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## Young People at Destiny's Crossroads - Professional vocation

**Lecturer Ph. D. Nina Stănescu**

“Ovidius” University of Constanta - Faculty of Theology, Constanta, Romania

nina.stanescu13@gmail.com

**Abstract.** Adolescence, known as the most colorful period of personality development, deals with a variety of issues, one being the choice of a future profession. The formula for the right profession choice is: I want – I can – I must, where “I want” integrates personal interests, motivations and needs; “I can” expresses individual inclinations, skills and abilities compared to those around them; “I must” implies the current and prospective needs and requirements of the workforce and the emergence of new professions. The changes proposed in the last decades within the socio-economic life on the whole, especially in the sphere of production and education, have determined the emergence of new characteristics and tendencies in the theory and practice of school and professional orientation. These tendencies and characteristics, outlined in accordance with the current dimensions of the technical-scientific revolution, are common to most national orientation systems and manifest both in terms of concepts and in the field of practice itself [1] in most contemporary countries, orientation has exceeded the stage of a psychodiagnostic action and professional guidance, becoming an educational action which aims to achieve a dynamic balance between the possibilities of the individual, the requirements of the professions and the social needs of the workforce. The assertion of this tendency in the practice of school and professional orientation is based on the expansion of the psychopedagogical conception about orientation in more and more countries of the contemporary world, where it is argued that school and professional orientation is a long educational process, which aims to develop the personality of young people in view of the school and professional options and their future social and professional integration

**Keywords.** vocation, career, personality, teenager

Each individual is valuable in himself/herself, according to the humanistic psychology developed by Carl Roger and Abraham Maslow. Each person, by his/her human nature, has the ability to develop and choose his/her own destiny, to validate his/her positive qualities and characteristics insofar as the environment creates the conditions for updating the self.

Interest is a criterion for defining the person, perhaps more expressive than intelligence, temperament, or character. Temperament expresses the biological background of the person, the social character, whereas interests represent personality as a product of the culture. Interests refer to the connection between the person and the world of values, externalizing the basis of qualities achieved through the contact with the external reality.

The encyclopedic dictionary of psychology defines *interest* as “an internal motivational stimulus which expresses the active or relatively stable orientation of the human personality towards certain fields of activity. The term expresses a relationship of particular convenience between the organism and the environment” [3].

As a main factor of education and guidance at the same time, school shapes positive attitudes towards work, it educates motivations, it develops interests and skills, etc., thus achieving the psychological preparation of the pupils for the choice of the studies and profession.

**Analysis:**

The best-known career development services are: career education, career orientation, career counseling, supervision, mentoring, coaching. They all have a supra - and trans - individually managed component, but also an individually managed component, in the sense of the development of the human, social and psychological capital of one's own career.

• **Career education.** This phrase started to be used at the beginning of the decade and expresses a category of career intervention which *provides the means and exercises the formation of skills for the development of the individual's knowledge about the education and training offers of the schools, facilitates the acquisition of the mechanisms needed for informed decisions (...), informs about the possibilities of employment and professional success* [4].

• **Career orientation** had from its beginnings as the main goal the professional selection for the new industrial economy. Applying to all areas of work, career orientation refers to the services designed to assist and help people, regardless of age and stage of professional development, to make educational, training, and professional choices and to manage their own careers.

• **Career counseling** has been defined as a method that develops a sense of mental comfort, reduces stress, and supports the effort to overcome career obstacles.

• **Supervision** is one of the forms of intervention in professional and career development based on interpersonal relationships. Supervision has been defined in educational and organizational literature as a process which provides orientation and support to employees in their professional development so as to engage more effectively in achieving the goals of the organization in which they work.

• **Mentoring** is a type of interpersonal relationship of support in the professional and personal development, as a formal or informal means of initiation, practiced in various contexts between the poles of the relationship, respectively mentor - protégé.

**Career coaching** has been defined as "the process by which an employee is helped to focus on his/her career interests, a process which leads to a greater clarity of perspective, to personal change, and increased activism" [5].

Career's descriptive-explanatory theories and models focus on two major themes: the choice and development of the career, these being, in fact, among the first and the most stable throughout time career-related problems which have been tackled scientifically.

The choice of profession has been a favorite research topic since the beginnings of vocational psychology, in the context of occupational psychology. It has remained a major topic of empirical research and theoretical reflection in career psychology, too.

The specialized literature includes numerous references to these aspects of the career. The main issues addressed in relation to career choice are: the factors determining the choice of profession; the interaction of factors in the process of choosing the profession; differentiating between choice / preferences / professional interests; the career choice process; the periods and stages of the process of choosing the profession; behaviors specific to professional choice; career decision; the main categories of issues that make it difficult to make a decision or even make a career decision impossible [6].

Choosing a future profession has always been a difficult thing. Today, when all the time more professions are undergoing radical transformations, this decision-making moment is made

even more difficult by the fact that parents, teachers, and acquaintances can no longer provide forecasts for the future, since they lack experience in the new fields.

Thus, career choice expresses the pupil's preference for one or another of the school and professional alternatives he/she has. When expressing a preference, the pupil indicates what he/she would like to do. However, in making a choice, he/she predicts what he/she will likely do. It turns out that school and career choice is more comprehensive than preference and is based on taking into account several factors.

The choice of profession is not only an individual issue, but also one which concerns the entire society through its consequences and perspectives. Appropriately, professional guidance will also have a social and pedagogical aspect, i.e., to help the person make the best career decision.[7]

The role of the school and career guidance counselor is to help the candidate make the informed choice of a profession. Through his/her entire activity, he/she facilitates self-knowledge of the subject, determines him/her to become aware of his/her desires and motivations, to know his/her skills, abilities, and possibilities, as well as to know how his/her can best capitalize on them for his/her own and society's benefit.

Career development, along with the choice, has also been the subject of numerous studies in different fields and from different perspectives.

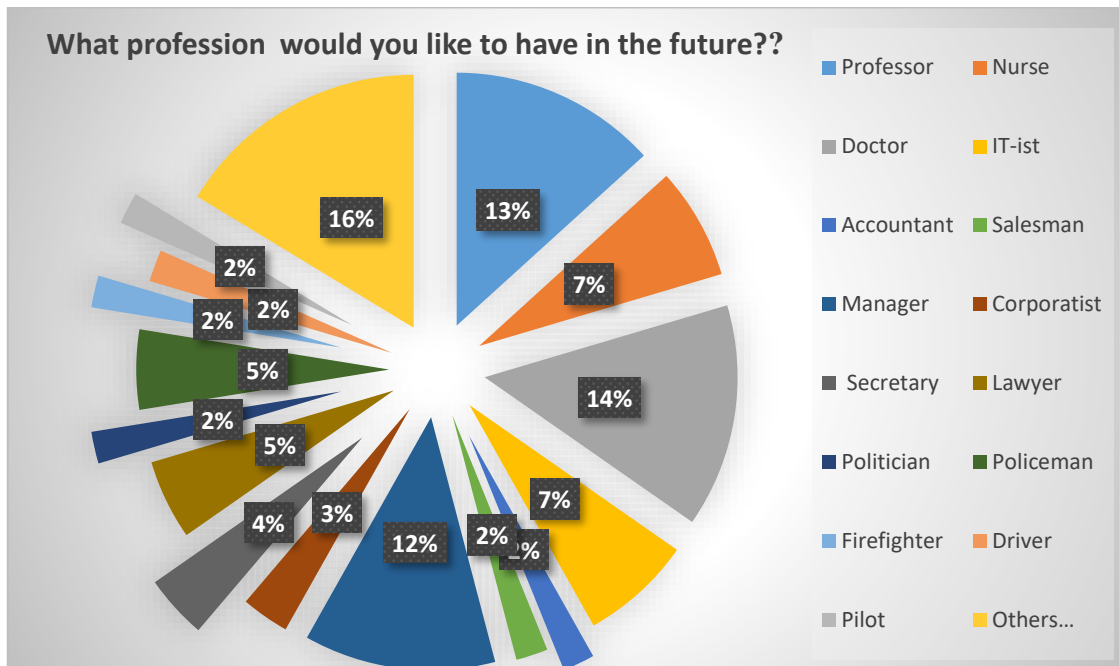
Career development involves the evolution of self-conception in relation to occupations and professions, as a result of the interaction between inherited skills, physical constitution, the opportunity to observe and play various roles and the evaluations of the extent to which they are approved by superiors and colleagues.

In the traditional career approaches, career development has been assimilated to professional development, both being regarded as processes of socialization, learning, and development that describe "various psychological, sociological, cultural, economic inputs - which over time result in a manifest professional behavior, the ability to make decisions and professional maturity".

The current meaning of the concept of career development no longer refers exclusively to the occupation, but also to the entire life of the individual, to his/her needs and desires, his/her abilities and potential, to his/her values, aspirations and fears.

### **Research and exemplification:**

As an example, we have presented below some important aspects regarding the discussed topic from a mini - research project with the subject: *Vocational choice of profession* carried out in November 2020.



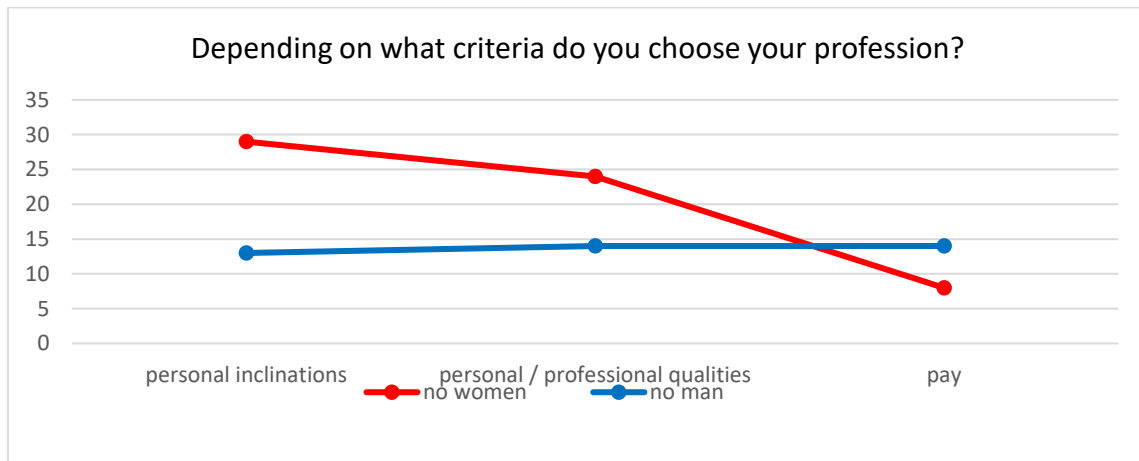
Out of 97 interviewees, 16% chose other different professions from the list, such as: electrician, barber, manicurist, car mechanic, dancer, etc., 14% - the medical field, 13% - education, 12% - salesman, 7% chose social worker and also 7% chose IT, 5% chose the lawyer profession and also 5% chose the field of law enforcement, 4% chose the secretarial profession. The accountant, salesman, politician, firefighter, driver, pilot professions recorded a 2% percentage. It is worth mentioning that the medical and educational professions were chosen by most of them. Together, they make up 27%.

### **Depending on what criteria do you choose your profession?**

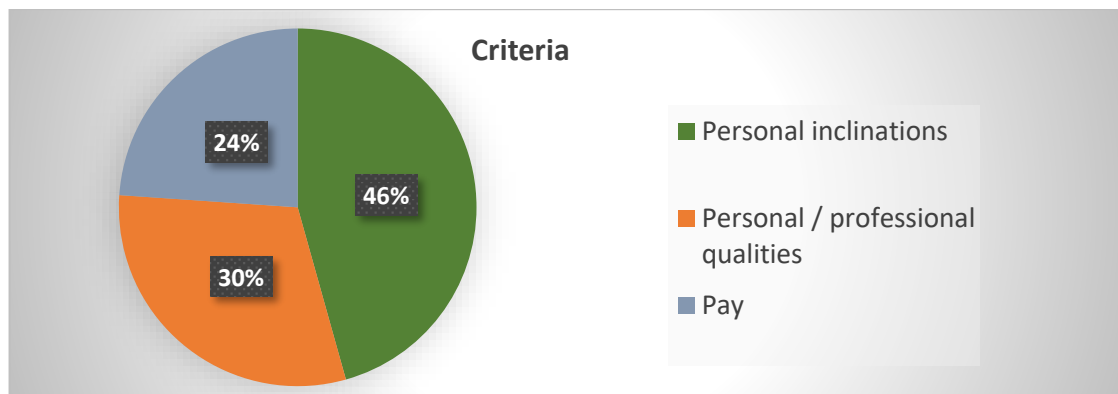
We have asked this closed, trichotomic question in order to be able to see what the criteria for choosing the profession are.

If we analyze them according to those who completed the questionnaires, the situation is as follows:

Depending on what criteria do you choose your profession?			
	No women	No men	Total
Personal inclination	29	13	42
Personal / professional qualities	24	14	38
Pay	8	14	22



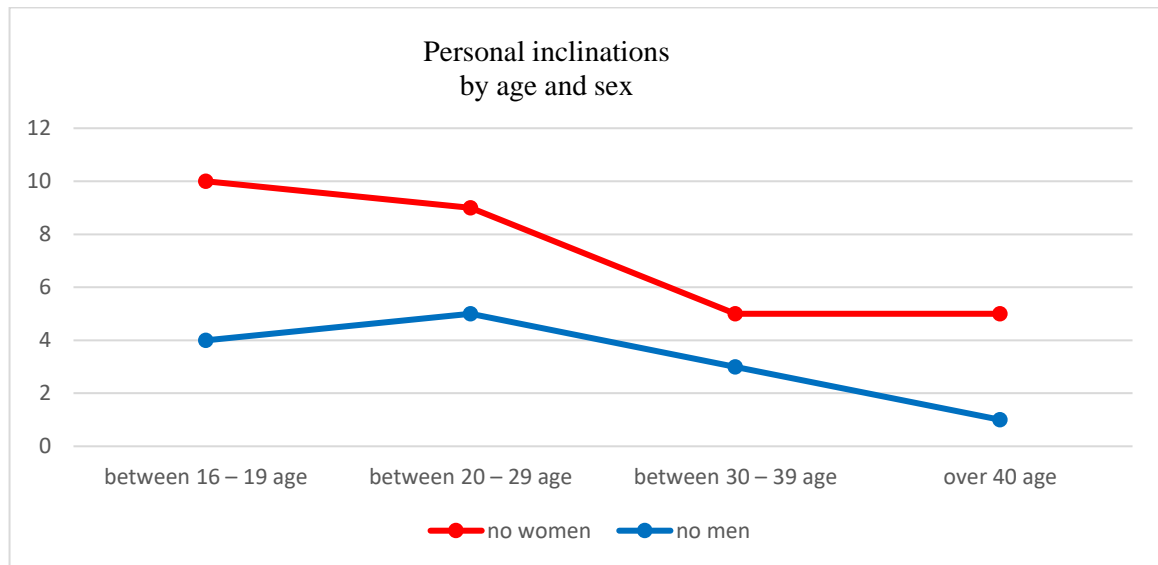
We have chosen a Line chart so as to observe more easily the differences between the three possible answers provided by both female and male persons. As one can see, men are consistent in their criteria for choosing a profession. In women’s case, personal inclinations, as well as personal / professional qualities are very important in choosing a profession.



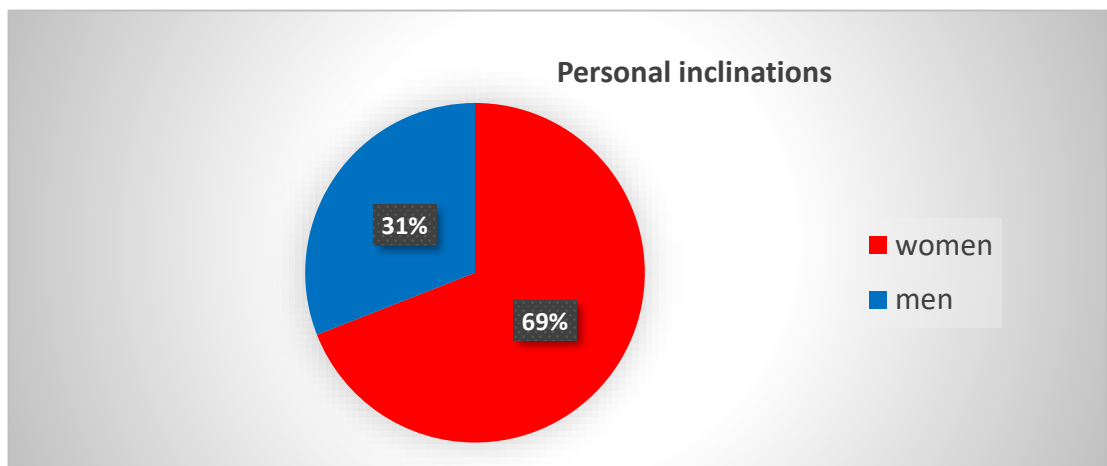
We have also chosen a Pie chart to see everyone's options in terms of percentage.

A percentage of 46% chooses their job according to personal inclinations, whereas 30% have personal / professional units as criteria and for 24% pay is a criterion.

Personal inclinations by age and sex				
Age	between 16 – 19 age	between 20 – 29 age	between 30 – 39 age	over 40 age
Women	10	9	5	5
Man	4	5	3	1
Total	14	14	8	6

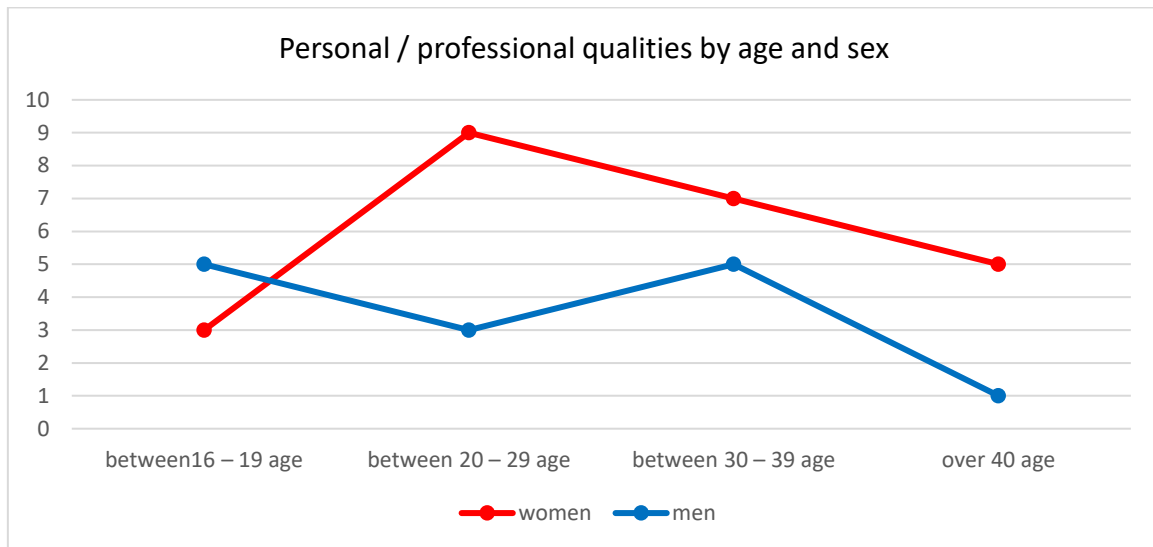


As one can see, personal inclinations underlie the choice of profession especially for persons under the age of 29, especially for female persons, but also male persons take into account personal inclinations when choosing their profession.

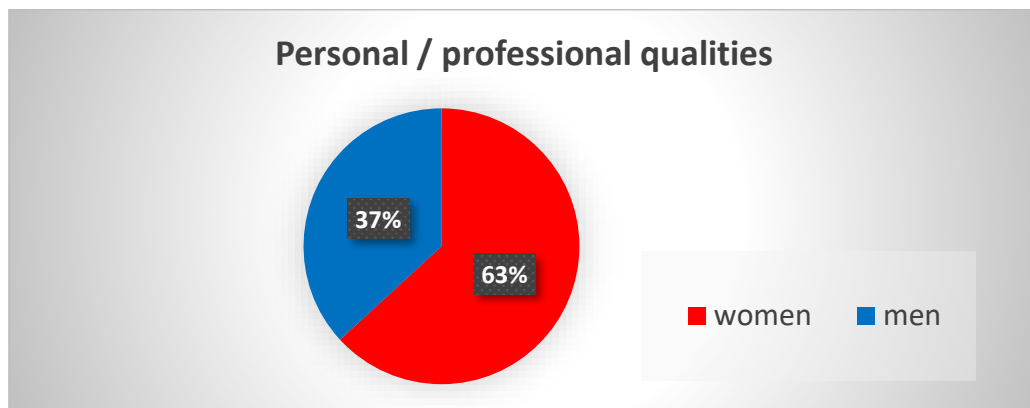


69% of the women choose their profession according to their personal inclinations, compared to 31% of men.

Personal / professional qualities by age and sex				
Age	between 16 – 19 age	between 20 – 29 age	between 30 – 39 age	over 40 age
Women	3	9	7	5
Men	5	3	5	1
Total	8	12	12	6

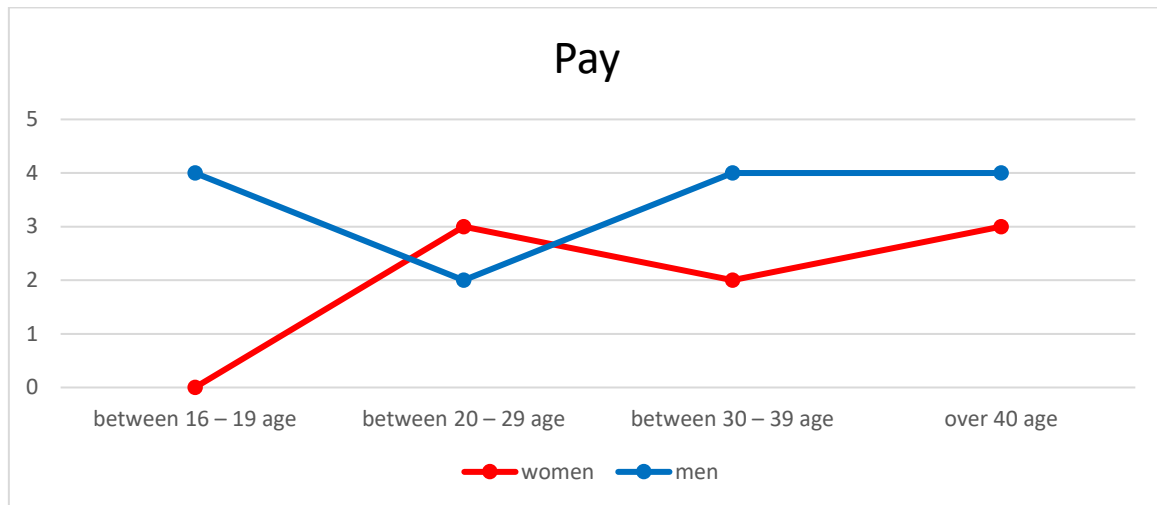


Personal / professional qualities underlie the choice of profession by female persons, especially those over 20 years of age. Male persons also use personal / professional qualities, especially men between 16 and 19 years old, but also those between 30 and 40 years old.

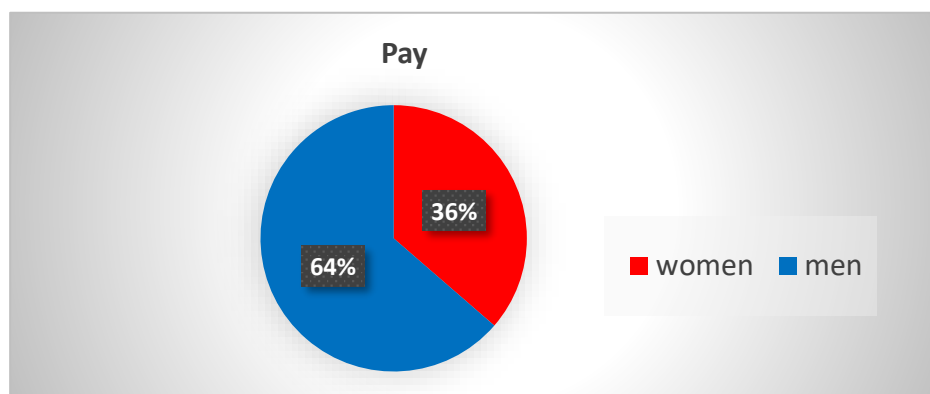


As one can see, pay is the criterion commonly used by men. In particular, men over the age of 29 chose pay as a criterion. On three age segments men chose the criterion more than women, while the 20-29 age segment is dominated by the feminine gender.

Pay by age and sex				
Age	between 16 – 19 age	between 20 – 29 age	between 30 – 39 age	over 40 age
Women	0	3	2	3
Men	4	2	4	4
Total	4	5	6	7



As one can see, pay is the criterion commonly used by men. In particular, men over the age of 29 chose pay as a criterion. On three age segments men chose the criterion more than women, while the 20-29 age segment is dominated by the feminine gender.



If for the first two criteria the balance was tilted in favour of the women, for this third criterion the balance is tilted in favour of the men, i.e. 64% compared to women - with only 36%.

### Conclusions

Each individual is valuable in himself/herself, according to the humanistic psychology developed by Carl Roger and Abraham Maslow. Each person, by his/her human nature, has the ability to develop and choose his/her own destiny, to validate his/her positive qualities and characteristics insofar as the environment creates the conditions for updating the self.

In the life of young people, the most difficult period is the time interval from the completion of the studies to entering the employment market. This time frame can last from a few days, ideally, to a year or more.

Family has an important role in shaping the values and needs of its members. Parents contribute to the formation of their children's self-concept and can serve as role models, family determines the harnessing of the skills, interests, values, and career development. It is suggested that the degree of identification with their parents will be reflected in the interests manifested by the children and implicitly, in the choice they will make in their career.

The vast majority of people set goals based on what they think is possible, not on what they really want. This way of hitting the road is wrong because:

- It limits you - even if you could achieve what you want, you do not set out to do it because you do not think you can
- It blocks you - even if you know what you want, in time you end up believing that your desires are not "true" because you choose not to act on them.

Nowadays it seems and it is difficult to professionally guide a teenager on the path of his/her becoming, but the starting point of this journey should be the search for mastery ...

A master is that professional who uses his/her intellect, instinct, and intuition harmoniously in order to produce admirable results:

- masters focus more on the travel than on destination,
- masters get up faster when they fall,
- all masters are experts, but not all experts become masters,
- masters know how to overcome the frustration of the initial incompetence,
- masters know how to discipline themselves so as to produce predictable results, according to expectations.

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