
- Stanculescu, A., Isuf, F. (2014). *Education and Career Guidance*. Dolj: Casa Corpului Didactic .
- Starica, E. (2013, 3-4 16). Predictorii ai indeciziei in alegerea carierei la adolescenti. *Revista de Psihologie*, p. 27.
- Tomsa, G. (1999). *Consilierea și orientarea în școală*. Bucuresti: Casa de Editura si Presa Viata Romaneasca.
- Whats, A. K. (2000). Guidance in the United Kingdom: Past, Present and Future. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, 287.
- www.edu.ro*. (2019). Retrieved from *www.edu.ro*.
- Zunker, V., G. (2016). *Career Counseling. A Holistic Approach*. CA Unated States: Cengage Learning, Inc.