Career indecisiveness and personality in Greek High school students

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Career indecisiveness is one of the major career decision-making problems. Research so far has demonstrated its relation to a variety of personality factors. The present study aimed to explore, for the first time, indecisiveness in Greek junior High school students and its relation to personality parameters. Emotional and Personality-related Career decision-making Difficulties (EPCD) and Core self-evaluations scale (CSEs) for the assessment of both career indecisiveness and personality variables were administered to the students. The results showed that the students high in EPCD had not made any decisions concerning further education issues, such as type of senior high school, educational orientation, and future university studies. In contrary, the students of the sample who scored high in CSEs had made decisions on the above mentioned parameters. The results have been discussed in relation to implications for counseling.

Key words: Career indecisiveness, educational choice, personality, core self-evaluation, adolescents.

INTRODUCTION

Research in the career domain has paid attention to career decision-making problems in an attempt to help individuals to enhance their skills for career planning (Gati et al., 1996; Larson et al., 1988). One of the major career decision-making problems has been identified as indecisiveness (Salomone, 1982; Santos, 2001). Indecisiveness is conceptualized as a personality trait and a problem existing before the beginning of the career decision-making process, in contrary to career indecision which is defined as the difficulties that a person faces while making career-related decisions and it is considered to be a normal transitory phase during career decision-making process (Gati et al., 1996; Germeijfs and De Boeck, 2002; Osipow, 1999). Indecisiveness seems to be stable enough and moreover to generalize across decision situations, since indecisive people have difficulties in making all sorts of life decisions, despite their degree of importance (Crites, 1969).

Clinical case studies (Salomone, 1982; Santos, 2001) have revealed that indecisive people seem unable to make decisions even when they have been involved in a long step by step decision-making process and suffer from personal problems such as anxiety, low self-confidence, dependency on others and an unclear sense of their self (Heppner and Hendricks, 1995). Moreover, indecisive people show a deviant decisional pattern in their career development, which is characterized by chronic anxiety and inadequate problem-solving skills (Savickas, 2004) and they are less committed to their educational and/or career choices (Germeijfs et al., 2006). Those people need special attention during career counseling and problems related to indecisiveness should be early enough addressed and effectively treated, prior to any career counseling intervention concerning career decision-making in order for them to be fully involved in the career decision-making process, in a later stage, and...
make more efficacious choices (Di Fabio, 2006; Germeijis and De Boeck, 2003; Nota and Soresi, 2004).

An adequate number of studies have examined the relationship between different aspects of personality and career indecisiveness. High level of anxiety, high levels of irrational beliefs, external locus of control, low self-esteem (Bacanli, 2006; Germeijis and Boeck, 2002; Germeijis et al., 2006; Salomone, 1982), and inadequate identity formation (Cellini and Kantrowski, 1984; Fuqua et al., 1987; Johnson, 1990; Salomone, 1982) are among the most prevalent personality factors that have been found to be related to career indecisiveness and general or chronic indecisiveness.

The researchers, taking into consideration the distinction between career indecision and career indecisiveness and the importance of the latter in the context of career counseling and guidance, developed scales that measure indecisiveness. More precisely, Frost and Shows (1993) developed the Frost Indecisiveness scale, which is a 15-item self-report scale. The scoring is based on two subscales labeled fears about decision making and positive decision making. Another researcher, Bacanli (2000) developed the Personal Indecisiveness Scale (PIS) which is also subdivided into two subscales: exploratory indecisiveness which refers to difficulties related to a long decision-making process and impetuous indecisiveness which refers to quick decision making and giving up such decisions easily. Two years later, Germeijis and de Boeck (2002) published another scale measuring indecisiveness and verified the fact that the two terms (career indecision and indecisiveness) are two separate constructs, since self-esteem as a personality aspect was found to be related only to career indecisiveness.

The model of Emotional and Personality-related Career Decision-making Difficulties (EPCD)

Saka et al. (2008), acknowledging the career indecisiveness as a major problem for people that affects several aspects of their lives, provided the career literature with a general conceptual framework for emotional and personality-related career decision-making difficulties, which addresses in a concrete way the factors that previous research has highlighted as being associated with indecisiveness. The framework is organized into three factors: pessimistic views, anxiety, and self-concept and identity. After analysis, factors are subdivided in 11 categories.

Pessimistic views. Saka et al. (2008) taking into consideration the research related to pessimism and emotional and behavioral reactions have defined pessimistic views as negative cognitive biases and perceptions. These perceptions include pessimistic views regarding the world of work, pessimistic views about the process, and the individual’s degree of control over the process and outcomes. Pessimistic views regarding the world of work refer to negative perceptions of occupations. Pessimistic views about the process refer to a person’s low career-decision making self-efficacy, since the person considers himself as incapable of carrying out an appropriate career decision-making process. The third category, pessimistic views about one’s control, refers to a person’s sense of an external locus of control in the process, the choice and/or the outcomes.

Anxiety. Anxiety refers to the effects of anxiety of specific aspects of the decision making process and it consists of four categories: A) Anxiety about the process, which refers to “…feelings of stress and anxiety prior to the decision making process or anxiety evoked by perfectionism about the process” (p.406). B) Anxiety related to the uncertainty involved in choosing, which refers to uncertainty about the future, anxiety about being in an undecided state, and anxiety related to low tolerance for ambiguity. C) Anxiety about the process of choosing included perfectionism about choosing, fear of losing other potentially suitable options, fear of choosing an unsuitable occupation and anxiety about one’s responsibility for the act of choosing. D) Anxiety about the outcome “refers to worries about the implications of the actualization of the chosen alternative” (p. 407), which is the fear of failure of not meeting one’s expectations and preferences in the certain occupation.

Self-concept and Identity: Self-concept and Identity is the last factor of the model. It refers to one’s developmental personality aspects and consists of four categories: A) Self-esteem which is defined as a sense of a person’s self-worth in both general and career related aspects of life. B) General anxiety which refers to the general trait of anxiety as a more broader and stable personality trait and less as an emotion. C) Uncrystallized identity which refers to difficulties in forming a stable sense of personal identity resulting to a person’s difficulties in expressing “…consolidated beliefs, values, preferences, and life goals” (p.408) and preventing “…the individual from expressing clear vocational preferences, interests, aspirations, and career goals” (p. 408). D) Conflictual attachment and separation, which refers, on one hand, to difficulties in relations with significant others and more specifically to difficulties concerning excessive criticism, lack of satisfaction, lack of support from intimate others, and on the other hand, to a person’s need for approval from them. Both sources are considered to affect a person’s career decision-making process and/or choice.

Based on the above mentioned model, Saka et al. (2008) developed a scale named Emotional and Personality-related Career decision-making Difficulties (EPCD) which measures indecisiveness. The original version of the scale consists of 53 items, while the short version developed by Gati et al. (2011) consists of 25 items. Both versions have been used in studies based on Israeli and American sample (Gati et al., 2011), while the
original version has been validated for Portuguese (da Silva and Ventura, 2012) and Turkish population (Oztepmel, 2012).

Core self-evaluation

Core self-evaluation is a construct within the personality domain which mainly refers to a positive self-concept (Judge et al., 1997). CSE theory has been derived from Packer's writings, a Clinical Psychologist and a Philosopher as well, who suggested that individuals make general evaluations of themselves, that have a subconscious impact on their appraisal of the world around them. Packer (1985) noted that core evaluations are "basic conclusions, bottom-line evaluations, that we all hold subconsciously" (p. 3). Judge et al. (1997) extended Parker's idea and developed an integrative theoretical framework in order to explain dispositional impacts on job satisfaction.

CSE is defined as “fundamental premises that individuals hold about themselves and their functioning in the world” (Judge et al., 1997, p. 161). The specific personality construct consists of four specific traits: (a) self-esteem (i.e., the basic appraisal of a person’s worth), (b) generalized self-efficacy (i.e., a person’s global perception of his or her ability to successfully complete a set of behaviors), (c) locus of control (i.e., the degree to which a person believes that he or she controls events in life, rather than the environment, powerful others or fate), and (d) emotional stability and it sometimes known by its converse, neuroticism (i.e., a person’s lack of emotional stability and his or her tendency to dwell on the negative) (Judge and Bono, 2001a). Although these traits are not identical, they do share significant conceptual similarities, and it is this area of similarity that constitutes the basic, fundamental assessment an individual makes of oneself.

The developers of the construct argue that this broad personality construct is dispositional in nature, predicts action over time and over situations, and thus offers more information about behavior than single constructs (Judge et al., 2003). More precisely, the authors argued that “. . . core-self evaluations is a basic, fundamental appraisal of one’s worthiness, effectiveness, and capability as a person” (Judge et al., 2003, p. 304). Furthermore, Judge et al. (2004) noted that “individuals with positive core self-evaluations appraise themselves in a consistently positive manner across situations; such individuals see themselves as capable, worthy, and in control of their lives” (p. 328–329). Validation studies conducted by CSE's developers found that the specific construct was distinct from other personality traits and the predicted outcomes were above and beyond other personality traits (Judge et al., 2003). CSE has been found to be related to various aspects of human life and functioning, such as expression of emotions (Judge et al., 1999), life happiness (Piccolo et al., 2005), life satisfaction (Chang et al., 2012; Judge et al., 1998), gerontology (Baker et al., 2011), nursing (Almost et al., 2010), and physical and psychological health functioning (Tsousis et al., 2007).

CSE has been widely used in the organizational domain and has shown unique relationships to outcomes above and beyond other individual predictors (Chen, 2012). The construct has been reported to have a positive relation to job satisfaction (Chang et al., 2012; Dormann et al., 2006; Judge and Bono, 2001; Judge et al., 2003), engagement (Rich et al., 2010), popularity (Scott and Judge, 2009), and a negative effect on work burnout (Best et al., 2005). However, it is worth mentioning that a recent research on the bottom line of organizational psychology and career guidance found no relationship between CSE and the calling in career which refers to the one’s perception that a certain career is the purpose of his life (Hirschi, 2011). In Greece, CSE has been recently studied in relation to career decision-making difficulties (Koumoundourou et al., 2011) and career decision-making self-efficacy (Koumoundourou et al., 2012). The results of the first mentioned study showed that the CSE fully mediated the relationship between family variables and girls' career decision-making difficulties. The results of the other study showed that CSE as a personality construct had a direct and indirect effect on vocational identity via career decision-making self-efficacy for girls. As Chen (2012) noted, the research related to organizational domain has clearly demonstrated the CSE's usefulness, but more research is needed in order to understand how CSE contributes to the research literature related to other scientific fields.

The present study

The Greek educational system demands from adolescents (14-15 years old) to make decisions concerning their future career planning early enough in their lives. Their first choice concerns whether they are going to leave school early –at the end of junior High school or they are going to continue their secondary education studies by choosing one of the two types of senior High school (General or Technical High school). Greek research has tried, so far, to identify the factors that influence the students’ specific career decision-making. The literature has stated that the individual’s micro-social environment factors, such as family (Kounenou, 2011), gender, values and social class affect Greek adolescents’ career choice (Kassimati, 1991). In Greek society, parental influence on young people’s career choice seems to be rather important and prominent due to parents’ active involvement into their children’s lives. Greek parents’ habit of organizing their children’s lives affects directly and indirectly the latter’s life choices (Kassimati, 1991; Kokkotas, 1978). For example, Saiti and Mitrosili (2005) reported that Greek parents strongly advise their children to follow upper secondary education
that leads to higher education, instead of attending other types of post secondary education. Although most of the research in adolescents’ career decision making is based on general high school students, Greek students in technical secondary education seem to have different characteristics from students in general education. For example, research (Christopoulou, 2010; Katsampouri et al., 2009) has shown that more males and more immigrants attend technical high schools than general ones. The majority of those students either view their choice as a realistic one providing them with more career options or they consider the studies in a general high school as more demanding. Technical high school students are more influenced by their fathers’ occupational status and show less preference to enrolling in universities than students of general secondary education (Christopoulou, 2010). Despite the fact that Greek research (Koumoundourou et al., 2011; Kounenou, 2011) in the field of adolescents’ career decision-making difficulties has been increased, little attention has been paid to career indecision (Argyropoulou et al., 2007) and moreover to career indecisiveness, which remains an unexplored field for the Greek population. It would be rather important to explore whether career indecisiveness in Greek High school students is related to their first career choice in regard to their secondary education studies and whether personality factors are related to the specific decision.

METHODS

Due to the need for the exploration of the indecisiveness in Greek population and responding to the call of the developers of EPCD for studies that could focus on validating EPCD with additional instruments that measure personality characteristics and indecision (Saka et al., 2008), the present study aimed at exploring issues of career indecisiveness in Greek High school students in relation to their personality aspects, based on EPCD model. Greek adolescents, early enough (15-16 years old), have to make educational and career decisions concerning the type of high school that they are going to attend for the next three years: general lyceum, or technical/vocational technical high school. For the majority of the Greek adolescents, the specific choice is related to their future graduate studies in a University or Technical Institution level and therefore determines their future occupation as well. Besides, as other studies have demonstrated (Creed et al., 2006; Saka and Gati, 2007) and as Hirschi et al. (2011) have stated “…early measures of career development status, therefore, provide important signals regarding those students who may be at risk for or experience extended career indecision” (p. 179).

Based on previous studies (Gati et al., 2011; Saka et al., 2008) that have demonstrated that emotional and personality related factors are associated with career indecisiveness, it is hypothesized in this study that: a) the correlation between the total scores of the EPCD and the measure of the Greek students’ absence of decision concerning the type of senior High school, the kind of scientific direction and their future university studies will be positive and relatively high, b) the correlations between EPCD clusters and subscales and the measure of the Greek students’ absence of decision concerning the type of senior High school, and their future university studies will be positive and relatively high.

Additionally, based on the studies of Chang et al. (2012) and Chen (2012) showing that Core self-evaluations are related to various aspects of one’s behavior, especially in the organizational domain, it is hypothesized that the correlations between CSEs and the measure of students’ absence of decision concerning the type of school and the kind of scientific direction will be negative and relatively high. Finally, based on the studies of Chang et al. (2012) showing that Core self-evaluations are negatively related to people’s negative affectivity, and that EPCD is negatively correlated to positive affection and positive aspect of personality (da Silva and Bentura, 2012), it is hypothesized that EPCD measures and measures of CSEs will be negatively correlated to each other.

Sample

The sample consisted of 200 Greek junior high school students studying in four high schools in the city of Athens. Each school belongs to a different region of the capital. Although authorization was taken from the administrations of several high schools, only the students of the schools that authorization was approved during the data collection participated in the study. Fifty students from each school (each group of students in a regular public school consists of 25 students), all in the final year of junior high school, filled out the questionnaires. In all, 41.5% were boys and 58.5% were girls and their age was 15 years old.

Instruments

Questionnaire for demographic variables. A questionnaire was made for the purposes of the study consisting of 15 items. Participants were asked to declare their parents’ educational background and career status, their status of decisions concerning type of senior high school (General, Technological, no decision), kind of educational orientation (scientific, technological, theoretical, no decision) and whether they have made their decisions concerning their future university studies.

Emotional and Personality Career Difficulties Scale (EPCD; Gati et al., 2011), short version. The EPCD was used in order to assess participants’ indecisiveness and the personality factors related to it. The short version consists of 25 items. The first page of the questionnaire includes general background information (gender, age, and years of education). The following pages contain 25 statements, each representing one of the eleven difficulty categories. The participants were asked to rate the degree to which each statement described them on a 9-point scale (1- does not describe me to 9- describes me well). Cronbach-alpha’s internal consistency reliabilities in the sample of the present study were: .92, .79, .92, .76 for the total scale, and the three major clusters (pessimistic views, anxiety, and self concept and identity) respectively. The reliabilities for the 10 scales ranged from .57 (for the pessimistic views about the world work) to .86 (for anxiety about the choice). The relatively low reliability for the pessimistic views is in line with previous research concerning low reliability for the total of Pessimistic views cluster (Gati et al., 2011; Gati et al., 2011; Saka and Gati, 2007; Saka et al., 2008). The relatively low reliability for the self-concept and identity could be attributed to the sample’s age, since young adolescents have not achieved a concrete identity and especially the Greek ones’ career decisions are susceptible to the parental impact. Unlike the aforementioned studies having used the specific scale, the reliability for the identity attachment subscale was found to be .20 and therefore the specific subscale was excluded from the further analysis of the results. EPCD was translated into Greek language following the translation-back translation procedure. More precisely, the English short version of
the EPCD scale was translated into Greek by a native English person who was born in Greece and by a Professor of career counseling who speaks English fluently due to her studies in Great Britain. The two separate translations were compared to each other and the Greek form was generated. Finally, the Greek form was translated back to English by an instructor in English language.

**Core Self-evaluations Scale (CSE; Judge et al., 2003).** The CSE is a 12-item questionnaire assessing the construct of CSE. More specifically, CSE consists of statements assessing (a) self-esteem, (b) generalized self-efficacy, (c) locus of control, and (d) neuroticism, but it provides one general score rather than treat each of the assessed variables as independent subscales. CSE has been reported by its developers (Judge et al., 2003) to have adequate internal consistency (average reliability was .84 across four different samples) and test–retest reliability (.81 over a month period). The CSE uses a 5-point response scale for the degree to which each statement is representative (or not) to the person responding (1- not representative at all to 5- very representative). Scores ranged between 12 and 60. Example items include, “I complete tasks successfully;” “Overall, I am satisfied with myself,” and “Sometimes I feel depressed.” The alpha coefficient for CSE total score for the present study was .88. CSE was translated into Greek by Tsousis et al. (2007) following the translation-back translation procedure (Brislin, 1970). CSE has been previously used in Greek career-related studies (Koumoundourou et al., 2011, 2012).

**Procedure**

The study was survey based. Participants were asked to participate in the research aiming to examine the procedure, by which career decisions are made. Trained investigators visited students at their classrooms and after informing them about confidentiality issues and that they had the right to withdraw from the administration at any time and any stage, they administered a booklet containing the above instruments in different order to control for order effect. No name or identification number was required, thereby maintaining anonymity. The questionnaire booklet took approximately 25 min to complete.

**Statistical analysis**

The analysis of the data was performed with statistical methods of descriptive and inferential statistics. For the statistical analysis, the statistical package SPSS (version 13) was used. T-test was used to compare the mean scores of the continuous variables among two groups (categorical variables), whereas one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used when the groups were more than two. Pearson correlation was used in order to explore the relationships among continuous variables.

**RESULTS**

**Preliminary analyses based on sample’s demographic characteristics**

The majority of the students (80.9%) live with both parents, while 19.1% of them come from separated or divorced families. Regarding the parents’ working status, the results showed that 80.5% of the fathers and 48.5% of the mothers are employed, 8.5% of the fathers and 11% of the mothers are unemployed, 6.5% of the fathers and 1.5% of the mothers have been retired and 38.5% of the mothers are housewives. Regarding the students’ decisions on the senior high school, 46.7% have decided to attend general lyceum, 24.1% have decided to attend the technical one, 19.6% have not made any decision and 9.5% of them have decided to drop-out. Regarding the students’ decision on the educational orientation, 31.2% of them have chosen the scientific orientation, 23.4% of them have chosen the theoretical orientation, 16.2% have chosen the technological one and 29.2% have not made any specific decisions.

There were no statistical significant differences on the demographic variables, such as gender, siblings, school, profession of mother and father. The main differences were found among father’s ($x^2 =27.258$, df=6, $p>0.001$) and mother’s educational background ($x^2 =17.740$, df=5, $p>0.005$), father’s ($x^2 =11.465$, df=2, $p>0.005$) and mother’s ($x^2 =23.812$, df=3, $p>0.001$) working status (employed, unemployed, and retired). Specifically, the students whose father and mother were secondary education graduates and higher education graduates tended to be more decisive on their future plans. Regarding the parental working status, it seems that the students who had made their decisions were those whose parents were employed, whereas those whose parents had been retired had not made any decisions.

**EPCD and the students’ decisions on school, educational orientation, and future studies**

Anova was used to test the relationship between EPCD total score and the students’ decision concerning the type of senior high school. A significant difference [$F=4.376 (3,179) p=0.005$] was found referring to the EPCD scores between students who have made their decisions concerning general lyceum and those who have not made any specific decisions (Table 1).

The relationship between the subscales of EPCD and the students’ decision on the type of school was tested by Anova. Significant differences were found in pessimistic views [$F=7.976 (3,179) p=0.000$], pessimistic views about the process [$F=8.845 (3,179) p=0.000$], pessimistic views about the world of work [$F=8.845 (3,179) p=0.000$], pessimistic views about the individual’s control [$F=8.847 (3,179) p=0.000$], anxiety due to the uncertainty involved in choosing [$F=3.062 (3,179) p<0.05$], self-concept and identity [$F=6.248 (3,179) p=0.000$] and identity uncrystallized [$F=12.601 (3,179) p=0.000$], between the students who have chosen to continue their high school studies in a general lyceum and those who do not know what they are going to do next year.

Anova was also used to test the relationship between EPCD total score and the sample’s decision on the educational orientation. Referring to the EPCD scale, there was found a significant difference [$F=6.847 (3,141)$]
Table 1. Mean, standard deviation, and significance between EPCD and decision on the type of senior high school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of High School</th>
<th>EPCD</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>F</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>119.28</td>
<td>40.87</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.376</td>
<td>3.179</td>
<td>.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technological</td>
<td>128.93</td>
<td>33.16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drop-out</td>
<td>129.50</td>
<td>40.73</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No decision</td>
<td>145.46</td>
<td>24.85</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 2. Mean, standard deviation and significance between EPCD total and students' decision on future educational orientation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational orientation</th>
<th>EPCD</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>F</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>114.40</td>
<td>42.86</td>
<td></td>
<td>6.847</td>
<td>3.141</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical</td>
<td>114.00</td>
<td>40.02</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technological</td>
<td>132.67</td>
<td>33.61</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No decision/Don't know</td>
<td>145.65</td>
<td>26.31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

p<0.001] between students who have made their decisions concerning either theoretical or scientific orientation and those who have not made any decision (Table 2).

The assessment of the relationship between EPCD scales and subscales and the sample’s decision on the scientific orientation revealed significant differences in pessimistic views [F=10.155 (3,141) p=.000], pessimistic views about the world of work [F=9.146 (3, 141) p=.000], pessimistic views about the process [F=9.146 (3,141) p=.000], pessimistic views about individual’s control [F=8.957 (3,141) p=.000], anxiety [F=4.691 (3,141) p<0.05], anxiety about the choice [F=5.579 (3,141) p=.001], anxiety about the process [F=6.996 (3,141) p=.000], anxiety due to uncertainty involved in choosing [F=6.623 (3, 141) p=.000], self-concept and identity [F=5.638 (3,141) p=.001], and identity uncrystallised [F=18.228 (3,141) p=.000].

The assessment of the relationship between EPCD total and its subscales and the students’ decision status on their future university studies revealed significant differences between the students who have made their decisions and those who have not (they do not know what they would like to study) on the following scales: EPCD total [t(190)= 4.225 p=.000], anxiety due to uncertainty involved in choosing [t (188) =3.602 p=.000], anxiety about the choice [t(187) = 4.342 p=.000], self-concept and identity [t(187) = 4.462 p=.000] and uncrystallised identity [t(189) = 9.356 p=.000].

CSEs and students’ decision on school, educational orientation, and future studies

The analysis of the data concerning the relationship between CSEs and the sample’s decision on type of school revealed a significant difference between the students that they will drop-out and those who have decided on continuing their studies in a General Lyceum [F=6.512 (2,193), p=.000]. A significant correlation [F=3.298 (3,149), p<.005] was also found between the students who have chosen scientific orientation and those who have not made their decisions. Additionally, students who have made already their decisions on their future studies scored higher on CSEs [F= .8851 (3,104) p=.005].

EPCD and CSEs correlation

Table 3 shows the means, standard deviations, and the correlations of the total EPCD and its three major clusters with CSEs. As can be seen, all Pearson’s correlations are negative and high. More precisely, CSEs is negatively
related to EPCD total (-.479, p<.01), pessimistic views (-.436, p<.01), anxiety (-.342, p<.01), and self-concept and identity (-.487, p<.01).

**DISCUSSION**

The present study aimed at exploring career indecisiveness in Greek senior High school students regarding their first career choice and its relation to personality factors.

The results showed that the students who had not made decisions concerning the type of senior high school, the educational orientation, and their future university studies appeared to have higher total EPCD scores than those who had made their decisions. According to these results, EPCD seems to be highly correlated to the students’ difficulty to decide on the specific parameters. In EPCD clusters and subscales, the results showed that the students of the sample who had not made their decisions about the type of school appeared to have higher scores on all the subscales of the pessimistic views cluster, anxiety about the process, anxiety due to uncertainty, self-concept and identity, and identity uncrystallized. Similar results were revealed in the students who had not made their decisions on their educational orientation and their future university studies. These results seem to be in line with the findings observed in other research studies showing that indecisive persons present to have high anxiety, low self-efficacy (Multon et al., 1995), while career indecisive persons are characterized by high level of anxiety or neuroticism, low career related self-efficacy (Saka and Gati, 2007; Gati et al., 2011), external locus of control (Saka and Gati, 2007; Santos and Ferreira, 2011; Gati et al., 2011) low self-esteem, and inadequate identity formation (Bacanli, 2006; Cellini and Kantrowski, 1984; Chantand et al., 1993; Gati et al., 2011; Johnson, 1990).

On the contrary, the students of the present study who had chosen to continue their studies in a General Lyceum, had chosen the scientific field as an option of their future educational orientation and who had made their decisions on their university studies appeared to have higher scores on CSEs. Literature has previously shown that high-CSE individuals seem to adopt approach goals (Judge et al., 2005), are more motivated and committed to pursuing opportunities (Judge and Hurst, 2008) while low-CSE ones seem to avoid any threats and risks (Srivastava et al., 2010). A meta-analysis conducted by Chang et al. (2012) showed that high-CSE individuals tend to set more challenging goals, be more committed and persistent, while persons who express more comfort in their career decision-making ability exhibit positive affections and are adequately confident (Multon et al., 1995).

In accordance to the present research’s hypothesis, the negative correlations between CSEs and the total EPCD and the three cluster scores were relatively high. The results showed that the students of the sample with a positive self-concept present to have lower scores in EPCD and vice versa. This finding shows that emotional and personality-related aspects of career decision-making difficulties are lower when self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, and internal locus of control are higher, while neuroticism is lower. These negative correlations provide evidence for the validation of the EPCD short version scale for the Greek young adolescents, since CSE as a personality instrument measures the same basic parameters as EPCD does. Da Silva and Ventura (2012) tested the EPCD’s validity in relation to other instruments assessing positive affectivity and positive personality factors (e.g. self-esteem). The results of their study showed strong negative relationships between EPCD clusters and total score and the positive aspects of affections and personality. Other researchers (Chang et al., 2012; Elliot and Thrash, 2002) have also demonstrated that CSE has strong negative relations with negative affectivity and markers of avoidance temperament, such as avoidance motivation and performance avoidance goal orientation.

Summarizing the aforementioned results concerning the relationship of the two instruments with the sample’s career decision, it could be stated that, there are certain personality characteristics (locus of control, self-esteem, self-efficacy, anxiety, and degree of identity formation) that are related to the Greek young people’s career decision-making ability concerning their studies in upper

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**Table 3. Means, standard deviations, and correlations between students’ scores on EPCD and CSEs.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scales</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>CSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>127.50</td>
<td>37.36</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>-479**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pessimistic views</td>
<td>30.93</td>
<td>10.98</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>-436*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td>40.54</td>
<td>17.27</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>-342**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-concept and Identity</td>
<td>39.02</td>
<td>11.99</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>-487**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>40.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**.Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.
secondary education. Taking into account previous Greek research results showing that the most prevalent factors influencing Greek young adolescents’ career decision-making behavior are the parental and family ones, the present study has shown that both positive and negative aspects of the personality could be considered as factors that should be taken into consideration by researchers and counselors, as far as career decision-making ability and/or career indecisiveness is concerned.

**Limitations**

It is nevertheless necessary to note some research limitations. First, the data were collected from the capital of Greece, excluding more rural and suburban areas. Therefore, the results need to be cautiously applied elsewhere. Additionally, as evident to most other studies in this area, the findings are based only on self-report data and therefore the validity of the correlations found is limited. Finally, given that the assessment of constructs was concurrent, the issue of causation remains unresolved and needs to be addressed by longitudinal designs.

**Implications for counseling**

The knowledge concerning personality variables that are related to students’ career decision-making ability allow counselors to individualize the intervention programs according to the young people’s needs (Salomone, 1982; Savickas and Jarjoura, 1991). As far as indecisive persons are concerned, the counselors need to address and help the individuals to resolve more central personality issues, such as pessimism, anxiety, and identity formation before they start dealing with career decision-making difficulties. EPCD seems to be a useful instrument for the assessment of the Greek young students’ indecisiveness and the personality variables that influence it, while CSE seems to provide counselors with enough evidence concerning the positive aspects of personality that should be enhanced. Therefore, the early identification of the personality factors that are related to Greek young adolescents’ career decision-making ability can enhance career counseling process’s beneficial outcome and help the persons to cope with the obstacles caused or maintained by their personality that leads to problems concerning career and life planning.

**Conclusion**

The present study tried to explore EPCD parameters and Core self-evaluations of Greek junior high school students in relation to their decisions on type of senior High school, educational orientation, and future university studies. Students who have not made any decisions regarding the above mentioned parameters scored higher in EPCD scales, while the students who had made their decisions had more positive self-concept as it was measured by CSE.

**REFERENCES**


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