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PERSONALITY TYPES, CAREER CHOICE AND CAREER CERTAINTY AMONG HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract:

Career choice is the one of the most important decisions undertaken in adolescence. According to numerous studies, various factors influence the development of career choices. The overall goal of this study was to analyze career certainty in relation to the congruence between personality traits and career choice. The main research question was: are there differences in the level of career certainty among adolescents with congruence between personality traits and career choice and those without congruence? A total of (N=587) twelfth grade high school students from seven regions of Kosovo took part in the survey. The sample was selected randomly. The participants completed the Career Decision Scale and Self Directed Search. The research results show a positive relationship between personality traits and chosen career. The results also support four of the six study assumptions regarding level of career certainty among adolescents, with and without congruence between personality traits and chosen career. Adolescents with congruence of personality traits and professions for realistic, investigative, artistic, and social categories showed higher career certainty compared to adolescents who had not reported congruence between these factors. For the entrepreneur and conventional categories, there were no differences in level of career certainty among adolescents with and without congruence of personality traits and chosen career.

Keywords:

adolescents, career certainty, personality traits, chosen career, Career Decision Scale, Self Directed Search

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Career decision making is one of the most important processes of adolescence. In particular, career decision making status is considered one of the most salient constructs for career development and is observed lately with great interest. Defined by Career Decision Making Scale, career decision making status consists of two factors: career certainty and career indecision (Osipow, Clarke, Carney, Winer, Yanico, and Koschier 1976). While career certainty refers to certainty of the decision taken, career indecision provides information on specific issues that can impede findings on career certainty and its relatedness with other career constructs such as the structure of interests, academic stability, self-efficacy, contextual supports, etc. Furthermore, all the studies employ certainty of decision making for the assessment of career decision making status (Osipow, Clarke, Carney, Winer, Yanico, and Koschier 1976; Hartung 1995).

According to Holland's theory, career indecision might result from the person scoring high on completely different domains (Holland, 1997). A considerable number of studies are framed on Holland's theory of person – environment (Gottfredson, Jones, and Holland 1993; Luzzo 1995; Antony 1998; Gordon, and Meyer 2002; Bacanli 2005; Nieken and Störmer 2010; Durr II 2008; Petra and Susi 2010; Bacanli 2005). Holland (1997) reached the conclusion that career choices can be looked at as a reflection of personality. According to him, a career choice is successful if it includes the personality type, since it is through career that individuals express their full personalities. In relation to personality Holland has defined six types: realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising, and conventional (Allison and Cossette 2007).

Holland's theory has evolved over time and nowadays represents the interaction person – matching stable personality traits with the environment (Brown, 2002). People interact with their work environments and enjoy their environment if it matches their personality traits (Spokane, Luchetta, and Richwine 2002). According to Spokane et al. (2002), lack of harmony between personality and environment leads individuals to make efforts in behavior modification or their working environment, seeking stability at work, as Holland put it.

On the other hand, career certainty is seen to be connected with personality traits congruent with chosen career. Individuals with higher congruence between personality and their chosen career, also show higher certainty in their career decision making, supporting Holland's theory. Tracey and Darcy (2002) conducted a study with a sample of 162 students. They examined deviation from the circular normative model RIASEC of interest-based organization, to ascertain whether the deviation is connected with career indecision and career decision certainty. The study results showed that individuals who adjusted to the normative model of work interests reported a higher level of career certainty. Students who reported higher congruence between career interests and preferred work also reported higher career certainty.

The current study aims at exploring whether there is correlation between career decision-making certainty and personality traits congruence with the chosen career. Objectives of the study were (a) to measure the level of career certainty decision making, (b) to measure according to the RIASEC model the range of chosen careers among Kosovar youngsters, (c) to understand the interconnection between personality traits and chosen careers, and (d) to analyze correlation of the congruence between personality and chosen career with career certainty. The hypothesis is that there exists an interconnection between personality traits and chosen career.

Methodology

Sample and sampling procedure

Participants were $n=587$ twelfth grade students from high schools of the seven regions in Kosovo. The age range of participants was 17-20 years old. The largest percentage of students fell on the age of 18 years-- 91.6 %; 19-year-old students provided 7.9 % of the sample, and 17 and 20-year-old participants each provided 0.3 % of the sample. From the gender point of view, 57.6 % of the samples were female students, while 42.4 % were males. The sampling procedure was based on group random probability method.

Study measure instruments

- Questionnaire of demographic data

Questions related to demographics represented the first section of the whole questionnaire. This section contained questions related to age, gender and place of residence.

- Inventory of Interests: Self-Directed Search (Holland 1994)

Inventory "Self-Directed Search" consists of five sections: activities, competencies, aspirations, occupations, and other self-estimates whose large number of items are categorized by the RIASEC model (Holland 1994). All these dimensions containing items which are categorized in realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising and conventional category. In terms of reliability and validity, the inventory has shown the internal consistency coefficient value of .927 (Cronbach Alpha), while correlation between the dimensions of inventory has come to be with the value of $r = .177$ - $r = .561$ and sig. .000

- Career Decision Scale (Osipow, Winer, Koschier, and Yanico 1976)

Career Decision Scale assesses career decision status, respectively career certainty and indecision. The scale contains nineteen items; eighteen are closed questions that have the needed space for scoring and recording. The first two questions measure the participants' feeling of certainty on career decision, while the other questions, up to number eighteen, measure career indecision (Osipow, Winer, Koschier, and Yanico 1976).

The two above mentioned measures are translated and adjusted into Albanian by Jemini-Gashi (2014) after gaining permission of the PAR Company. Regarding to reliability of the questionnaire, coefficient of Cronbach Alpha has come to be .926 while in terms of validity, the correlation between career certainty and career indecision has shown a coefficient of $r = -.395$ and sig. .000.

Study design

Predicting variables: determining demographic variables and congruence between personality and career choice, Aspirations/Personality type.

Criterion variable: career certainty

Data are collected at one specific point in time. The study has only a cross-sectional design, since the sample consisted of only twelfth grade students.

Procedure

The data collection was completed during April 2012 after prior written permission by the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology of Kosovo, as well as the Directorates of Education for their respective municipalities. School principals also provided their consent for the study. Students were notified at least two weeks ahead for the date of questionnaire completion. Before starting to fill out the questionnaires, students were informed in a detailed way about (a) the aim of the research, (b) their right to refuse participation or to stop participation at any point of questionnaire completion, and (c) whatever advantage might derive from the research in the future.

Results

Frequency analysis findings show that participants have mainly reported high career certainty on career choice. Thus, 69.3 % reported high career certainty level, 22 % reported a moderate level of career certainty, and 8.7 % reported a very low level of career certainty.

In order to understand distribution of the percentage for each type of personality trait, analysis of frequency was applied. 33.6 % of participants reported to be a social personality type, 19.3 % reported realistic personality traits, 16.5 % reported to be a

conventional type, 13.3 % reported to be an enterprising type of personality, 8.5 % reported to be a artistic type of personality, 7.7 % reported to be an investigative type. Statistical analysis to the RIASEC model of careers has shown that social careers were chosen most by Kosovar adolescents (34.6 %). The second largest group of careers chosen was the conventional (27.9 %). The third group was investigative (15.8 %), realistic careers (11.4 %), artistic careers (5.3 %), and at the end, enterprising careers (3.7%).

In relation to the research question, whether there is any significant correlation between personality traits and career choice, the results deriving from Phi and Cramer's V show a value of .208 and $p=.000$.

Statistical analyses were applied to each category of personality types and careers (Holland 1995) to ascertain whether the adolescents who have consistency between personality type and chosen occupation have a higher certainty related to the decision on their career. Means, for certainty of decision on career choice between adolescents with consistency of personality traits and realistic careers and those without such consistency were compared.

Means and t-test scores consist of the value of $M=3.2162$ when consistency of personality traits and realistic occupations were not reported, and $M=3.5234$ when consistency between personality traits and realistic occupations was reported; t-test results are $t= -2.583$ and $sig.007$.

The value of mean for the group of adolescents whose personality traits are not congruent with the chosen enterprising profession is $M=3.0128$, while the same value for the group of adolescents whose personality traits are congruent with their chosen occupations is $M=3.3122$. Value of t-test on significance of differences resulted $t= 7.65$ the sig. .312.

Comparison of means analysis was also applied to the investigative category in certainty of career decision for adolescents who report consistency between personality traits and investigative occupations and the adolescents who do not report such consistency.

Findings show that value of mean in the group with no consistency of personality traits and investigative occupations is $M=3.2223$, while the value of mean for adolescents who reported consistency between personality traits and investigative occupations is $M=3.5323$. In relation to group differences and differences in significance, values consist of $t=-2.837$ and $sig. .004$.

In relation to certainty in decision for career between adolescents with consistency of personality traits with artistic occupations and those with no such consistency, analyses of comparing means through t-test for independent samples were completed.

Scores, resulting from statistical analyses of comparing means and t-test for adolescents without consistency of personality traits and artistic occupations, consist of

3.1502, while for adolescents who show consistency of personality traits and chosen occupation of artistic category, the mean is $M=3.6998$. Values on significant differences among groups consist of $t=-3.234$ and $sig. .001$.

Independent samples t-test results showed value of mean $M=3.1629$ for the group without consistency of personality traits and chosen social occupation. The group of adolescents that showed consistency on social personality traits and chosen social occupations has a value of mean $M=3.5672$. Value of t-test on significance of differences have resulted $t=-2.532$ and $sig. .002$.

The value of mean for the group of adolescents whose personality traits are not consistent with the chosen enterprising profession is $M=3.0128$, while the same value for the group of adolescents whose personality traits are consistent with their chosen occupations is $M=3.3122$. Value of t-test on significance of differences resulted $t= 7.65$ the $sig..312$.

Dividing the sample into two independent groups related to consistency of personality traits with chosen occupation, made it possible to analyze differences in the conventional category in conjunction with their consistency in chosen occupation (career) certainty.

The value of mean for the group of adolescents without consistency of personality traits and chosen occupation in the conventional category has resulted $M=3.2179$, while for the group with consistency of mentioned factors the value of mean is $M=3.2321$. In relation to significance of differences the values are $t=0.012$, and $sig. .828$.

Discussion

The general aim of this study was to analyze the correlation of personality traits with career choice of adolescent participants. Cross-tabulation results, respectively those of *Phi Cramer's V*, have supported the assumption on positive correlation between personality traits and career choices. The results on *Phi Cramer's V* .208 and $sig. .000$ show that chosen occupation has significant correlation with personality traits of Kosovar adolescents.

Results also show specific indications in relation to each assumption. More specifically, there are significant differences on career certainty among adolescents who have consistency between realistic personality traits and realistic occupations and those who do not report such consistency. The comparison of means and t-test value for this category revealed a mean value of $M=3.2162$ for adolescents without consistency between realistic personality traits and realistic occupations, and $M=3.5234$ for adolescents without such consistency. These results show a significant difference among Kosovar adolescents in their career choice decisions, at the same time showing higher consistency between realistic traits and occupations.

When it comes to differences on career certainty among adolescents with and without consistency of investigative personality traits and investigative occupations, results also show higher mean value for the group of adolescents with consistency between personality traits and occupations of the same category ($M=3.2223$ for adolescents without consistency between personality traits and investigative occupations, while the mean $M=3.5323$ results for adolescents with consistency between mentioned factors; $t=-2837$ and $sig. .004$). Based on these results, it is legitimate to talk about differences in certainty about the decision made on career choice among adolescents with consistency of investigative personality traits and investigative occupations.

The analysis of differences among adolescents with consistency of artistic personality traits and artistic professions in career certainty was one of the objectives of this study. The results in this category show a higher value of mean for career certainty among adolescents who show consistency between artistic personality traits and artistic occupations. Differences in career certainty also had statistical significance ($M=3.1502$ for adolescents without consistency between artistic personality traits and artistic occupations, while $M=3.6998$ is for adolescents with consistency of the above-mentioned factors; $t=-3.234$ and $sig. .001$).

Results also support another assumption, according to which adolescents with consistency between social personality traits and social occupations will report higher certainty on decision made for their career. Results show higher value of mean among adolescents with consistency between artistic personality traits and social careers, and their differences in certainty related to decision for their careers have resulted to be significant ($M=3.1629$ for the adolescents without consistency between social personality traits and social occupations, and $M=3.5672$ for the adolescents with consistency between the above mentioned factors; $t=-2.532$, $sig. .002$).

Results do not show significant differences in career certainty between adolescents with consistency between enterprising personality traits and enterprising careers, and those without such consistency ($M=3.0128$ for adolescents without consistency between enterprising personality traits and enterprising occupations, while the value of mean for adolescents without such consistency is $M=3.3122$; $t=-7.65$, $sig. .312$).

In relation to the conventional category, no significant differences were reported by adolescents with and without consistency in conventional personality traits of this career category. Value of mean by adolescents without consistency between conventional personality traits and conventional occupations was reported to be $M=3.2179$, while the value of mean for adolescents with such consistency resulted $M=3.2321$. The values of t and $sig.$ on gender differences significance were $t=0.012$, and $sig. .828$.

The results for certainty of decision on career, in relation to its consistency with enterprising and conventional personality traits, do not support the assumptions of this

objective in the study; thus, in such cases the null hypothesis is supported. This result can be explained by the fact that a small number of enterprising and conventional career categories were included in the study. There were three professions specifically selected by Kosovar adolescents in the enterprising category, and only two in the conventional career category. The assumption is that the small number of such occupations has influenced the significance of the results, independent of the fact that a high percentage of the Kosovar adolescents chose them.

On the other hand, the results related to certainty of decision for career among adolescents with and without consistency between realistic personality traits and realistic occupations, investigative personality traits and investigative occupations, artistic personality traits and artistic occupations, social personality traits and social careers, support the study assumption showing significant differences between adolescents of both groups, with high value of mean for the adolescents with consistency of such traits and occupations, also refusing the null hypothesis of each category.

The importance of consistency between personality traits and career choice has been emphasized also by Tarcey and Darcy (2002), according to whom the individuals who adjusted to RIASEC circular normative model reported a higher level of certainty on career choice. These results are consistent with other studies as well (Spokane, Luchetta, and Richwine 2002; Martino, Norbury, O'Brien, and Weinrich 1985; Holland 1997). The importance of consistency between personality traits and career choice is strongly supported by the person-environment theory of Holland (1997), whose approach emphasizes such consistency and its importance in career development and satisfaction from choices made. Studies conducted in the field of careers in Kosovo are only a few. Interconnection between chosen careers and personality traits using the RIASEC model has been analyzed by a study (Jemini-Gashi 2014) that found significant correlation between personality and chosen career.

Besides theoretical implications, results of the current study indicate considerable practical implications as well as tracks for other studies. Taking into consideration the finding that Kosovar adolescents reported consistency between personality traits and career choice, which correlates with a higher reported level of certainty on the chosen career, programs should be designed for raising adolescents' awareness of their personality traits when they are about to make a career choice. Results from the current study might be beneficial to career counselors when they work with adolescents on professional orientation.

Future studies on personality traits, career choice and career certainty would greatly contribute if they focus on examining the consistency and interconnection of performance at work and school with employees' and students' personality traits, to see

whether consistency leads to greater work satisfaction. Longitudinal studies would provide more evidence to help build more adequate services through both education development and career counseling.

Conclusions

Results of the current study support four out of six assumptions related to consistency among personality, career choice and certainty of the chosen career. Based on scores from statistical analysis there is a positive, significant correlation between personality traits and the chosen career of Kosovar adolescents. Based on the RIASEC model of Holland, reported adolescent occupations were recorded in occupational categories: realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising and conventional. Certainty of career was examined for each category of the model. The results show that adolescents with consistency between realistic personality and occupation reported a higher certainty on decision of career choice than that of adolescents who did not report such consistency. Higher scores on certainty of career were shown also by adolescents who reported consistency between personality traits and investigative occupations, compared to adolescents who did not report such consistency. Similar results on consistency between personality and occupation were shown by Kosovar adolescents in the artistic category, consequently reporting a higher certainty level on career choice. Higher mean values are also shown for adolescents with consistency between social personality traits and social chosen occupation, while adolescents without such consistency reported lower scores on career certainty. Differences in adolescents with consistency between personality traits and occupation chosen for the four above mentioned categories have statistical significance. On the other hand, there were no significant differences in career certainty among adolescents with consistency between enterprising and conventional personality traits and chosen occupation.

Longitudinal studies are recommended for future research, as they can provide important evidence for the weight of consistency between personality and chosen occupation, and the influence of such consistency on career certainty, on students' academic performance, as well as on work performance and satisfaction.

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