



Suomi

Global Education and Leadership Conference



PERSONALITY TRAITS AS PSYCHOLOGICAL DETERMINANTS OF CAREER CHOICE IN ADOLESCENCE

Botirbek Bashirov

Researcher, Karshi State University, Uzbekistan

Abstract. *Career choice is one of the most significant developmental decisions made during adolescence. The effectiveness of this process depends not only on educational opportunities, family expectations and labour-market conditions but also on individual psychological characteristics. This paper examines personality traits as psychological determinants of adolescents' career choice. Particular attention is given to responsibility, independence, persistence, sociability, emotional stability and openness to new experiences. These characteristics may influence how adolescents evaluate occupational alternatives, respond to uncertainty, identify their interests and make independent career decisions.*

Keywords: *adolescence, career choice, personality traits, character, career orientation, professional interests, self-knowledge.*

INTRODUCTION

Career choice represents an important stage in adolescent development because it is connected with the formation of future goals, social roles, educational plans and personal identity. Adolescents are expected to make decisions about future education and professional activity at a time when their interests, values, self-concept and personality characteristics are still developing. As a result, career choice cannot be explained only by knowledge about available professions. It also reflects the adolescent's understanding of personal capabilities and the correspondence between individual psychological characteristics and the requirements of a particular professional field. Super's developmental approach emphasises that career development is closely connected with the formation and implementation of self-concept throughout different stages of life (Super, 1990).

MAIN PART

Personality and character traits may influence both the content of career preferences and the process through which adolescents arrive at a professional decision. Holland's

theory of vocational personalities proposes that individuals tend to seek occupational environments that correspond to their interests and personality orientations (Holland, 1997). From this perspective, professional choice becomes more appropriate when there is a degree of correspondence between personal characteristics and the psychological demands of the occupational environment. An adolescent who enjoys intensive interpersonal communication may perceive socially oriented occupations differently from an adolescent who prefers independent analytical activity. Similarly, a preference for structure, novelty, leadership, practical activity or creative expression can shape the range of occupations that an adolescent considers personally attractive.

Responsibility is particularly relevant to career choice because professional planning requires adolescents to consider the long-term consequences of present decisions. A responsible adolescent is more likely to gather information about educational requirements, compare professional alternatives and evaluate whether personal abilities correspond to future occupational demands. Responsibility also supports persistence when professional goals require sustained preparation. In contrast, when career decisions are made primarily in response to temporary interests or external pressure, the adolescent may not sufficiently analyse the requirements and consequences associated with the selected profession.

Independence represents another important characterological factor. Adolescents make career decisions within a social environment that includes parents, teachers, peers and broader cultural expectations (Vondracek, Lerner & Schulenberg, 1986). These influences can provide valuable guidance, but they can also create difficulties when external expectations are inconsistent with the adolescent's own interests and psychological characteristics. Developing independence does not mean rejecting advice from significant others. Rather, it involves the ability to evaluate external information critically and integrate it with personal goals, interests and abilities. A psychologically mature career choice therefore combines social guidance with the adolescent's capacity to take personal responsibility for the final decision.

Persistence and emotional stability may influence how adolescents respond to difficulties associated with career planning. Professional goals often require preparation, competition, examination and adaptation to uncertainty. An adolescent who encounters an obstacle may interpret it either as evidence that a career goal is impossible or as a problem requiring additional effort and strategy. Persistence can help maintain goal-directed behaviour, while emotional stability may support more balanced evaluation of

difficulties. These characteristics become especially important when adolescents face uncertainty regarding admission to educational institutions or doubt about their own abilities.

Sociability can also affect professional orientation. Some occupations require continuous interaction, cooperation, persuasion, teaching, helping or management, whereas others involve greater concentration on objects, information, technical systems or independent analytical tasks. Awareness of one's preferred style of interaction can therefore contribute to a more realistic evaluation of occupational alternatives. Nevertheless, personality characteristics should not be interpreted as rigid restrictions. A quiet adolescent should not automatically be considered unsuitable for socially oriented professions, just as a highly sociable adolescent should not be directed exclusively towards occupations involving interpersonal interaction. Characterological assessment should provide information for self-understanding rather than become a mechanism for mechanically assigning professions.

Openness to experience is relevant to the exploration stage of career choice. Adolescents who are willing to consider new information and unfamiliar alternatives may explore a wider range of professional possibilities before making a decision (Lent, Brown & Hackett, 1994). Career exploration is important because adolescents may initially base their preferences on a limited number of familiar professions or on simplified representations obtained from family, media or peers. Exposure to different professional environments can broaden these representations and allow the adolescent to compare personal characteristics with a more realistic range of career possibilities.

Self-knowledge consequently becomes a central psychological condition for constructive career choice. Adolescents need opportunities to understand not only what they are interested in but also how they usually communicate, respond to difficulties, organise activity, make decisions and pursue goals. Character traits acquire professional significance when adolescents learn to connect them with real occupational demands. For example, recognising personal persistence becomes useful when an adolescent understands which professional activities require long-term concentration and sustained effort. In the same way, awareness of communicative strengths becomes more meaningful when related to professions involving intensive interpersonal interaction.

Career guidance should therefore combine occupational information with psychological self-analysis. Traditional approaches that merely provide lists of professions may be insufficient because adolescents also need assistance in understanding

why particular occupations attract them and whether those preferences correspond to their relatively stable individual characteristics. Psychological assessment, individual counselling, discussion of occupational situations and opportunities to observe real professional activities can help adolescents compare their personal characteristics with the requirements of different career environments.

At the same time, career choice should remain developmentally flexible. Adolescence is a period of continuing personality formation, and interests or professional intentions may change as new experiences are acquired (Savickas, 2013). Psychological guidance should therefore avoid presenting character traits as fixed determinants of a single “correct” profession. The more productive goal is to help adolescents develop conscious career orientation based on an understanding of themselves, realistic information about occupations and the ability to evaluate different alternatives independently.

CONCLUSION

Personality traits constitute an important psychological component of career choice during adolescence. Responsibility, independence, persistence, emotional stability, sociability and openness to experience may influence how adolescents explore occupational alternatives, evaluate professional requirements, respond to uncertainty and make decisions about their future. Their influence should be considered together with interests, abilities, educational opportunities and social conditions.

REFERENCES

1. Holland, J. L. (1997). *Making Vocational Choices: A Theory of Vocational Personalities and Work Environments*. 3rd ed. Odessa, FL: Psychological Assessment Resources.
2. Lent, R. W., Brown, S. D. & Hackett, G. (1994). Toward a unifying social cognitive theory of career and academic interest, choice, and performance. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 45(1), pp. 79–122.
3. Savickas, M. L. (2013). Career construction theory and practice. In: S. D. Brown & R. W. Lent (eds.), *Career Development and Counseling: Putting Theory and Research to Work*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
4. Super, D. E. (1990). A life-span, life-space approach to career development. In: D. Brown & L. Brooks (eds.), *Career Choice and Development*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
5. Vondracek, F. W., Lerner, R. M. & Schulenberg, J. E. (1986). *Career Development: A Life-Span Developmental Approach*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.