

CAREER DEVELOPMENT – A LIFESPAN PERSPECTIVE (PART 2)

Maria POPOVA-HRISTOVA¹

Abstract: *Identify strengths and weaknesses, and areas requiring further development Develop a self-reflective stance to academic work and other activities Synthesise one’s key strengths, goals and motivations into a rounded personal profile: Careers education learning outcomes (adapted from AGCAS, 2005). We conducted a survey with students and parents of students about their knowledge of career counseling and the opportunities to obtain professional support in this field in Bulgaria, as well as their attitude and attitudes about the meaning of career guidance.*

Key words: *Careers education learning, life planning, self-awareness, career decision-making*

1. Introduction

1.1. The Next Generation of Career Concepts

A number of new concepts and models have recently been offered to explain the variety of career patterns that are being enacted in today’s dynamic work environment. Some of these newer conceptualizations, which we call “integrative frameworks,” represent attempts to combine various ideas from the protean and boundaryless concepts. Some of these newer concepts emerged based on the interpretations of research findings (e.g., hybrid careers). Other models (e.g., kaleidoscope) offer conceptualizations that are not an extension of either the protean or

boundaryless concept, but instead offer an alternative lens by which careers can be examined.

1.2. Integrative Frameworks.

Traditional Careers Redux

For many years, scholars emphasized careers within the confines of traditional organizational structures. Beginning in the mid-1990s, an increasing focus was placed on careers outside of organizations. Career scholars, however, may be guilty of shifting from one extreme to another.

Numerous studies have reported that individuals in their samples exhibited a more traditional career path [1, 2], [5, 6], [9].

¹ NSA “Vassil Levski”, Sofia, Bulgaria.

For example, McDonald, Brown and Bradley [5] found that while most employees, especially women, were following nontraditional career paths, some still had traditional careers (e.g., predictable organizational advancement). The individuals following traditional career paths had infrequent job or firm changes and most had worked for their organization for 10 or more years. The organization had some policies that supported a traditional career path, including mechanisms for rewarding long tenure (e.g., 3 months of paid leave after 10 years of continuous service). Likewise, O'Neil, Bilimori and Saatcioglu [6] also found that while most of the women in their sample exhibited nontraditional career paths, 38% had externally directed careers with linear, ladder-like advancement patterns. Skilton and Bravo [8] also found that while many individuals in the film industry had short tenures (i.e., 61% of the personal assistants left the industry in the 3-year study period), some individuals followed a more traditional career path from personal assistant directly to producer, with few roles in between.

These individuals often remained with the same production company even when they were producers themselves and could have established their own firm.

1.3. Hybrid Careers

Emerging from the findings from several studies is the idea that some individuals enact "hybrid" careers that are characterized by elements of both

traditional and nontraditional career concepts.

For example, it found that most workers in their sample desired the Downloaded from jom.sagepub.com by guest on February 19, 2013, Sullivan and Baruch 1557 traditional career outcomes of job security and upward mobility but also wanted nontraditional outcomes such as "boundaryless training" (i.e., training that could be used both in and outside the firm) and "protean well-being" (i.e., an open, trusting, and respectful work atmosphere [3]).

O'Neil et al. [6] found that 34% of the women in their sample had an orderly career and were focused on upward advancement, but were also self-directed in their career management.

Moreover, Skilton and Bravo [9] reported that some film industry employees followed an "up the ladder" path that had elements of both a traditional and nontraditional career. These individuals assumed multiple roles while advancing up the hierarchy, but also moved back and forth between projects in which they had different levels of control (e.g., some they produced, others they directed).

2. Materials and Methods

With Career counseling tools we asked 224 people in Bulgaria how they made their choice for the profession they chose through a survey-students for themselves and parents for their children.

3. Results

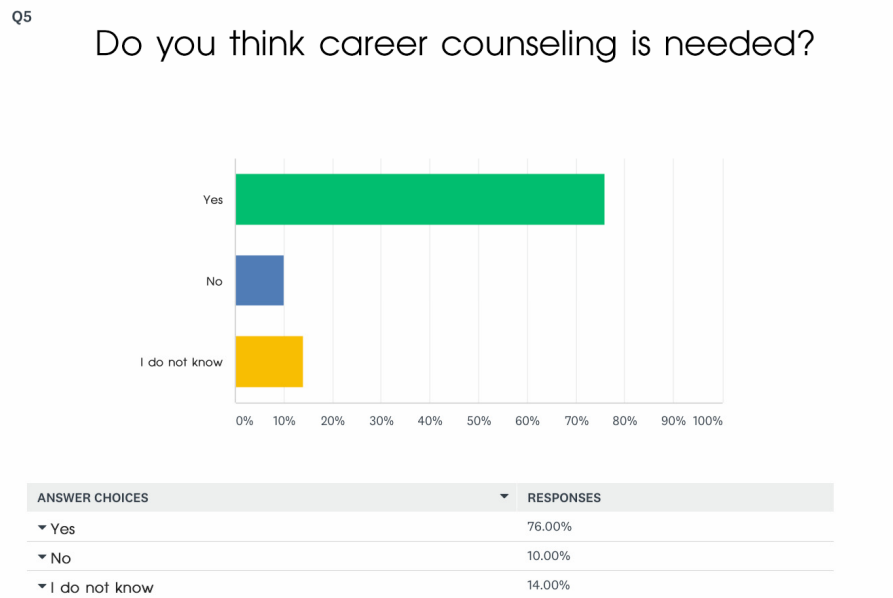


Fig. 1. Question “Do you think career counselling is needed?”

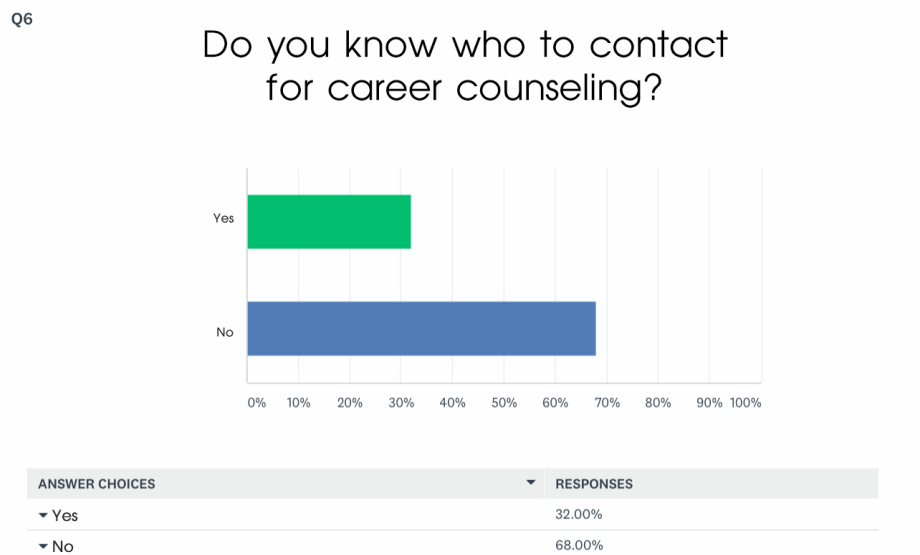
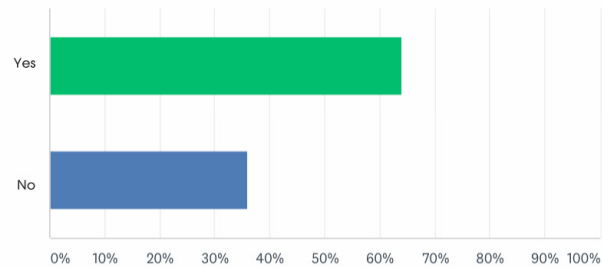


Fig. 2. Question “Do you know who to contact for career counselling?”

Q7

Would you pay for yourself or your child for a professional career counseling?

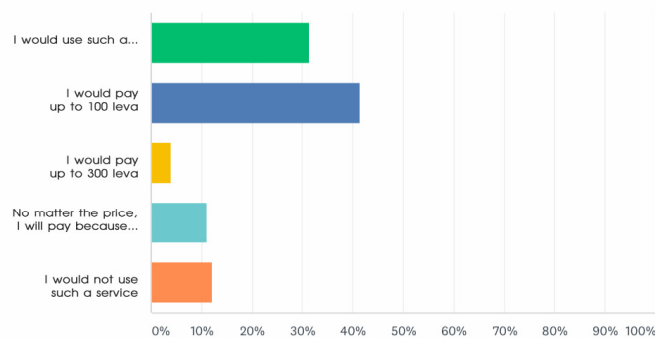


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	64.00%
No	36.00%

Fig. 3. Question “Would you pay for yourself or your child for a professional career counselling?”

Q8

How much would you pay for professional career counseling?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
I would use such a service only if it is free	31.31%
I would pay up to 100 leva	41.41%
I would pay up to 300 leva	4.04%
No matter the price, I will pay because it is important for my future/child's future	11.11%
I would not use such a service	12.12%

Fig. 4. Question “How much would you pay for professional career counselling?”

Question 5 (fig. 1): Did you know what duties you will have if you start working in your specialty?

We asked the respondents whether they find the career counseling necessary.

76% answered positively, 10% negative, and 14% were unable to answer the question.

Question 6 (fig. 2): Do you know who to contact for career counseling?

When we asked them the question: "Do you know who to contact for career counseling?" Surprisingly, we found that 68% did not know, and only 32% had an idea of who to turn to.

Question 7 (fig. 3): would you pay for yourself or your child for professional career counseling?

On the question: "Would you pay for yourself or your child for professional career counseling?"

64% respond positively and 36% would not make such an investment.

Question (fig. 4): When we asked the interviewed students and students' parents, what is the amount they would invest in professional career counseling. 31% of respondents said they would use such a service only if it is free.

41% would pay up to 100 BGN 12% would not use such a service at all, 11% say that regardless of the price they would invest in the service because the future is fundamental and 4% of the respondents respond that they would pay up to 300 BGN.

The research process of this project revealed an extraordinary necessity of diversity and quality in the career development learning and work-integrated learning practices implemented in the higher education sector in Bulgaria; there is a dearth of publishing which would share valuable knowledge with the

sector and establish appropriate benchmarks for delivery and quality.

There are a variety of ways in which career development learning be integrated can be integrated into a student's learning journey, extending from the bolted-on to the bespoke [9]: extra-curricular activity; unit-level activity; program level activity; and within discipline and trans-discipline graduate attributes. There is considerable scope to conduct research into students' perspectives of career development learning and work-integrated learning in higher education, and to explore how their approaches to learning can inform pedagogical practices. Concomitantly, there is scope to explore how university staff delivers career development learning and work-integrated learning in terms of pedagogical frameworks, particularly to determine factors which contribute to the most efficient and effective approaches to delivery, alignment with key learning criteria (e.g., graduate attributes), and assessment.

Conclusion

From the survey conducted we can draw the following conclusions:

1. Interviewed students and student parents explicitly declare their positive attitude to career counseling, finding it necessary and obligatory in a large percentage of their responses;
2. The difficulties encountered in using such services are limited to the lack of sufficient information from where they can receive professional career counseling;
3. About 65% of the respondents would pay for such a service, with as many as 11% of them not having a ceiling on the

amount they would invest in such a positive initiative given their basic role in their lives or their children's live.

References

1. Diemer, M. A., Blustein, D. L.: Vocational hope and vocational identity: Urban adolescents' career development. *Journal of Career Assessment*, 2007, 15(1), 98-118.
2. Dressler, S., Keeling, A. E.: Student benefits of cooperative education. In R. K. Coll & C. Eames (Eds.), *International handbook for cooperative education: An international perspective of the theory, research and practice of work-integrated learning*, 2004, (pp. 217-236). Boston, MA: World Association for Cooperative Education.
3. Gander, M.: Careers of professional staff in Australian and UK universities. *Australian Universities' Review*, vol. 59, no. 1, 2017.
4. Kenworthy-U'Ren, A.: Service-learning and career development learning: A synergistic coupling. Paper presented at the *National Symposium on Career Development Learning: Maximising the Contribution of Work-integrated Learning (WIL) to the Student Experience*, Melbourne, 2008.
5. McDonald, P., Brown, K., Bradley, L.: *Career Development*, 2005 - emeraldinsight.com. Accessed: 12-01-2018.
6. O'Neil, D.A., Hopkins, M.M., Bilimoria D.: Patterns and Paradoxes in Women's Careers. In: Patton W. (eds) *Conceptualising Women's Working Lives. Career Development Series (Connecting Theory and Practice)*, vol. 5, Self-perceived employability: Construction and initial validation of a scale for university students. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 2008, 73(1), 1-12.
7. Skilton, P.H., Bravo, J.: Do social capital and project type vary across career paths in project-based work? The case of Hollywood personal assistants Career Development International, 2008 - emeraldinsight.Com. Accessed: 12-01-2018
8. Watts, A.: *Career development learning and employability*. The Higher Education Academy, York, UK, July 2006.
9. http://www.nsee.org/about_us.htm#op Accessed: 12-01-2018