

III РОЗДІЛ
ПСИХОЛОГІЧНИЙ АСПЕКТ
ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ ОСОБИСТОСТІ
В СОЦІАЛЬНИХ УМОВАХ

UDC 159

*Eva Bócsa
Petroșani, Romania*

CAREER GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING IN SCHOOLS

The importance of career guidance and counselling activities. Most teenagers regard their future with hope and slight fear and elaborate various scenarios that concern their adult period of life. Among the multitude of other issues they are preoccupied with those regarding their career. Previously, the term ‘**career**’ used to signify the ascending path of an individual along the hierarchical structure of a certain organization; in other words, only a relatively small number of persons could think of a career and only after they began their professional activity. Nowadays, the notion of career has acquired a larger meaning; accordingly, a career represents the educational and professional path taken by a certain individual. **Profession** represents the specialization or qualification acquired owing to studies and certified at the time of their graduation. The persons who possess a certain profession are able to carry out an activity within an enterprise, an institution, etc.; consequently, such persons may exert an **occupation** owing to which they get an income. In order to succeed in their career, teenagers should be helped to discover their **vocation**, namely their predisposition to a certain field of activity or profession [2].

The activities of **career guidance and counselling** are carried out in schools (mainly in high schools and universities) by form masters, school counsellors, psychologists, social assistants. Specialized works set forth a series of differences among the following terms: career guidance, career counselling, and career education [2]:

- **Career guidance** activities target personal development and individuals endowment with the knowledge and abilities required in order to attain an efficient management of one’s own career;
- **Career counselling** targets the development of abilities required with a view of settling certain specific difficulties connected with career (lack of satisfaction in school activity, difficulties in learning, difficulties in taking decisions regarding career, career anxiety, etc.); more specifically, one may speak about a psychological intervention.

- **Career education** represents an educational intervention targeting the development of skills and abilities required by the management of one's own career.

Consequently, career guidance includes the activities of information, counselling, and career education.

At present, such activities are quite important due to the fact that a lot of teenagers find it difficult to get a job. The number of available jobs is relatively small, the demands of the employers seem hardly achievable, and there are also difficulties linked to self-knowledge and self-confidence.

Most often, discovering one's vocation, accomplishing one's education, and getting employed does not mean long term stability. Several decades ago, professional requirements used to maintain relatively unchanged during long periods of time. Nowadays, society continually transforms and the mutations at the level of the professions require new demands which individuals have to adapt to. Professional career may be accompanied by phenomena of guidance change, returning to the system of professional education, unemployment, etc. Owing to such reasons, the activities of counselling and career guidance do not only address to teenagers and young persons, but also to adults, and, sometimes, to elder people. Such activities exhibit a tremendous importance in the case of disabled persons who find it more difficult to get a job than healthy persons.

Theories regarding career guidance and counselling. The first preoccupations concerning career guidance and counselling date back at the beginning of the 20th century. During the previous century several theories representing the ground of career counselling activities were elaborated.

Matching theories. Frank Parson [5] is considered to be the 'father' of the activities of *vocational guidance*. In his 1909 book, "Choosing a Vocation", he displayed three fundamental principles which are still valid today. In his opinion, in order to choose a proper career, one should be aware of:

1. Self-knowledge: individuals should be helped to get acquainted with their aptitudes, interests, resources, and personality features.
2. Knowledge of the demands, advantages, and disadvantages of occupational fields.
3. The existence of a proper relation between self-knowledge and professional demands.

Another very important idea of Parsons is the one according to which the persons who provide counselling should not tell their clients what occupation they may choose; instead, counsellors have to help clients decide by themselves.

J. L. Holland [1], a well known continuator of Parson, describes six types of personality depending on the preference manifested towards objects, data, ideas or people: the realist type, the investigative type, the artistic type, the social type, the entrepreneur type, and the conventional type. Occupational environments may also be classified according to this typology. Vocational guidance

implies the search of an environment which is congruent with the type of personality.

Developmental theories. These theories claim that choosing a career involves several stages. E. Ginzberg [2], a representative of this conception, sets forth the following stages:

1. The stage of professional fantasies (until 10 years old).
2. Exploratory stage when individuals embrace certain values and evaluate their abilities (11-18 years old).
3. The stage of realistic options when possible solutions are evaluated and a final decision is taken (19 – 24 years old).

D. E. Super (2) has developed this theory and described five stages (apud Dumitru): growth stage (until 14 years old), exploration stage (15 – 24 years old), stabilization stage (25 – 44 years old), maintenance stage (45 – 64 years old), and decline (over 65 years old).

Theory of occupational allocation. According to the model of ‘opportunity structure’ of K. Roberts, in the case of most people, choosing a career depends on social factors, such as: family, social environment, school, group of friends, or professional opportunities [3].

Psychodynamic theories. An important representative of such theories is Anne Roe [3]. This clinician psychologist of psychodynamic formation has started from A. H. Maslow’s human needs and emphasized the fact that professions and occupations play an important part in meeting human needs, including the meeting of self-achievement need. The professions/occupations chosen by individuals depend on their personality which, at its turn, is influenced by family environment and the educational attitudes of the parents (for instance, a protective and affectionate family environment is going to determine the choosing of professions/occupations that focus on people and their issues). Psychodynamic theories help counsellors understand the complexity of the factors that influence career decisions.

Career guidance and counselling activities. A lot of high schools and universities in Romania display activities of career guidance and counselling. The counsellors working in the field assist individuals in planning their career. Career planning represents the process owing to which individuals outline their career profiles, settle certain goals connected to their own career, and initiate actions with a view of reaching the goals. Career planning does not mean drawing out a whole plan for one’s entire life; it is rather a continual process of adjusting career goals to personal characteristics and to educational and occupational offer which permanently develops. Career planning involves several stages:

1. *Self-knowledge.* In order to choose the most suitable profession, individuals have to know quite well their personality traits, aptitudes, abili-

ties, competences, interests, and sets of values. Meanwhile, individuals have to know what to do in order to develop according to the desired option (dealing here with education, training, and also self-education and self-training).

2. *Exploration of professions.* This is an extremely important stage. In order to find out the profession that matches the personality traits, interests, and aptitudes of an individual, this one should possess a lot of data regarding both the existing professions and the educational units that train specialists in various fields.
3. *Decision taking.* It regards a certain profession and is followed by the attendance of the school that trains specialists in the chosen field.
4. *Searching for a job, employment, followed by career development* (and, when required, returning to the previous stages).

The specialists that deal with career guidance mainly focus upon the following categories of activities:

- Self-knowledge and personal development;
- Exploration of educational and professional routes;
- Marketing or personal ad.

Self-knowledge and personal development. Knowledge of personality traits. Counsellors should help counselled persons know their personality traits. In order to help individuals know themselves, psychologists employ professional tests; nevertheless, there are also simpler methods that can be used by social assistants, didactic staff or the individuals themselves.

In order to take correct decisions, it is quite important to be aware of the personality traits that represent resources which can be capitalized in certain fields of activity. There are also inadequate traits for certain occupations which should be known too. While knowing their personality, the counselled individuals may discover the fields of self-achievement.

Self-confidence and self-esteem are extremely important resources for all individuals. Getting a realistic self-image and high self-esteem mainly depends on the attitude of the people around us, especially of the parents, brothers and sisters, friends, and didactic staff. Certain educational mistakes may determine the outlining of a negative self-image, the decrease of self-esteem, having numberless unpleasant consequences upon the individuals' future. The increase of self-esteem may be achieved owing to various methods. In the case the low self-esteem is the result of competences lacking, it is necessary to improve such competences (for instance, in case a student exhibits a low self-esteem due to certain examination failures, it is important to improve learning techniques). In case persons settle exaggerated standards when compared with their possibilities and consequently encounter failures, then more realistic standards should be adopted. In order to increase self-esteem, it is essential that individuals become

aware of their skills and competences, pay attention to their success, and learn to self-evaluate. With these in view, the counsellor may provide valuable support.

Knowledge of aptitudes. In order to forge a successful career, it is important that individuals become aware of their aptitudes. Aptitudes represent the ‘strong points’ of an individual; they show the fields where an individual has most chances to succeed.

Psychologists are able to ‘measure’ aptitudes owing to tests. The members of the didactic staff know a lot of pupils/students, and they accordingly may draw out comparisons or may identify those pupils/students capable of higher performance in a certain field. Aptitudes can also be identified through self-observation: individuals realize that they have aptitudes for a certain field in case they manage to easily acquire knowledge and rapidly build specific skills, in case they get better results than other individuals, or in case they are able to get involved in certain activities for a long time, without becoming tired.

Interests and the system of values. Becoming aware of interests and the system of values represents another aspect of self-knowledge. Interests are an individual’s preference for certain fields of knowledge or activity. Interests play an important part in the process of taking career decisions. The outlining of interests depends on genetic factors (aptitude potential) and on the life experience according to which individuals learn to prefer certain activities and to avoid others. For instance, in case children have aptitudes for a certain activity (drawing), they are going to succeed in activities of this type. Owing to the success they get, they will show more interest for such activities. The rewards given by parents may also influence the outlining of interests. On the contrary, punishment determines aversion to certain activities (children who are forced to read a certain number of pages daily will scarcely show any interest to reading later in life).

Nowadays, the most known and employed inventory of interests is the one elaborated by J. L. Holland (1; 2). The psychologist describes six types of personality depending on the preference shown towards objects, data, ideas or people:

- *The realist type* prefers manipulating objects, machines, instruments, and data. The type includes individuals that are anchored into the present and prefer concrete activities, mainly physical. They possess manual, mechanic or technical aptitudes.
- *The investigative type* turns to activities involving abstract thinking and intellectual values and prefers activities focused on research and investigation in the most varied fields (biology, physics, social and cultural fields, etc.). Such individuals possess mathematic and scientific abilities and prefer working alone in order to settle issues.

- *The artistic type* prefers the world of ideas, of less structured activities that involve a creative process and offer the opportunity of self-expression. Those belonging to this type possess imagination and artistic skills.
- *The social type* is both interested in people and in the world of ideas. Such persons prefer the activities involving interpersonal relations, are ready to help people or to teach them various things.
- *The entrepreneurial type* prefers team-working, yet with a view to becoming a leader. Such persons avoid scientific activities or fields that involve a very difficult work, preferring those that may emphasize their initiative, oratorical and managerial skills.
- *The conventional type* prefers the activities that require the systematic and ordered manipulation of data or objects. Such individuals hardly adapt to circumstances displaying a high level of ambiguity and no clear demands, yet, they have abilities in administrative activities. People belonging to this type are conformists, good performers that obey conventions and rules. They prefer order as well as labour environments involving well structured tasks and the implementation of algorithms.

Generally, there are no pure types of interests, but combinations of these.

An easy manner of becoming aware of one's interests is to reflect upon one's previous choices: activities deployed, volunteering fields, optional/facultative courses attended. By doing this, individuals may become aware of their interests and system of values. Interests can also be discovered through inventories of interests. Such inventories mainly include lists of activities and occupations among which one would select the preferred ones. By grouping preferences, one is able to emphasize interests as well as the manner they can be capitalized.

Values represent people's fundamental beliefs regarding the most important things in their lives, their interpersonal relations, and jobs. Individual elaborate during their lives a system of values that guide them. Family, health, security, money, power represent such examples. The system of values largely contributes to individuals embracing certain professional fields (for instance, in case a person praises generosity and cooperation, that person is likely to prefer professions such as: social assistant, psychologist, counsellor, professor, and therapist).

Exploring educational and professional opportunities. The activities of career guidance and counselling imply helping the counselled persons to get data regarding educational and professional opportunities. With this in view, one may use a varied printed stuff (brochures, fliers, and magazines), audio and video stuff (CDs, DVDs) as well as Internet.

Counsellors may organize meetings with persons that attend certain schools or work in the fields the counselled individual is interested in. At the

same time, they may organize visits to such places in order to show the manner activities are carried out and to talk with those who learn or work there.

Counselled persons can be encouraged to look for data about educational routes or about the companies that might hire them via their social network (the persons they know and whom they trust and who may help them choosing a career: parents, other members of the family, friends, teachers, neighbours, etc.).

Direct labour experience is also extremely important. Such an experience may be acquired owing to: volunteering activities, labour during vacations or direct observation of the manner various persons carry out their activity: members of the family, friends, and acquaintances. This type of activities also offer the opportunity of enlarging the social network which may be used later in order to find a job.

Taking a decision and looking for a job. Exploring educational and occupational routes is usually followed by career decisions which represent the selecting of an option out of the multitude of variants available at a certain moment. Individuals should become aware of the fact that they are probably not going to take a lifelong decision. During their lives, if required, they might resume the process of building their career.

After taking the decision and graduating the school that gives them the proper qualification, graduates would like to find a job. In order to do this, they should pay attention to the elements offered by labour market. Accordingly, it is important to regularly consult the job offers displayed by newspapers, magazines as well as those posted by specialized electronic sites. Those who look for a job may publish advertisings in specialized publications, take part in job shops, or look for direct data provided by the companies they would like to be hired by (such data are available through accessing the company's site). They may as well resort to a labour employment company or office.

Marketing or personal ad. Personal ad may be carried out through systematizing and displaying data about one's abilities, competences, interests, and educational and professional experience in order to reach career goals. Two of the main devices providing personal advertising are: the CV and the Cover Letter. Getting a job largely depends on the manner individuals introduce themselves on the occasion of a job interview.

Career counselling specialists should provide the persons they counsel data regarding the manner a CV and a Cover Letter are drawn out as well as regarding recommended/ not recommended behaviour when participating in a job interview.

Bibliography: 1. *Băban A.*, (coord.), Consiliere educațională. Ghid metodologic pentru orele de dirigenție și consiliere, Cluj-Napoca, 2001. 2.

Dumitru I. Al., Consiliere psihopedagogică. Baze teoretice și sugestii practice, Polirom Publishing House, Iasi, 2008.

3. Gikopoulou N., (editor), Career Guide for Schools, http://www.career-guide.eu/uploads/cg_handbook_low.pdf

4. Lemeni G., Miclea M., (coord.), Consiliere și orientare – ghid de educație pentru carieră, ASCR Publishing House, Cluj-Napoca 2008.

5. <http://www.celebratecareers.com/documents/ParsonsPaper.pdf>

Eva Bócsa

CAREER GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING IN SCHOOLS

The hereby paper, after defining fundamental notions (career, profession, occupation, vocation, etc.) and briefly displaying certain theories regarding career guidance and counselling, analyzes the main activities carried out by counsellors: providing support with a view of self-knowledge and personal development, exploring educational and professional routes, personal ad.

Keywords:

Ева Боча

ОРИЕНТИРОВАНИЕ И КОНСУЛЬТИРОВАНИЕ ПО ПОСТРОЕНИЮ КАРЬЕРЫ В ШКОЛАХ

В данной статье мы определили основные термины, а также представили некоторые теории по поводу ориентации и консультирования в карьере. Затем мы проанализировали основные профориентационные мероприятия: оказание помощи в самопознания и личностном росте, изучение образовательных и профессиональных путей, личностное продвижение.

Ключевые слова: карьера, профессия, занятие, призвание.

Єва Боча

ОРІЄНТУВАННЯ ТА КОНСУЛЬТУВАННЯ З ПОБУДОВИ КАР'ЄРИ В ШКОЛАХ

У даній статті ми визначили основні терміни, а також представили деякі теорії з приводу орієнтації і консультивання в кар'єрі. Потім ми проаналізували основні профорієнтаційні заходи: надання допомоги в самопізнання та особистісному зростанні, вивчення освітніх і професійних шляхів, особистісний просування.

Ключові слова: кар'єра, професія, заняття, покликання.

Стаття надійшла до редакції 21.10.2013