



PERSONAL IDENTITY AND VOCATIONAL DECISION DIFFICULTIES: THE TEENAGER GREEK IMMIGRANTS OF THE HELLENIC HIGH SCHOOL OF WUPPERTAL, GERMANY

 **Maria N. Anagnostara¹⁺**
 **Evangelos C. Papakitos²**

¹Hellenic High School (Gymnasium-Lyceum) of Wuppertal, Germany.

Email: mnanagnostara@gmail.com Tel: +4920269544300

²University of West Attica, Greece.

Email: papakitsev@gmail.com Tel: +302105381810



(+ Corresponding author)

ABSTRACT

Article History

Received: 18 May 2021

Revised: 14 June 2021

Accepted: 8 July 2021

Published: 29 July 2021

Keywords

Adolescence

Immigration

Ego-identity status

Career guidance

Decision-making difficulties

Vocational educational policies.

The purpose of this research was to examine the relationship between the identity formation of adolescent Greek immigrants in Germany and the difficulties they encounter in making vocational decisions, as a prerequisite to the consequent selection of relevant education and training. The psychometric tools Ego Identity Process Questionnaire (EIPQ) and The Career Decision Making Difficulties Questionnaire (CDDQ), as well as an improvised demographic questionnaire, were handed out to 100 pupils of the Hellenic High School of Wuppertal. The research results were interpreted in the light of Marcia's identity typology and Gati's theoretical model and revealed that: (a) Adolescents with an Identity Achievement had little difficulty in choosing a career, while others had considerable difficulty. (b) There was no relevance between age groups and identity typology. (c) Genders did not differ in identity typology and vocational decision-making difficulties. Both sexes seemed to have equal difficulty in their vocational pursuits. (d) School performance did not differ according to the type of identity. (e) The higher the school grades/performance, the higher the identity inquiry. (f) The greater the difficulties of adolescents in their vocational choices, the less committed they became. (g) The high and middle educational level of mothers (but not of fathers) led to higher rates of Identity Achievement. The difficulties of adolescents' vocational decision-making did not differ according to the educational level of their parents. (h) The duration of staying of adolescent immigrants in Germany was not correlated with difficulties in their vocational choices.

Contribution/Originality: The findings aim to assist the educational community in coping with the vocational decision difficulties of teenager immigrants, seek to contribute to the relevant existing literature and to serve in the planning of vocational educational policies for adolescents abroad.

1. INTRODUCTION

The *rites of passage* are associated with entering new stages, with a change of status and age. The *margin* phase in which, among other things, they are distinguished, hovers somewhere *between and betwixt* (Turner, 1977). During adolescence, persons pass from childhood to adulthood, experiencing a second birth. They leave family protection, shake off their former outward image, and, until they make a new one, feel threatened by an invisible enemy, which may be their formerly frightened Self, adolescent vulnerability, anger (Dolto, Dolto-Tolitch, & Percheminier, 2012).

Identity shaping, immigration, and vocational choice are perceived as rites of passage that may make it difficult for the adolescents, who may form a dysfunctional identity (Lightfoot, Cole, & Cole, 2014). They may also have difficulty making vocational decisions or making an inappropriate decision (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994). Finally,

it is possible, being immigrants, to adopt as *culturalization strategies* the *separation* or *marginalization*, which will cause them negative emotions and mental health problems (Pavlopoulos, Dalla, & Motti-Stefanidi, 2017).

This research highlights a variety of rites of passage; the transition from adolescence to adulthood and the interplay of this age with the formation of identity and with factors such as vocational decision and immigration, which also have an *intermediate* character. The research problem is examined in modern globalization and crisis, where the boundary between the old that recedes and the new that has not yet been formed is visible.

2. THE CONTEXT

Stormy adolescence is a special way of life. Adolescents, because of their biological maturity and uncertainty about the social behaviors of the adults that they are about to adopt, are anxious about how they look in the eyes of others, compared to what they feel they are (Erikson, 1994). They are upset during the crystallization of vocational decisions, because vocational choice interacts with multilevel changes that they experience, and with factors that contribute to the formation of their personality (Hadia, 2015). Critical factors are also the dynamic life experiences, such as migration, that changes the environment and determines the cultural, social and economic parameters with which the young immigrants coexist (Pavlopoulos et al., 2017). The socio-cultural context is underlined, as it is associated with challenges that the adolescents face in the formation of their identity and in their vocational orientation (Pavlopoulos, Bezevegkis, & Georganti, 2012).

According to *maximal self-determination*, people freely determine what kind of person they will become (Schwartz, 2000), while, according to the principle of *epigenesis* (Erikson, 1994), the personality evolves forever, following a series of conflicting psychosocial developmental stages, extending from birth to old age. Between the ages of 12 and 20, the adolescents seek the single, unique and consistent Self (Erikson, 1977), but then the protective falsehood emerges, which facilitates socialization. It, in order to activate the psychic reality of the inner world and the true context of life outside, must converse with the former authentic Self of the solitary play of childhood (Matot, 2014).

Through identity crisis, which is considered the normative psychosocial aspect of adolescence, adolescents mature (Erikson, 1977), resolving conflicts between positive and negative traits (Erikson, 1994). Social and individual factors converse and the adolescents, with an abstract-symbolic thinking, come up with serious issues, whose quality of negotiation depends on their maturity (Piaget & Inhelder, 1990). During this unifying process, the adolescents' experiment with identities, being activated in their self-discovery. For optimal identity formation, a psychological moratorium is needed, where the adolescents explore more and engage less (Erikson, 1994).

Judgment/ exploration and *effectiveness/ commitment* are associated with identity-enhanced personality, which is a developmental stage and is established in late adolescence (Marcia, 1993). In *exploration*, the adolescents examine alternatives, combining self-knowledge and worldview. In *commitment*, they undertake obligations on catalytic issues for the transition to adulthood: Ideology, values, sexuality, subject of studies, career (Schwartz, Mullis, Waterman, & Dunham, 2000). Marcia, combining *exploration* and *commitment*, came up with the following adolescent identities: *Identity Achievement*, *Identity Foreclosure*, *Moratorium* and *Identity Diffusion* (Makri-Botsari, 2008).

In *Identity Achievement*, the teenagers, after going through periods of crisis, set goals, which they try to achieve through decisions. Politicized and with a worldview, they reflect on the vocational choices that they make (Marcia, 2002). In *Identity Foreclosure*, the teenagers unquestionably adopt the standards of their parents. Although they probably did not experience a crisis, they are committed to the views and attitudes of others. The overprotective family, with interfering parents, determines the values of this style of identity (Marcia, 1966). In *Moratorium*, the teenagers try. They are experiencing a turbulent period of crisis, with successive changes in their preferences. Their inner confusion is reflected in their moody behavior that stigmatizes their relationships with the environment (Marcia, 2002). In *Identity Diffusion*, the adolescents only target in the short term. They do not try; they fear

responsibilities. Trying alternatives, they have preferences, but, by not connecting theory and practice, they do not form a clear identity (Marcia, 1966).

The most functional identity style is the *Achievement* one. Its independent teenagers have a clear plan. They have self-confidence, good grades/performance, and acceptable behavior. Their parents release them, offering them a secure bond that gives them a sense of acceptance (Kroger & Haslett, 1988). The passive teenagers of *Identity Foreclosure* submit to leading parents, who force them to adhere to family traditions. With limited sociability and lack of creativity, they become uncompromising and complacent in later life (Frank, Pirsch, & Wright, 1990). The stressful teenagers of *Moratorium* show mobility. Yet, the supportive parents reinforce their expression, which allows them to disagree, without, however, losing mutual respect. Although treated as self-existents, they have difficulties to commit to long-term intimacy (Grotevant & Cooper, 1985). The volatile teenagers of *Identity Diffusion* neither explore nor engage. They do not develop close interpersonal relationships; they are socially isolated. They often feel that their absent parents have abandoned or neglected them and, being emotionally distant, they feel that they do not communicate with them (Berzonsky, 2004).

Since identity is a work of individual and social determination, its formation, in addition to the emergence of human inner forces, also takes on a behavioral dimension (Potamianos, 2012). It is a dynamic self-construction of fluctuations and restatements, which is not resolved once and for all in adolescence. As the understanding of the Self is revised, identity is formed in *successive periods of exploration-commitment, in cycles of Moratorium - Achievement - Moratorium - Achievement* (MAMA cycles) (Stephen, Fraser, & Marcia, 1992).

However, career development is also a lifelong process, part of which is the *vocational choice* (Kantas & Hantzi, 1991), as a prerequisite to the consequent selection of relevant education and training. Some people are engaged in their future profession since their childhood. For others, however, the vocational choice is not linked to desires and talents but to the law of supply and demand in the labor market. Most people move between these two extremes (Feldman, 2010). Individually and in combination, personal and social factors are motivations for a vocational choice (Kazi, 2007), and the transition from school to work is assisted by family, educators and significant Others (e.g., friends and/or classmates), confirming or even extending the initial adolescent choices (Phillips, Christopher-Sisk, & Gravino, 2001). A key role in vocational exploration is played by the unique profile of each adolescent (Argyropoulou, 2017).

Often, the choice of profession and studies are interrelated (Koumoundourou, Tsaousis, & Kounenou, 2011). The Greek adolescent immigrants in Germany, pupils of Greek high-schools there, participate annually in the Pan-Hellenic Examinations of Greek Expatriates and are admitted directly in Greek universities and indirectly in German ones. With the Greek High School Diploma, they can be trained vocationally in Germany, in specialized post-secondary studies ("Ausbildung"). Of course, there are also those who replace their parents in production, as unskilled or skilled workers (Damanakis et al., 2011).

As a rule, a vocational decision is complex and problematic (Di Fabio, Palazzeschi, Asulin-Peretz, & Gati, 2013). *Procrastination in job-seeking*, as a developmental stage, is expected (Guay, Senecal, Gauthier, & Fernet, 2003), but, as a consistent personality feature, it becomes a chronic *career indecision*, generalized to any significant decision-making (Osipow, 1999). Instead, the *ideal vocational decision maker* takes its responsibility (Gati, Krausz, & Osipow, 1996). (Gati et al., 1996) proposed a model in which, initially, they classified the difficulties of vocational decision-making into those that occur prior to the beginning of decision-making process and those that appear during this process. The first includes the *lack of readiness*, while the latter include the *lack of information* and the *inconsistent information*. These categories are divided into ten subcategories: *lack of motivation*, general *indecisiveness*, *dysfunctional myths*, *lack of knowledge about the career decision-making process* (Steps), *lack of self-knowledge* (Self), *lack of information on alternative occupations*, *lack of information on the ways of obtaining information*, *unreliable information*, conflicts of persons with themselves (*internal conflicts*) and with significant Others (*external conflicts*). The combination of internal concerns and exposure to a multicultural environment disrupts the acquisition of adolescents' identity (Giang &

Wittig, 2006), while the cultural dimension is also involved in career choice, especially when adolescents move to a country with a different culture from home (Gutierrez-Alcivar, 2015). Yet, the ability of their families to adapt to the new culture, while preserving the cultural identity of their birthplace, protects the vocational choice of adolescent immigrants. Otherwise, immigrant adolescents face a stressful process, traumatic and mournful (Pavlopoulos, Dalla, & Motti-Stefanidi, 2011). However, the mentally resilient, in their adaptation, operate with intercultural competence and, supported by compensatory means, manage their vulnerability, considering that immigration gave them more than it took them (Takis, 2006).

In addition, adolescent immigrants face challenges beyond immigration. The family's financial hardship and adolescents' commitment to the family core and community preclude career choices (Bonifacio, 2016). Their stress, due to the *stereotype threat*, in which the natives charge them with low cognitive abilities, may hinder their academic performance (Weber, Appel, & Kronberger, 2015). However, whenever academically superior to the natives, they respond with the *immigrant paradox*: They study more at home, score better on exams, and grow faster (Garcia Coll et al., 2012). Yet, due to racism, they experience *supercultural stress*, which is associated with low self-esteem, depression, marginalization, identity confusion, even with toxic substances and alcohol (Takis et al., 2006). Teenagers are usually flexible, while their parents are not. This, combined with the divergence of individualistic (host country) and collective (country of origin) cultures, directs them, in order to save family cohesion, to subordinate their personal interests to kinship (Akosah-Twumasi, Emeto, Lindsay, Tsey, & Malau-Aduli, 2018).

Greek adolescent immigrants in Germany have additional difficulties and socio-psychological burdens (Hopf, 1993). Whether attending a Greek school abroad or living in areas exclusively inhabited by Greeks, they are exposed to both the immigrant microcosm (*ghetto*) and German society (Kasimati, 1983). They experience the constant problems of every Greek teenager immigrant in the world, who, trying to combine old and new, as abroad they are considered Greeks but in Greece foreigners, feel, at the same time, both Greek and acclimatized in the host country (Varverakis, 2011). Part of their difficulties focuses on school and career (Hopf, 1991).

3. SCOPE AND RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

An attempt is made herein to connect the typology of identity and the difficulties in choosing a career for pupils of the Hellenic High School of Wuppertal (North Rhine-Westphalia). Also, highlighting, according to Marcia, the type of their identity and the projection of the process in making vocational choices is also enquired. Factors that may be related to adolescent personal identity and vocational decision difficulties (gender, age, school performance, educational level of parents, and the duration of stay of adolescent immigrants in Germany) are also being investigated.

The research hypotheses are:

- a) The existence of a relationship between identity formation and difficulties in making vocational decisions: The *Identity Achievement* and the *Identity Foreclosure* will be associated with fewer difficulties in making vocational decisions, while the *Moratorium* and *Identity Diffusion* with more (Gordon & Steel, 2015; Marcia, 1966; Marcia, 2002).
- b) In the relationship between age and identity, the findings are contradictory. It has been argued that identity types evolve linearly, without regressions (Marcia, 1966). Therefore, older ages will be positively associated with *Identity Achievement* and *Moratorium*, while younger ones with *Identity Foreclosure* and *Diffusion* (Meeus..., Van de Schoot, Keijsers, Schwartz, & Branje, 2010; Meilman, 1979; Papazoglou, 2014). But other researchers suggest that adolescents do not pass from one type of identity to another in a predetermined order (Bosma & Kunnen, 2001). So, strong identity commitments are also assumed in early adolescence.
- c) Regarding gender, the results of previous researches are contradictory. High percentages of girls are classified in advanced identities (*Identity Achievement*, *Moratorium*) and have less difficulty in career choices. High percentages of boys are classified in underdeveloped types (*Identity Foreclosure* and *Diffusion*) and have

more difficulties in career choices (Gonida-Bamniou & Deligianni-Kouimtzi, 2008; Issa, 2014; Kaddoura & Sarouphim, 2019; Solomontos-Kountouri & Hurry, 2008), but also high percentages of them are classified in sophisticated identities (Marcia, 1993). However, there is no gender difference either in identity typology (Kumru & Thomson, 2003) or in the difficulties of making a career choice (Gati, Osipow, Krausz, & Saka, 2000).

- d) The highest school performance will be associated with *Identity Achievement*, the lowest with *Identity Diffusion* (Berzonsky, 2004; Hadia, 2015; Issa, 2014; Lange & Byrd, 2002). High scores will be associated with less difficulty in making a vocational decision, while low scores will be associated with more (Berzonsky, 2004; Hadia, 2015; Issa, 2014; Kaddoura & Sarouphim, 2019).
- e) The educational level of the parents will be related to the typology of identity in adolescents and to the degree of difficulty of the latter in making vocational decisions (Dimaki, Kaminioti, Kostaki, Psarakis, & Tsourti, 2005; Kazi, 2007; Pezirkianidis, Athanasiades, & Moutopoulou, 2013; Sidiropoulou-Dimakou, Alexopoulou, Argyropoulou, Drosos, & Tampouri, 2008).
- f) The extended living time of the participants in Germany will be associated with fewer difficulties in making vocational decisions (Herwartz-Emden & Berez, 2007).

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1. Sample

The sample, initially, consisted of 134 pupils, 15-18 years old, of the Hellenic High School (Gymnasium – Lyceum) of Wuppertal. However, using the validity of the Gati's questionnaire (Gati et al., 1996), it eventually included 100 questionnaires. The sample of 100 pupils is formed as follows:

- 24 participants (24%) (9 boys, 15 girls) from the 3rd Grade/Class of Gymnasium (i.e., the last Grade of Junior High School).
- 24 participants (24%) (11 boys, 13 girls) from the 1st Grade of Lyceum (i.e., the Senior High School).
- 28 participants (28%) (10 boys, 18 girls) from the 2nd Grade of Lyceum.
- 24 participants (24%) (6 boys, 18 girls) from the 3rd Grade of Lyceum (i.e., the last Grade of Senior High School).

The selection of the sample was based on the fact that from the 3rd Grade of Gymnasium, adolescents gradually form a personal identity and are reflected in vocational decisions. Questionnaires were handed out in four classes, to identify differences related to age. The distribution of their fathers and mothers, depending on their educational level, is shown in Table 1.

Table-1. Distribution of the sample, depending on the educational level of their parents.

| Educational Level | Frequency | | Percentage | |
|--------------------------------|-----------|---------|------------|---------|
| | Fathers | Mothers | Fathers | Mothers |
| Elementary School | 5 | 7 | 5% | 7% |
| Junior High School (Gymnasium) | 28 | 16 | 28% | 16% |
| Senior High School (Lyceum) | 45 | 45 | 45% | 45% |
| Tertiary Vocational Graduates | 6 | 15 | 6% | 15% |
| University Graduates | 9 | 13 | 9% | 13% |
| Post-graduate Degrees | 6 | 4 | 6% | 4% |
| Doctoral Degrees | 1 | - | 1% | - |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100% | 100% |

The distribution of the grouped educational levels of fathers and mothers is shown in Table 2 (Low: Elementary, Gymnasium; Medium: Lyceum; High: Tertiary Education).

Table-2. Distribution of the sample, depending on the grouped educational level of their parents.

| Educational Level | Frequency | | Percentage | |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|------------|---------|
| | Fathers | Mothers | Fathers | Mothers |
| Low | 33 | 23 | 33% | 23% |
| Medium | 45 | 45 | 45% | 45% |
| High | 22 | 32 | 22% | 32% |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100% | 100% |

4.2. Data Collection - Means

The Greek versions of the following questionnaires were handed out:

- The Ego Identity Process Questionnaire (EIPQ), translated into Greek by [Georganti \(2009\)](#).
- The Career Decision Making Difficulties Questionnaire (CDDQ), translated into Greek by [Koumoundourou and Kassotakis \(2007\)](#).

Also, an improvised questionnaire was issued (Demographics Questionnaire), which concerns socio-demographic data of Greek adolescent immigrants in Germany (gender, age, place of birth, time of residence of themselves and their parents in Germany, class, marital status, educational level - occupation of parents, school performance).

The EIPQ evaluates the search for and commitment to a psychological identity during adolescence and emerging adulthood ([Zimmermann, Mantzouranis, & Biermann, 2010](#)). Its 32 elements were randomly classified into the dimensions of *exploration* and *commitment* ([Balistreri, Busch-Rossnagel, & Geisinger, 1995](#)), which are evaluated in ideological field (profession, religion, politics, values) and interpersonal field (family, friendships, relationships with the opposite sex, gender roles). The agreement is declared on a six-point Likert scale. The sum of the scores gives the total scores of *exploration* and *commitment*. The differential correlation of the dimensions, based on the configuration of their separate scores in relation to the median, results in the identities of Marcia ([Georganti, 2009](#)). The median values were: 66.5 (*exploration*) and 62.0 (*commitment*). The separate scores of the two dimensions directly evaluate the contribution of each dimension. Those who, in both dimensions, are rated above the median are classified in the *Identity Achievement*, while those who are rated below are classified in the *Identity Diffusion*. Those who, in the *exploration*, are rated above the median but, in the *commitment*, below, are classified in the *Moratorium*. Those with the opposite of the previous results are classified in *Identity Foreclosure*. The reliability of the tool was tested by its creators separately for each of the dimensions. The internal consistency index of Cronbach α was: 0.76 for *exploration* and 0.75 for *commitment* ([Balistreri et al., 1995](#)), while in the present study it is: 0.44 for *exploration* and 0.66 for *commitment*.

The CDDQ is for teens and young adults. It estimates vocational indecision and evaluates the causes of difficulties in making vocational decisions ([Gati & Kulcsar, 2019](#)). The edition of the present study includes 34 questions of basic and individual difficulties ([Gati & Saka, 2001](#)), on a nine-point Likert scale. The creators of the tool tested its reliability in an Israeli and an American sample of men and women, 19 to 23 years old. The average Cronbach α reliability index for the ten scales of difficulties was 0.78 and 0.77, respectively. In both samples, the overall reliability of the tool was 0.95. The similarity of the Cronbach α index in the whole tool, from its application to both samples, is reflected in the Spearman correlation coefficient: 0.94 for the 10 scales ([Gati et al., 1996](#)). The average Cronbach α reliability index in the present study is 0.87.

4.3. Data Collection - Procedure

A quantitative research was carried out by convenient sampling. After receiving the relevant permits (approval of the research and validation of its approval by the Greek Institute of Educational Policy and the Ministry of Education, respectively), teachers, pupils and parents of the school were informed about the purpose, its duration, the way of using the data or results, its benefits and the privacy protection measures ([Creswell, 2016](#)).

Parents/guardians were given consent forms for their minor children to participate in the research. The questionnaires were completed at school, without third party interventions. Two teaching hours were required in each class. Due to the large number of pupils in the classrooms, two teachers were present. To ensure non-effect of the series, the EIPQ and the CDDQ were distributed alternately in a second phase, while the Demographics Questionnaire was completed at the same time, at the beginning of the process. For the protection of personal data, these confidential and research-only questionnaires were anonymized (Robson, 2010).

5. FINDINGS - RESULTS

5.1. Identity and Difficulty in Making a Vocational Decision

This relationship was investigated by applying the Single Factor Variance Analysis (ANOVA). Adolescents, depending on their type of identity, differed in the difficulty of making vocational decisions [$F(3, 96) = 8.08, p < 0.001$]. The subsequent Bonferroni testing showed that the mean value (MV) of difficulty for *Moratorium* adolescents ($MV = 4.42$ and $SD = 1.10$) was higher compared to *Identity Achievement* adolescents ($MV = 3.05$ and $SD = 0.94$) and to *Identity Foreclosure* ones ($MV = 3.56$ and $SD = 1.15$). A statistically significant difference was observed between adolescents with *Identity Achievement* and *Diffusion* ($MV = 3.92$ and $SD = 1.09$) (see Table 3 and Figure 1).

Table-3. MV and SD of the difficulties in making vocational decisions depending on the type of identity.

| Identity Type | Difficulties in making vocational decisions | |
|----------------------|---|------|
| | MV | SD |
| Identity Diffusion | 3.92 | 1.09 |
| Identity Foreclosure | 3.56 | 1.15 |
| Moratorium | 4.42 | 1.1 |
| Identity Achievement | 3.05 | 0.94 |

5.2. Age and Typology of Identity

To investigate the differentiation of age groups (14-16, 17-18 years old) and the identity typology, a χ^2 test was applied. It appeared that there was no differentiation [$\chi^2(3, N = 100) = 3.37, p > 0.05$].

5.3. Gender: Identity typology and difficulties in making a vocational decision

In the case concerning the differentiation of gender and identity, a χ^2 test was applied. It appeared that there was no gender differentiation [$\chi^2(3, N = 100) = 3.78, p > 0.05$]. In order to check whether the genders differ in the difficulties of making vocational decisions, a statistical *t-test* was applied. The two genders did not differ [$t(98) = 0.87, p > 0.05$].

5.4. School Performance: Identity and Difficulties in Making a Vocational Decision

To examine whether adolescents of different identity types differ in school performance, a Single-Factor Variance Analysis (ANOVA) was applied. The identity types did not differ [$F(3, 96) = 2.19, p > 0.05$]. To test the relationship between school performance, difficulty in making vocational decisions and of both identity dimensions, the *Pearson r* correlation analysis was applied. A weak positive correlation was found between school performance and exploration; a moderately negative correlation was found between commitment and vocational decision-making difficulties (see Table 4).

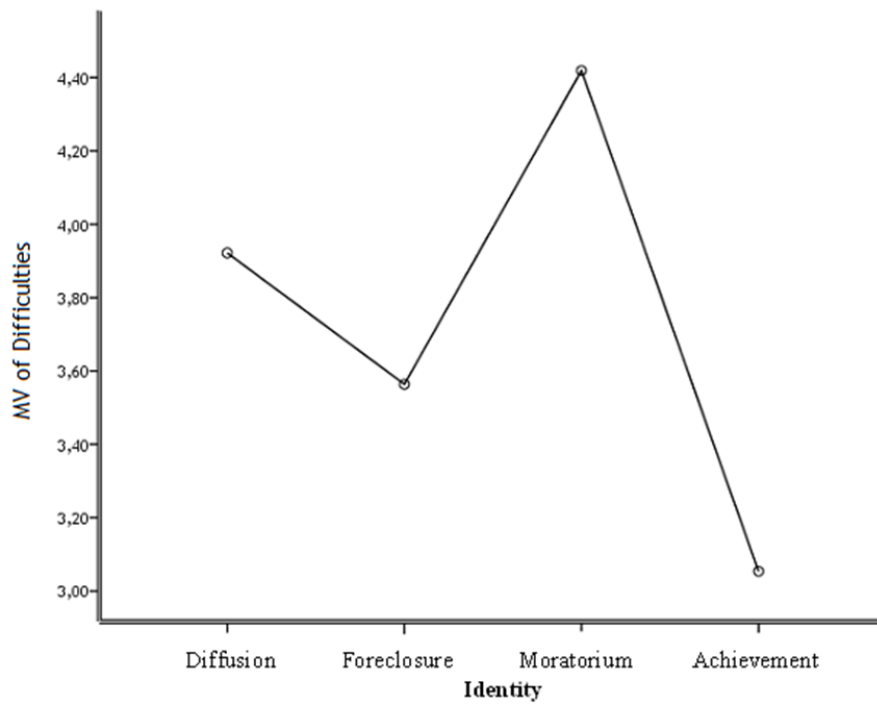


Figure-1. Differentiation of the MV of difficulties depending on the type of identity.

Table-4. School performance, vocational decision-making difficulties and identity dimensions.

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|--|---|-------|---------|-------|
| 1. School performance | 1 | -0,08 | -0,02 | 0,28* |
| 2. Vocational decision-making difficulties | | 1 | -0,40** | 0,06 |
| 3. Commitment | | | 1 | -0,03 |
| 4. Exploration | | | | 1 |

Note: *p < 0.01, **p < 0.001.

5.5. Educational Level of Parents: Identity and Vocational Decision-Making Difficulties

The χ^2 test was applied. There is no difference between identity typology and fathers' educational level [χ^2 (6, N = 100) = 10.253, $p > 0.05$], while there is a difference between identity typology and mothers' educational level [χ^2 (6, N = 100) = 17.746, $p < 0.01$].

Adolescents with low-educated mothers were categorized into *Identity Diffusion*, then into the *Moratorium*, then into *Identity Foreclosure*, and finally into *Identity Achievement*. At the mothers' medium educational level, the highest percentages of adolescents were categorized into *Identity Achievement*, then into *Identity Foreclosure*, then into the *Moratorium*, and finally into *Identity Diffusion*. At the high educational level of mothers, the highest percentages were categorized into *Identity Achievement*, then into the *Moratorium*, then into *Identity Foreclosure* and, finally, into *Identity Diffusion* (see Table 5).

Table-5. Distribution of identities compared to the educational level of mothers.

| Identity typology | Educational level [N (%)] | | | Total |
|----------------------|---------------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | Low | Medium | High | |
| Identity Diffusion | 9 (39.1%) | 7 (15.6%) | 2 (6.3%) | 18 (18%) |
| Identity Foreclosure | 5 (21.7%) | 12 (26.7%) | 4 (12.5%) | 21 (21%) |
| Moratorium | 7 (30.4%) | 9 (20.0%) | 11 (34.4%) | 27 (27%) |
| Identity Achievement | 2 (8.7%) | 17 (37.8%) | 15 (46.9%) | 34 (34%) |
| Total | 23 (100%) | 45 (100%) | 32 (100%) | 100 (100%) |

In the investigation of the relationship between the educational level of parents and the difficulties of making vocational decisions, a Single-Factor Variance Analysis (ANOVA) was applied. Regardless of their educational level, adolescents did not differ in their difficulty of making vocational decisions:

Fathers: [$F(2,97) = .243, p > 0.05$]; Mothers: [$F(2,97) = 2.76, p > 0.05$].

5.6. Living Time in Germany and Difficulties in Vocational Decision-Making

The Pearson r correlation analysis showed that there is no statistically significant correlation between them [$r(100) = 0.06, p > 0.05$].

6. DISCUSSION – CONCLUSIONS

While biological evolution interacts with the teachings of Others, the child self-organizes and develops, as an active and free subject, utilizing even the collective social memory (Jacquard, 2010).

In the present study, it was confirmed that adolescents, depending on the type of identity, have a different difficulty in making vocational decisions. The adolescents of *Identity Achievement* faced negligible difficulties (Gordon & Steel, 2015; Marcia, 1966; Marcia, 2002), but, contrary to assumptions, the adolescents of *Identity Foreclosure* faced numerous ones, perhaps because the compliance with parental standards may not have been convincingly adopted (Frank et al., 1990). The increased difficulties are probably due to the release from their parents or even to the fact that these adolescents are going through the transition from *Identity Foreclosure* to *Moratorium* (Kroger & Haslett, 1987). Since *Identity Foreclosure* persons are in both a “developmental” and a “binding” stage, participants are likely to be “developmental”, thus exploring more and therefore having more difficulties (Jespersen, Kroger, & Martinussen, 2013). The findings confirmed that adolescents of *Moratorium* and *Identity Diffusion* would have more difficulties in making vocational decisions (Gordon & Steel, 2015; Marcia, 1966; Marcia, 2002). The crisis of functional identity, which, above all, characterizes the *Moratorium*, explains the appearance of additional difficulties in making a vocational decision (Meeus, 1996). The adolescents of *Identity Diffusion* are not realistic; they do not try to be (Marcia, 1966). As a result, they have difficulty in making vocational choices. They did not have much difficulty herein, however, but moderate; possibly because, in the questionnaires, they chose the easy solution of the commonly accepted position, in the middle of each scale (Katerelos, 2020).

There was no difference between age and identity typology. The older teenagers were classified in *Identity Achievement* and *Moratorium* but the youngest ones in all types. Research observes a particular sequence of developmental progress in measured forms of adolescents’ identity (*Identity Foreclosure* or *Diffusion*, *Moratorium*, *Identity Achievement*) (Meilman, 1979). Others, however, support a non-specific sequence of transition from type to type of identity (Bosma & Kunnen, 2001). The findings are reinforced by Erikson (1994), according to which adolescents enter adolescence already engaged, due to the resolution of psychosocial crises in childhood. Contributing studies suggest that early adolescents have strong identity commitments (Adams & Jones, 1983; Archer, 1982; Meeus, Jedema, Helsen, & Vollebergh, 1999). Therefore, even participants aged 14–16 may have already strongly chosen and thus been classified in *Identity Achievement*. Moreover, the *Moratorium*, as an identity of some younger people, is probably not Marcia's *Moratorium* but the transitional *searching moratorium*, which is observed in the beginning and middle of adolescence, but disappears at the end of it Meeus et al. (2010).

There was no difference between gender and identity typology; gender and degree of difficulty in making a vocational decision. The results are consistent with studies that do not show significant gender differences in identity situations (Kumru & Thomson, 2003), and show that gender is not associated with vocational decision-making difficulties (Gati et al., 2000).

Both girls and boys in this survey belong to *Moratorium* and *Identity Achievement*. Since 1960, the gender differences have emerged more in interpersonal than in ideological and overall identity (Meeus et al., 2010). It is therefore reasonable today for the teenagers in Germany to have overcome issues of gender discrimination.

Regarding girls, the results go along with other researches (Meeus et al., 2010; Streitmatter, 1988) and explain that: In early adolescence, girls' brains develop rapidly, resulting in girls entering adolescence early. Other studies classify boys mainly in *Identity Achievement* and *Moratorium* (Marcia, 1993), because they focus on having strong identities and not on developing intimate relationships (Erikson, 1994).

The results confirmed that boys and girls have equal difficulty in making vocational decisions. In the West, there are now drastic changes in gender differentiation and perceptions that distinguish women from men in social and vocational issues (Gonida-Bamniou & Deligianni-Kouimtzi, 2008). After all, other factors may have contributed to the vocational development of adolescents in this sample (personal interests, individual ambitions, family, educational and socio-economic background of parents, school, peers, wider socio-cultural environment) (Sidiropoulou-Dimakakou et al., 2008). Therefore, gender does not dominate in this respect.

The school performance is not affected by the type of identity. However, in the test between school performance, difficulty in making vocational decisions and in both dimensions of identity, it was observed that the higher the performance of these adolescents, the more they explore; while, the more difficulties they have in their career choices, the less they commit. These results are interpreted because the persons of *Identity Achievement* and *Moratorium*, having an exploration score above the median (Balistreri et al., 1995), adopt better study habits, thus achieving higher academic performance (Berzonsky, 2004; Lange & Byrd, 2002). Due to their study experience, they are perfectionists with demands on themselves. They feel their responsibilities, worry about their vocational decision (Kerr & Sodano, 2003) and, because of more choices, feel uncertain (Hadia, 2015). Therefore, it is believed that, perhaps for better results, they are constantly researching and, due to their increasing effort, are scoring higher. However, these findings are met with skepticism, since the submitted school performance of the anonymized questionnaires has not been cross-checked at the School Records. Probably the teenagers, due to low self-confidence and burdened with the expectations of Others, hid their insecurities behind untrue elements (Eleftherakis & Korosis, 2014; Makri-Botsari, 2008).

Moratorium and *Identity Diffusion* adolescents are low-committed (Balistreri et al., 1995). The former soon drastically change their preferences (Marcia, 2002). Their possible mood swings negatively affected the areas of their lives, increasing difficulties in vocational decisions. Because of their potentially fear-of-responsibility behavior, the same happened to the latter, as well (Peterson, Marcia, & Cappendale, 2004), because they are inconsistent and dreamy (Marcia, 1966). Because of the difficulties, they move away from educational events and ignore parameters in the vocational decision-making process. Because they have difficulties, they are not committed and, possibly, they are not involved in educational practice (Peterson et al., 2004). This is how lower-performance adolescents work mostly, choosing academically and vocationally based on their areas of greatest strength (Kerr & Sodano, 2003). Their school performance also determines their vocational choices (Dimaki, Kaminioti, Kostaki, Tsourti, & Psarakis, 2004).

The findings showed a lack of relationship between fathers' educational level and identity types, contrary to the relationship between mothers' educational level and identity types. Maternal communication is a catalyst in adolescents' *exploration* and, possibly, the mothers of the participants have a strong binary relationship with them (Meeus, Oosterwegel, & Vollebergh, 2002). The educational level of parents did not differentiate the degree of difficulty of adolescents in making vocational decisions, perhaps because the direct influences of the family did not play a role, like the indirect ones (e.g., adolescents-parents proximity, parenting style, parent-school relationship etc.) (Kazi, 2007). Despite the bidirectional teen-mother relationship, it is likely that these teenagers and their families were influenced by the German family model, where mothers, although concerned about their children, do not exaggerate parental interference. At the same time, Greek immigrant mothers in Germany make a living, working intensively. Therefore, their children become autonomous, without the external interventions of parents, regarding emotions and attitudes. Moreover, as a consequence of the fact that the Greek society now resembles Western models, the intercultural research presents Greek adolescents and post-adolescents moderately dependent on their

parents (Christopoulou, Sotiropoulou, & Pavlopoulos, 2010). In fact, it can be assumed that the aforementioned mothers did not trap their children (of early - mainly - adolescence) in the society of origin. They managed their nostalgia for homeland and did not suspend the independence of their children (Spiegler, Thijs, Verkuyten, & Leyendecker, 2019).

Although immigrant stories include separation, loss of faces and objects, sadness, mourning, fear, cultural shock, communication problems, loneliness, prejudice, isolation, and identity redefining (Kerrisk, 2010), it appeared that the particular adolescents perceived their biographical discontinuity as an evolutionary phase (Herwartz-Emden & Berez, 2007). They harmonized with the host country and the relocation did not cause them any emotional disturbances (Takis et al., 2006). This may be due to the fact that they did not face racism (Oppedal, Røysamb, & Lackland, 2004) or were supported by their ethnic group, their socioeconomic status or even by the specifics of Germany (Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006).

6.1. Limitations - Suggestions

The results aim to assist the educational community as a whole and to serve in the planning of the educational policy for Greek children abroad (Hellenic Ministry of Education), regarding vocational guidance and counseling. Therefore, it would help, in a future research, to further examine the topic of this one. By removing the limitations of the present one, conducting more research would highlight the needs and support the preparation of appropriate educational-counseling programs.

Because the sample was very small and involved just one school, the results only describe, confirm or disprove the hypotheses locally; they cannot be generalized to the relevant population, since they have no diversity. Their objectivity would be ensured by simple random sampling and by taking the scores from the School Records. Combining the EIPQ with Marcia's interviews and measuring areas of interest to adolescents (e.g., body image) would reveal more deeply their identity status. Tracing the relationship between the types of parenting practice with identity typology and the degree of difficulty in vocational decision-making would advance research. The same would happen with the examination of the complex interrelated parameters of the Social Family Level, or with the investigation on the degree of influence of parents and peers. Determining the impact of immigration on national and ethnic identity and on the relationship of specific identities with vocational decision-making difficulties highlights the socio-cultural environment. It would be scientifically interesting to compare the results of the present study with the findings of similar research, both domestically (Greece) and abroad, in countries with Greek school communities (e.g., USA, Australia). Finally, conducting comparative studies on the relationship between the type of psychological identity and the degree of difficulty in making career decisions in adolescents of ethnic populations other than Greek would emphasize broader aspects of the relationship and the uniqueness of each culture.

Nevertheless, such studies require the existence of a relevant career guidance and counseling service. Prior to 2011, the Hellenic Ministry of Education included an independent career guidance and counseling service, having bureaus all over the country, staffed with more than 700 teachers, specialized in career guidance and counseling. This qualified personnel practically covered the entire Greek secondary education, in offering the relevant services. After the emergence of the economic crisis in Greece and due to subsequent cutbacks on the national budget for education, nowadays there are less than 150 career counselors, without central administrative supervision, who cannot adequately meet the needs of vocational counseling domestically. The Hellenic Ministry of Education also operates 22 purely Greek high schools abroad (like the one herein, in Wuppertal), where there has never been any provision for offering vocational guidance services.

Recognizing this lack of vocational counseling services abroad, in January 2019, the authors herein implemented a relevant intervention at the Hellenic High School of Wuppertal, aiming at assisting the pupils of the 3rd Grade of Lyceum (the last one) in making educational choices for their admission to the Greek universities, after

participating to the National Examinations. After acquiring the permission of the Greek educational authorities, the first author coordinated this activity at Wuppertal, while the second one conducted a single group session of counseling for two teaching hours, through teleconferencing at the central premises of the Hellenic Ministry of Education (Athens). The universities with their departments and studies, the prerequisites for the participation to the National Examinations and the required scores for admission were presented and analyzed, as well as related questions of the pupils were answered. This successful, according to the stakeholders, pilot-action demonstrated the feasibility of offering on-line vocational guidance and counseling services to schools abroad, thanks to the usage of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). This initiative has not been repeated since, although a couple of counselors would have been enough for covering the most urgent part of vocational guidance needs of Greek high schools abroad. The authors though are available for sharing their know-how.

Funding: This study received no specific financial support.

Competing Interests: The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

Acknowledgement: The authors express their thankfulness to the following persons: S. Kazi, Associate Professor of Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences (Athens), who supported, providing feedback, the completion of this research, and managed with ease and efficiency the problems that arose throughout its preparation; Itamar Gati, Emeritus Professor at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, who, responding immediately to our request for providing a CDDQ, generously demonstrated that science and selfishness are incompatible; V. Pavlopoulos, Associate Professor of the National Kapodistrian University of Athens, for the material that he gave us and the trust he showed us.

REFERENCES

- Adams, G. R., & Jones, R. M. (1983). Female adolescents' identity development: Age comparisons and perceived child-rearing experience. *Developmental Psychology, 19*(2), 249-256. Available at: doi.org/10.1037/0012-1649.19.2.249.
- Akosah-Twumasi, P., Emeto, T., Lindsay, D., Tsey, K., & Malau-Aduli, B. (2018). A systematic review of factors that influence youths career choices-the role of culture. *Frontiers in Education, 3*(58), 1. Available at: doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2018.00058.
- Archer, S. (1982). The lower age boundaries of identity development. *Child Development, 53*(6), 1551-1556. Available at: 10.2307/1130083.
- Argyropoulou, A. (2017). Making vocational decisions in adolescence: A case study. *Theory and Research in Educational Sciences, 20*(1), 63-78.
- Balistreri, E., Busch-Rossnagel, N. A., & Geisinger, K. F. (1995). Development and preliminary validation of the Ego identity process questionnaire. *Journal of Adolescence, 18*(2), 179-192. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1006/jado.1995.1012.
- Berry, J., Phinney, J., Sam, D., & Vedder, P. (2006). Immigrant youth: Acculturation, identity, and adaptation. *Applied psychology: An international review, 55*(3), 303-332. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1464-0597.2006.00256.x.
- Berzonsky, M. (2004). Identity style, parental authority, and identity commitment. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 33*(3), 213-220. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1023/B:JOYO.0000025320.89778.29.
- Bonifacio, L. (2016). *The career development of latino immigrant youth*. Doctoral Thesis, Columbia University.
- Bosma, H., & Kunnen, S. (2001). Determinants and mechanisms in ego identity development: A review and synthesis. *Developmental Review, 21*(1), 39-66. Available at: doi.org/10.1006/drev.2000.0514.
- Christopoulou, A., Sotiropoulou, I., & Pavlopoulos, V. (2010). Psychological separation and mental health in young adults: An intercultural study. In G. Koulierakis, A. Paschalis, V. Rotsika & M. Tzinieri-Kokkosi (Eds.), *Clinical Psychology and Health Psychology: Research and Practice* (pp. 241-271). Athens: Papazisis.
- Creswell, J. (2016). *Research in education: Design, conduct and evaluation of quantitative and qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Athens: Tsorbatzoudis.
- Damanakis, M., Markou, G., Papalexopoulou, E., Michelakaki, T., Gotovos, A., & N., A. (2011). *Greek schools in Germany: Present, past and future* (M. Damanakis, Ed.). Athens: Gutenberg

- Di Fabio, A., Palazzeschi, L., Astulin-Peretz, L., & Gati, I. (2013). Career indecision versus indecisiveness: Associations with personality traits and emotional intelligence. *Journal of Career Assessment*, 21(1), 42-56. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1069072712454698>.
- Dimaki, K., Kaminioti, O., Kostaki, A., Tsourti, Z., & Psarakis, S. (2004). Educational and vocational preferences of Lyceum pupils in urban centers. *Social Research Review*, 114, 147-176. Available at: doi.org/10.12681/grsr.9285.
- Dimaki, K., Kaminioti, O., Kostaki, A., Psarakis, S., & Tsourti, Z. (2005). Educational and occupational preferences of high school students in Greece. *Education Training*, 47(6), 432-446. Available at: [10.1108/00400910510617051](https://doi.org/10.1108/00400910510617051).
- Dolto, F., Dolto-Tolitch, C., & Percheminier, C. (2012). *Adolescents: Problems and concerns*. Athens: Patakis.
- Eleftherakis, T., & Korosis, K. (2014). Adolescent-parent relationships, parental control and school performance. *Educational Sciences*(2-3), 126-146.
- Erikson, E. (1994). *Identity, youth and crisis*. New York: Norton & Company, Inc.
- Erikson, E. (1977). *Childhood and society*. London: Paladin Grafton Books.
- Feldman, R. (2010). *Evolutionary psychology - lifelong development*. Athens: Gutenberg.
- Frank, S., Pirsch, L., & Wright, V. (1990). Late adolescents' perceptions of their relationships with their parents: Relationships among deidealization, autonomy, relatedness, and insecurity and implications for adolescent adjustment and ego identity status. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 19(6), 571-588. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF01537177>.
- Garcia Coll, C., Patton, F., Kerivan Marks, A., Dimitrova, R., Yang, R., Suarez, G., & Patricio, A. (2012). Understanding the immigrant paradox in youth: Developmental and contextual considerations. In A. Masten, K. Liebkind, & D. Hernandez (Eds.), *Realizing the Potential of Immigrant Youth* (pp. 159-180). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Gati, I., Krausz, M., & Osipow, S. (1996). A Taxonomy of difficulties in career decision making. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 43(4), 510-526. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0167.43.4.510>.
- Gati, I., Osipow, S., Krausz, M., & Saka, N. (2000). Validity of the career decision-making difficulties questionnaire: Counselor versus career counselor perceptions. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 56(1), 99-113. Available at: [10.1006/jvbe.1999.1710](https://doi.org/10.1006/jvbe.1999.1710).
- Gati, I., & Saka, N. (2001). High school students' career-related decision-making difficulties. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 79, 331-340. Available at: [10.1002/j.1556-6676.2001.tb01978.x](https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6676.2001.tb01978.x).
- Gati, I., & Kulcsar, V. (2019). Career decision-making difficulties questionnaire. In K. Stoltz & S. Barclay (Eds.), *A comprehensive guide to career assessment* (pp. 289-297). Broken Arrow, OK: National Career Development Association.
- Georganti, A. (2009). *Morality development, identity formation and parental independence during adolescence*. Athens: National and Kapodistrian University of Athens.
- Giang, M., & Wittig, M. (2006). Implications of adolescents' acculturation strategies for personal and collective self-esteem (S. Yeong Kim, Ed.). *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 12(4), 725-739. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1037/1099-9809.12.4.725>.
- Gonida-Bamniou, E., & Deligianni-Kouimtzi, V. (2008). School, family and educational & vocational choices: Composition of research findings from the perspective of gender. In V. Deligianni-Kouimtzi, E. Gonida-Bamniou & A. Psalti (Eds.), *KALLIROI PROJECT, Educational and Vocational Choices of Adolescents: Exploring the Perceptions of issues on Gender Equality in the Greek School Community (Pupils, Parents, Teachers)* (pp. 195-223). Athens: Hellenic Ministry of Education.
- Gordon, V., & Steel, G. (2015). Who are Undecided students. In V. N. Gordon (Ed.), *The undecided college student: An academic and career advising challenge* (pp. 3-55). Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas.
- Grotevant, H., & Cooper, C. (1985). Patterns of interaction in family relationships and the development of identity exploration in adolescence. *Child Development*, 56(2), 415-428. Available at: [10.2307/1129730](https://doi.org/10.2307/1129730).
- Guay, F., Senecal, C., Gauthier, L., & Fernet, C. (2003). Predicting career indecision: A self-determination theory perspective (D. Kivlighan, Ed.). *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 50(2), 165-177. Available at: <https://doi.org.proxy.eap.gr/10.1037/0022-0167.50.2.165>.

- Gutierrez-Alcivar, G. (2015). *Who chooses my future? The Role of personality and acculturation in first and later generation immigrant college students' career decision making. honors college theses paper 146* New York: Pace University.
- Hadia, A. K. (2015). *The professional ambitions of adolescents: the influence of individual characteristics, family and type of education (general/vocational)*. Doctoral Thesis, Athens. Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences.
- Herwartz-Emden, L., & Berez, B. (2007). The integration of young returnees in Germany. A timely overview. *Science and Society, 17-18*(1), 123-145.
- Hopf, D. (1991). *Thirty years of greek-german migration and remigration: school problems and social integration of migrant children in the federal republic of germany and in greece*. Potsdam: University of Potsdam.
- Hopf, D. (1993). *The school situation of the Greek migrant children during their stay in Germany and after their return to Greece*. Potsdam: University of Potsdam.
- Issa, N. (2014). *Ego identity statuses of lebanese youth in early and middle adolescence: Relationship with gender and academic achievement*. Doctoral Thesis, Lebanese American University, School of Arts and Sciences, Beirut, Lebanon.
- Jacquard, A. (2010). *Me and the others, A genetic approach* (3rd ed.). Athens: Katoptro - A. Mamalis and Co.
- Jespersen, K., Kroger, J., & Martinussen, M. (2013). Identity status and ego development: A meta-analysis. *Identity: An International Journal of Theory and Research, 13*(3), 228-241. Available at: 10.1080/15283488.2013.799433.
- Kaddoura, N., & Sarouphim, K. M. (2019). Identity development among Lebanese youth: An investigation of Marcia's paradigm. *Heliyon, 5*(11), e02851. Available at: doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2019.e02851.
- Kantas, A., & Hantzi, A. (1991). *Occupational psychology, Theories of vocational development*. Athens: Ellinika Grammata.
- Kasimati, K. (1983). The cultural identity of the second generation of Greek immigrants in West Germany. *Social Research Review, 48*, 3-20. Available at: https://doi.org/10.12681/grsr.239.
- Katerelos, I. (2020). *Introduction to social research I*. Athens: Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences.
- Kazi, S. (2007). Influence of school and family on the choice of profession. In C. Kapoli (Eds.), *Counselling Horizons for School Guidance - SOS Orientation* (pp. 110-144). Athens: Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences
- Kerr, B., & Sodano, S. (2003). Career assessment with intellectually gifted students. *Journal of Career Assessment, 11*(2), 168-186. Available at: doi.org/10.1177/1069072703011002004.
- Kerrisk, C. (2010). *Inner journeys: Psychodynamic perspectives on immigration, identity and cross-cultural adaptation*. Dissertation, Auckland University of Technology, School of Public Health and Psychosocial Studies, Department of Psychotherapy, Auckland.
- Koumoundourou, G., & Kassotakis, M. (2007). *The greek version of the career decision-making difficulties questionnaire: a preliminary psychometric investigation*. Paper presented at the In International Conference: Guidance and Diversity Research and Application. Padova, Italy: AIOSP/IAEVG.
- Koumoundourou, G., Tsaousis, I., & Kounenou, K. (2011). Parental influences on Greek adolescents career decision-making difficulties: The mediating role of core self-evaluations. *Journal of Career Assessment, 19*(2), 165-182. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/1069072710385547.
- Kroger, J., & Haslett, S. (1987). A retrospective study of ego identity status change by mid-life adults. *Social Science and Behavioural Documents, 17*(1), 3-52.
- Kroger, J., & Haslett, S. J. (1988). Separation-individuation and ego identity status in late adolescence: A two-year longitudinal study. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 17*(1), 59-79. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1007/bf01537677.
- Kumru, A., & Thomson, R. (2003). Ego identity status and self-monitoring behavior in adolescents. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 18*(5), 481-495. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/0743558403255066.
- Lange, C., & Byrd, M. (2002). Differences between students' estimated and attained grades in a first-year introductory psychology course as a function of identity development. *Adolescence, 37*(145), 93-108.
- Lent, R., Brown, S., & Hackett, G. (1994). Toward a unifying social cognitive theory of career and academic interest, choice, and performance. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 45*(1), 79-122. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1006/jvbe.1994.1027.

- Lightfoot, C., Cole, M., & Cole, S. (2014). *The development of children* [Z. Bablekou, Ed.; Translated into Greek by M. Kouliantou]. Athens: Gutenberg.
- Makri-Botsari, E. (2008). *Modern problems of adolescence*. Athens: Hellenic Ministry of Education.
- Marcia, J. (1966). Development and validation of ego-identity status. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 3(5), 551-558. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0023281>.
- Marcia, J. (1993). The ego identity status approach to ego identity. In J. Marcia, A. Waterman, D. Matteson, S. Archer & J. Orlofski (Eds.), *Ego Identity A Handbook for Psychosocial Research* (1st ed., pp. 3-21). New York: Springer-Verlag New York Inc.
- Marcia, J. (2002). Identity and psychosocial development in adulthood. *Identity: An International Journal of Theory and Research*, 2(1), 7-28. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1207/S1532706XID0201_02.
- Matot, J. (2014). Adolescence, deconstruction and the beginning of magic-charm. *Psychiatry of Child and Adolescent*, 2(1-2), 6-22.
- Meeus, W. (1996). Studies on identity development in adolescence: An overview of research and some new data. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 25(5), 569-598. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/bf01537355>.
- Meeus, W., Jedema, J., Helsen, M., & Vollebergh, W. (1999). Patterns of adolescent identity development: Review of literature and longitudinal analysis. *Developmental Review*, 19(4), 419-461.
- Meeus, W., Oosterwegel, A., & Vollebergh, W. (2002). Parental and peer attachment and identity development in adolescence. *Journal of Adolescence*, 25(1), 93-106. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1006/jado.2001.0451>.
- Meeus, W., Van de Schoot, R., Keijsers, L., Schwartz, S. J., & Branje, S. (2010). On the progression and stability of adolescent identity formation: A five-wave longitudinal study in early-to-middle and middle-to-late adolescence. *Child Development*, 81(5), 1565-1581. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2010.01492.x>.
- Meilman, P. (1979). Cross-sectional age changes in ego identity status during adolescence. *Developmental Psychology*, 15(2), 230-231. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1037/0012-1649.15.2.230>.
- Oppedal, B., Røysamb, E., & Lackland, S. D. (2004). The effect of acculturation and social support on change in mental health among young immigrants. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, 28(6), 481-494. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/01650250444000126>.
- Osipow, S. (1999). Assessing career indecision. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 55(1), 147-154.
- Papazoglou, A. (2014). The role of family and peers in shaping the identity of adolescents. *Erkyna, Review of Educational-Scientific Issues*, 3(1), 177-193.
- Pavlopoulos, V., Dalla, M., & Motti-Stefanidi, F. (2011). *Immigration and repatriation: Impacts on children and adolescents*. Athens: National and Kapodistrian University of Athens.
- Pavlopoulos, V., Bezevegkis, H., & Georganti, K. (2012). Ethnic identity and psychological adaptation of immigrant adolescents. In A. Papastylianou (Ed.), *Intercultural routes: Repatriation and psychosocial adaptation* (2nd ed., pp. 91-124). Athens: Gutenberg.
- Pavlopoulos, V., Dalla, M., & Motti-Stefanidi, F. (2017). *Immigration*. In F. Motti-Stefanidi (Ed.), *Children and adolescents in a world that changes. Challenges, adaptation and development* (2nd ed.). Athens: Estia.
- Peterson, D., Marcia, J., & Carpendale, J. (2004). Identity: Does thinking make it so? In C. Lightfoot, C. Lalonde & M. Chandler (Eds.), *Changing Conceptions of Psychological Life* (pp. 113-126). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Pezirkianidis, C., Athanasiades, C., & Moutopoulou, N. (2013). The relationship between adolescents' perception of their parents' jobs and their future career orientation. *Scientific Annals-School of Psychology AUTH*, 10(1), 100-126.
- Phillips, S., Christopher-Sisk, E., & Gravino, K. (2001). Making career decisions in a relational context. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 29(2), 193-214. Available at: <https://doi-org-proxy.eap.gr/10.1177/001100001292002>.
- Piaget, J., & Inhelder, B. (1990). *The psychology of child* [Translated into Greek by K. Kitsos]. Athens: Dedalos I. Zaharopoulos.
- Potamianos, G. (2012). *The study of personality: A critical approach*. In G. Potamianos & F. Anagnostopoulos (Eds.), *Personality: Theories, Clinical Practice and Research*. Athens: Papazisis.

- Robson, C. (2010). *The research of real world* (2nd ed.). Athens: Gutenberg [K. Michalopoulou & F. Kalyva, Eds.; Translated into Greek by V. Ntalakou & K. Vasilikou].
- Schwartz, B. (2000). Self-determination: The tyranny of freedom. *American Psychologist*, 55(1), 79-88. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066x.55.1.79>.
- Schwartz, S. J., Mullis, R. L., Waterman, A. S., & Dunham, R. M. (2000). Ego identity status, identity style, and personal expressiveness: An empirical investigation of three convergent constructs. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 15(4), 504-521. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0743558400154005>.
- Sidiropoulou-Dimakakou, D., Alexopoulou, G., Argyropoulou, A., Drosos, N., & Tampouri, S. (2008). *Digital library*. Athens: Hellenic Ministry of Education: Education & Lifelong Learning Operational Program.
- Solomontos-Kountouri, O., & Hurry, J. (2008). Political, religious and occupational identities in context: Placing identity status paradigm in context. *Journal of Adolescence*, 31(2), 241-258. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2007.11.006>.
- Spiegler, O., Thijs, J., Verkuyten, M., & Leyendecker, B. (2019). Can children develop a dual identity when immigrant mothers feel homesick? A short-term longitudinal study among Turkish immigrants. *European Journal of Developmental Psychology*, 16(5), 581-594. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/17405629.2018.1482742>.
- Stephen, J., Fraser, E., & Marcia, J. E. (1992). Lifespan identity development: Variables related to moratorium-achievement (MAMA) cycles. *Journal of Adolescence*, 15(3), 283-300. Available at: [https://doi.org/10.1016/0140-1971\(92\)90031-y](https://doi.org/10.1016/0140-1971(92)90031-y).
- Streitmatter, J. L. (1988). Ethnicity as a mediating variable of early adolescent identity development. *Journal of Adolescence*, 11(4), 335-346. Available at: [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-1971\(88\)80033-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-1971(88)80033-2).
- Takis, N. (2006). *Mentally resilient immigrants and repatriate adolescent students: Protective and risk factors*. Doctoral Thesis, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Athens.
- Takis, N., Pavlopoulos, V., Papathanasiou, A., Dalla, M., Kaponi, K., & Motti-Stefanidi, F. (2006). Mental resilience and psychopathology of immigrants, repatriates and indigenous adolescents. *Child and Adolescent*, 8(2), 92-111.
- Turner, V. (1977). *The ritual process structure and anti-structure (Symbol, Myth and Ritual Series)*. New York: Cornell Paperbacks.
- Varverakis, M. (2011). *How lived experiences shape the identities of first-generation Greek immigrants*. Dissertation, University of St. Thomas, Minnesota.
- Weber, S., Appel, M., & Kronberger, N. (2015). Stereotype threat and the cognitive performance of adolescent immigrants: The role of cultural identity strength. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 42, 71-81. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cedpsych.2015.05.001>.
- Zimmermann, G., Mantzouranis, G., & Biermann, E. (2010). Ego identity in adolescence: Preliminary validation of a French short-form of the EIPQ. *European Review of Applied Psychology*, 60(3), 173-180. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.erap.2010.01.001>.

Views and opinions expressed in this article are the views and opinions of the author(s), World Journal of Vocational Education and Training shall not be responsible or answerable for any loss, damage or liability etc. caused in relation to/arising out of the use of the content.