Transactional analysis:
A useful approach for career counselling

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Abstract. The dynamic economic and digital development in recent years has been a prerequisite for significant changes in organizations and the nature of work. The traditional understanding of careers is changing and being replaced by alternative models in which the focus has shifted from loyalty to the organization to employee productivity and mobility. The aim of this article is to review the major personality constructs proposed in transactional analysis theory and some contemporary career models. Exemplary career counselling model based on transactional analysis will also be presented, which can serve as useful tools for exploring both specific personality characteristics and experiences related to the client's personal history and career development. The application of theoretical models from transactional analysis in career counselling can support the professional development of employees as well as be used as a complementary approach to enhance their autonomy and successful career development.

Keywords: work psychology, transactional analysis, personality, career counselling

Introduction

Recent years have witnessed significant changes in the labour market, with the emergence of new occupations in information technology, digital innovation and the occurrence of artificial intelligence. The accelerated digitalization and transformation of organizations and workplaces increases the importance of continuous learning, professional competence enhancement and the demand for career counselling services among employees. It is the changing world of occupations and career opportunities that are an important prerequisite for continuous learning and the acquisition of new skills, as well as career development flexibility throughout working life. Research results in recent years attest to the role of personality in terms of career choices, job satisfaction, and subjective career success (e.g., Bekir 2024; Tair 2020; Karabelyova 2015; Judge, Kammeyer-Mueller 2007). In this sense, career counselling and career development services can support individuals who wish to make a career change, as well as build on the individual's resources to meet the challenges of a dynamic career envi-

ronment by acquiring new knowledge and skills (Tsvetanska 2023). If at the beginning of the last century, the choice of profession and career development was perceived as a one-time act in a person's life, in today's global and digital world, people increasingly have to change jobs and constantly upgrade and diversify their professional competencies, social and personal skills. The rapid changes in the world of organizations and professions raise the question of updating the existing ones and searching for new theoretical models and paradigms to meet the contemporary demands and challenges of the labour market. The aim of this paper is to present a transactional analysis (TA) approach that can be successfully applied by career counsellors in providing vocational guidance and career counselling services.

Career and career counselling

One of the most important decisions in a person's life are related to career choice and development, which are often accompanied by in-depth information seeking and complex cognitive-emotional experiences. In the process of professional self-determination and choice of a career path, each person strives to find the right combination of personal interests and needs, subjective desire and objective opportunity for professional realization. While in everyday language career is perceived as development in a particular profession and growth in the relevant organizational hierarchy, in the specialized literature there are many definitions, as career is very often associated with professional success, development and accumulation of experience, practising a prestigious profession and advancement in the hierarchy (Karabelyova 2015). However, some authors point out the existence of certain specificities between occupational and career choice, emphasizing that occupational choice is a concrete event, whereas career development is a process that continues throughout the active working life (Super 1951). According to other authors, career is the subjectively perceived sequence of attitudes and behaviours that individuals associate with their experiences and activities in their working lives (Hall 1976). According to Hall, the essence of a career is revealed in the alignment of the individual's interests (attaining job satisfaction, prestige and public exposure, higher income, power to manage certain processes and systems and to dispose of people) in his or her career with those of the organization concerned.

In contemporary career models, it is postulated that people tend to change their career path to match different aspects of their lives, both inside and outside the workplace (Hall 2004). Today, career success is increasingly evaluated not only according to achievements in working life (such as salary, position, social prestige, and benefits), but also according to the subjective experience, emotional reactions, and personal evaluation of one's own career and career success. At the beginning of the 21st century, views of a traditional and limited career are gradually losing popularity and the idea of a protean career is emerging (Hall 2004), where the individual rather than the organization is active and where the main criteria for success are subjective (internal) rather than objective (external). External career success is visible and typically includes success criteria

such as financial income, promotion in the hierarchy, bonuses, and professional and social status, whereas criteria for the subjective career success are related to the individual's broader assessment of growth and development, work-life balance, and satisfaction with career development in general (e.g. Judge, Kammeyer-Mueller 2007). Today, the traditional institutional career model in which employees develop and grow within the hierarchy of a single organization is being displaced and replaced by nontraditional and alternative models such as the protean career (Hall 1976; Hall 2004), the boundaryless career (Arthur 2014), and the sustainable career (De Vos, Van der Heijden, Akkermans 2020). At the same time, the role of the individual in career management and development is becoming increasingly important and significant in times of dynamic change and long-term employment uncertainty. Hall (1976) describes protean career as horizontal in nature, for which the employee, not the organization, is responsible. The core values of protean career are personal freedom, opportunities for growth and development in different occupational areas, and the main criteria for career success are subjective factors (psychological experience of success, work-life balance, and realization of personal goals) rather than objective ones (such as job position, salary, and social status).

The idea of the boundaryless career is a model that emerged almost simultaneously with the views on the boundaryless organization at the end of the 20th century (Arthur 2014). Although it largely overlaps with the protean career, it has several distinctive characteristics (Ilieva 2019; Arthur 2014). First and foremost, it is a career type that provides a consistent opportunity to move through a variety of organizations where employees find recognition and successful professional fulfilment. Another distinctive feature of a boundaryless career is the real mobility associated with a change of residence, a change of profession, job position or organization, as well as the existence of a psychological attitude to work in a different environment, realize one's own career goals and aspire to independence. For example, the results of research by Bulgarian authors on career orientations find that the career profile of young people integrates a combination of independence, general managerial competence and entrepreneurship, with the aspiration to autonomy being a determining factor (Ilieva 2019, 70). This is linked to the survey subjects' desire and expectations for career development that provides opportunities for self-control in work, flexibility, and a desire to go beyond the constraints in organizations that can frustrate personal initiative, innovation and activism.

Another contemporary model views career development as a systematic and dynamic process that aims to achieve a sustainable career (De Vos, Van der Heijden, Akkermans 2020). The individual is considered a central element, while it is also postulated that each person's career inherently exists within an interconnected system and is influenced by multiple stakeholders and contexts. At the same time, a sustainable career is also seen as a dynamic process as the individual and their context change over time, which in turn is a prerequisite for them to continuously learn, improve their skills, influence and/or adapt to their environment (De Vos, Van der Heijden, Akkermans 2020, 3). The model of sustainable career development assumes that time (changes and events), context (country, organization, occupation, group and private life) and personality

(personal meaning and behaviour) influence career success as measured by the indicators of health (physical and mental health), happiness (career satisfaction and success) and productivity (job performance, organizational citizenship behaviour and employability). All of these factors impact on employees' experiences and careers and can lead to the realization of different opportunities, the satisfaction of personal needs, the achievement of organizational goals, but can also be a precondition for the emergence of different constraints, challenges and dilemmas.

In recent years, various models of career research and career success have been proposed and applied in Bulgaria (e.g. Bekir 2024; Tair 2020; Karabelyova 2015), which focus on different factors for experiencing career success and achieving individual career goals. For example, in the integrative model of career resources, factors that determine the achievement of career success, help the realization of career aspirations, and initiate career management are viewed as resources (for details see Hirschi 2012). Hirschi integrates different empirically derived constructs into four key resources: human capital resources, social resources, psychological resources, and identity resources. Human capital resources are associated with the abilities required to perform a specific job/position and include cognitive skills (e.g., occupational knowledge and competencies), education, experience, and training. Social resources relate to the structure and content of social relationships, and the extent of the social network that develops the individual. Psychological resources refer to psychological traits (e.g., neuroticism, extroversion, conscientiousness, openness to experience, self-esteem, positive and negative affect, etc.) and states (such as affect and motivation) that generalize and are present in different work situations and influence career development. Identity resources are tied to professional interests, goals and values, but mostly to answering the question, "Who am I and how is my work meaningful to me?" (Hirschi 2012, 376). The model assumes that the four resources are positively related, or put another way, it assumes that people have a clear idea of who they are and what they want, easily create and engage in social networks, develop their own professional identity, and exhibit purposeful behaviours in their career development (Hirschi 2012). Results from research in Bulgarian settings on the use of different career resources indicate that the individuals surveyed rated the available social career support and career opportunities in the organization lower (Tair 2020). It is also found that opportunities for career growth and support from the environment (colleagues, organization) are rated higher by individuals who are aged 18-30.

In the literature one can often encounter the use of the terms 'career choice', 'career counselling', and 'career guidance' as interchangeable, although there are certain differences. Donald Super (1951, 92) defines career guidance as a process that helps a person to develop and accept an integrated and adequate picture of himself and his role in the world of work, to test this concept in reality, to make it a reality in order to achieve satisfaction for himself and to benefit society. It is important to point out that professional activity provides individuals with identity, status and self-esteem, as well as access to social support, material benefits and quality of life (Tair 2011). In the most general sense, vocational guidance aims to seek the intersection of basic personality characteristics

(attitudes, values, interests, skills and goals) with the possibilities of choice and realization in a particular profession, while career counselling is a process that involves not only vocational guidance and academic training opportunities, but also career development planning, finding a suitable job and planning long-term life goals (Savickas 2015, 129). However, the process of career choice may be accompanied by problems arising from the individual's personal-emotional characteristics or from a lack of information about oneself, one's goals and abilities, and career development opportunities (Karabelyova 2015).

As the corporate world has undergone significant changes in the early 21st century, the understanding of careers has gradually changed, with the focus shifting from the organization to the individual (Hall 2004). This, in turn, is also a prerequisite for a change in the psychological contract between organizations and employees, in which loyalty to the organization versus job security is replaced by productivity versus employee training and development (Sullivan, Carden, Martin 1998). Dynamic economic environments, variable and insecure employment undoubtedly have their impact on career development opportunities as well as increasing the need to develop new skills and competencies to help manage careers. Refocusing from the organization to the individual increases people's responsibility and involvement in managing their own careers and lifelong professional development. The changing education system and work environment, modern models of career and career development require change in approaches to career counselling. Changes associated with globalization, technological advances, workforce mobility, and the transformation of organizations into multicultural structures are influencing career development, which is becoming more nonlinear and less predictable (Hirschi 2012). This in turn requires greater effort, flexibility and adaptability from workers in terms of managing their own careers and realizing professional success. From the perspective of today's dynamic times, career counselling is moving from "the empiricism of objective career guidance and the humanism of subjective career development to the social constructivism of projective life design" (Savickas 2015, 136). Consequently, today career counselling is seen in a broad social context that includes career choice, career development and life planning in general. For example, a report on an analysis of the results of a study on the current needs for career guidance and counselling in Bulgaria as a result of the impact of the aftermath of COVID-19 and the war in Ukraine (Human Resource Development Centre 2023) highlights several main directions for career guidance and counselling, such as: conducting career diagnostics, managing stress at work, updating the professional toolkit for career counsellors, improving the professional qualifications of career counsellors and counselling. In the age of open organizations, people are increasingly required to develop long-term planning skills and at the same time be able to successfully adapt to changes that occur in shorter time intervals. The ability to analyse and anticipate different developmental scenarios increases the possibilities for career sustainability and success. Therefore, depending on the needs of the client, counsellors can apply different career services: vocational guidance and identification of professional interests, continuing education to promote professional development or career counselling to design professional life (Savickas 2011, 8).

There is relatively little research on the career issues that provoke older adults to seek career counselling (Multon et al. 2007). More studies focus on career indecision related to factors such as insufficient or conflicting information about the profession and decision anxiety, and few examine existing career problems, psychological stress, and psychological resources as factors that provoke seeking career counselling. Whether it is career mobility, protean career based on values orientations or managing one's own career with a view to achieving personal career goals and work-life balance, the environment is becoming less predictable, less structured and less secure, requiring an adaptable, flexible and multilayered approaches on the part of career counsellors. One of the main goals of contemporary career theories is to formulate new constructs and models that can be of help to people who are seeking a change in their professional and career development. Today's career counselling approaches should focus on factors such as identity, adaptability, intentionality and life stories that actually contribute to formulating a new model for professional behaviour and career development (Savickas 2011).

Increasingly today, organizations are offering part-time, home office, fixed-term contracts for a specific project or using the services of external multidisciplinary teams. This increases the responsibility of individuals in terms of managing their own careers. To effectively manage these changes, individuals should implement various strategies, such as becoming aware of their interests and getting to know their strengths and weaknesses, having one or more career goals, and committing to taking actions that will lead to the realization of these career goals (Savickas 2011). These strategies can be implemented through training to develop new and build on existing skills, exhibiting sustained motivation and adaptability, and seeking help from career counsellors to analyse established patterns of behaviour.

We can summarize that career support and career counselling are sequential processes that address various factors related to individual, socio-cultural and personal characteristics, as well as factors related to the economic and educational environment. Many variables influence career development and career success and it is therefore essential that career counsellors, in addition to having knowledge and competencies in various theoretical areas, are able to provide a safe and secure environment for their clients to share about their experiences and goals. One useful and practically applicable approach in career counselling could be transactional analysis, which considers the functioning of the individual as a result of his or her early childhood development and their current interaction with the social environment "here and now". In this article, we'll review the basic constructs and descriptive models of personality from transactional analysis (TA) that can be useful tools for exploring both specific personality and behavioural characteristics and deeper psychodynamic processes and experiences related to a client's personal history and relevant to his or her career development.

Transactional analysis in career counselling

The choice of a profession, the completion of the necessary education, the realization of opportunities to apply the acquired knowledge and skills in the chosen profession are some of those factors that are the basis of a successful career development. Every work activity is also related to social interactions such as communication, teamwork, and coping with challenging situations that people carry out in the process of his/her professional and career development. According to a number of researchers, many aspects of career choices and career success are influenced by personality factors (e.g., Ilieva 2019; Karabelyova 2015; Tair 2011; Judge, Kammeyer-Mueller 2007). The results of our studies examining the role of personality constructs proposed in TA theory provide evidence that ego states and life positions have significant relationships with individuals' career fulfilment and, to varying degrees, contribute to an increase in the subjective career success for workers in eight different occupational fields (for details see Bekir 2024; Bekir, Tair 2019). This leads us to assume that TA is a useful and easily applicable approach and theoretical model in career counselling that presents an integrated model for describing personality, including a model of ego states, life positions, drivers, and life scripts. For the purposes of this article, we will first briefly present the main constructs for describing personality and then explore a multidimensional theoretical model for career counselling based on TA as an approach, summarizing findings from our research.

Ego states

The structure of personality in TA theory is metaphorically represented by the so-called three-component model of ego states, namely, the Parent ego state, the Adult ego state, and the Child ego state. Each ego state represents a coherent system of thoughts, feelings, and behaviours through which people interact (Stewart, Joines 2008; Berne 1973). The Parent ego state includes all the thoughts, feelings and behaviours transmitted to the child by parental figures and represents their internalized image in the form of rules, norms, attitudes, and values. The Adult ego state contains all thoughts, feelings, and behaviours related to the objective evaluation of reality "here and now", while the Child ego state refers to all thoughts, feelings, and behaviours that are related to the satisfaction of needs, childhood experiences and the preservation of past memories. Although there are clear boundaries between the different ego states, at the same time they are flexible, and as a result of this internal dynamic, the personality has the ability to respond in an optimal way to constantly changing circumstances, conditions, and environmental demands. The individual interacts through each of their ego states with those of another person or people, engaging in the exchange of stimuli or transactions. Precisely this exchange of transactions between individuals that underlies the analysis of interpersonal interaction in various social situations, including work environments.

Life positions

The concept of life positions in TA describes one of its core philosophical principles, namely the idea that all people have value and are good human beings. Interaction and the exchange of transactions occur between two subjects: I and You, who can express two polar positions: to be good (OK) and to not be good (not OK). Berne (1973, 84) uses these elements as a premise to formulate four basic life positions as follows: "I am OK, You are OK"; "I am OK, You are not OK"; "I am not OK, You are OK", and "I am not OK, You are not OK". Life positions express the high or low value individuals attribute to themselves and others, i.e., they represent a belief system about the self, others and the world (Stewart, Joines 2008). Individuals with an "I'm OK, you're OK" position are characterized by a problem-solving orientation, growth and development, sociability, and able to show empathy. Individuals with an expressed "I'm OK, you're not OK" position tend to be dominant and aggressive behaviours focused on their own successes and needs. Individuals with an "I'm not OK, You're OK" position often experience feelings of inferiority, depression, and exhibit a tendency to adapt to the demands of others. The fourth "I'm not OK, You're not OK" position is seen in individuals who have an established negative self-image, low self-esteem, and a tendency to devalue their own and others' behaviour. Life positions reflect the idea of manifesting positive and/or negative attitudes in interpersonal relationships and express the influence they exert on each person's behaviour.

Drivers

Drivers are unconscious internal impulses that determine the manifestation of repetitive patterns in the personality's behaviour, i.e., doing things in the same way such as at the same speed, striving for perfection, without emotions, etc. Drivers were first described as a construct by Taibi Kahler (1975), who assumed that they are formed as a result of the messages that the child's Parent ego state receives from the Parent ego state of its parent figures. These transactions at an early age between parents and their child are related to the processes of socialization and upbringing, influencing how the little human should think, what they should feel, or how they should act in various situations they encounter. This pattern of behaviour, formed and internalized during childhood, continues to be unconsciously reproduced by the adult rather (but not always) in order to satisfy his inner needs than the demands of real events and situations (Stewart, Joines 2008). In TA theory, descriptions of five drivers have been proposed, as follows: Be perfect, Hurry up, Be strong, Please others, and Try hard (Kahler 1975). Each one of them represents extremely short-lived behaviour, manifested in fixed patterns of action and which can be repeated unconsciously many times within a day. The Be perfect driver describes behaviour that is associated with striving for perfection, the desire to eliminate or prevent errors, while the Hurry up driver is characterized by speed in all activities and the conviction that everything can be done in less time. People with the Be strong driver have the ability to always maintain composure and calmness, while

people with the Try hard driver are characterized by initiative and the desire to do many things at the same time. The fifth driver, Please others, relates to a person's desire to be part of a community and to feel satisfaction only when he makes others happy.

Life script

In the TA theory, the stories created in the early period of individual development, formed beliefs about oneself and the decisions made on the basis of them about the way life proceeds are conceptualized with the term of a life script. The life script is an "unconscious life plan or pattern of behaviour made in early childhood, nurtured by parents, and confirmed by events, which enables the individual to structure his time and his actions" (Berne 1973, 38). Berne uses the term 'script' rather than 'story' because he postulates that these stories are the result of our early life experiences, written for us in our families and then forced upon us to act out as a blueprint for life.

The life script represents a continuous process of self-definition of the personality, which can sometimes lead to a self-limiting psychological construction of reality, because through it the individual ascribes meaning to their social environment, reinforces their beliefs about life, and attempts to predict and manage problems in the hope of fulfilling their needs and desires (Berne 1973). The life script is a basic construct for describing and analysing the functioning and behaviour of the personality, and although it is unique for each person, Berne (1973) offers a generalized classification depending on the content of the life script, grouping them into three types: winner, loser, and non-winner. People who set ambitious goals, are highly motivated, learn from their own mistakes and have a successful career have a winner type of life script. A loser type of life script is observed in individuals who do not have specific goals in their lives, often exhibit self-sabotaging or self-destructive behaviour, and do not feel satisfied with their professional fulfilment. A non-winner type of life script is observed in people who can be said to rather realize someone else's goals, cope with their tasks more slowly, do not take risks, do not achieve great success, do not change jobs often, can begin their professional career and retire in the same position. Each set of beliefs forming the life script provides the individual with a structure and a subjective self-regulating mental frame of reference for himself, for others, and for the quality of life (Berne 1973, 25) and any manifestation of the script can lead to supporting the experience, i.e., a subsequent event that "proves" that the scripted beliefs are correct and valid, making the behaviour predictable.

The above brief theoretical overview of career and career counselling gives us a reason to summarize that career development as a process involves the acquisition and use of certain professional knowledge and skills, the ability to plan and make decisions, training to enhance personal and social skills, and effective interaction with other people in the work environment. The four main constructs of TA briefly discussed - ego states, life positions, drivers and life scripts postulate that the effective functioning of the personality, its ability and motivation to achieve success are largely determined by factors influencing its

formation in early childhood. Results of our researches prove the existence of relationships between ego states, life positions and subjective career success in professionals from eight different professional fields, which indicates that personality characteristics are significant factors in both the experience of career satisfaction and the career success (Bekir 2024; Bekir, Tair 2019). Based on the theoretical constructs reviewed in TA and the analysis of the results obtained from our various studies, we formulated an exemplary career counselling model and a multidimensional career guidance model that can be used in practice as a complementary toolkit to build on existing career counselling approaches.

As defined by the European Association for Transactional Analysis (https://eatanews.org/4-fields-of-application/), counselling is a professional activity that, within a contracted relationship, aims to help clients develop self-awareness, discover different options for solving their problems, and improve their personal development skills by using their strengths and personal resources in an effective way. The main aim of counselling is to increase the autonomy of the individual in terms of functioning in his/her social, professional and cultural environment. Contemporary counsellors in the field of career planning and development are challenged to have knowledge of multiple theoretical approaches, to be able to use different theoretical models and tools, and to apply a person-centred and individual approach to their clients depending on their needs. It is evident from the theoretical review that each person's personal history and life experiences are different, which in turn makes it necessary for career counsellors to have the skills and appropriate methodology to explore these personality constructs and adapt their work to the expectations and goals of their clients. In this context, and with a view to enriching the methodology and upgrading the toolkit with which professionals in this field work, the application of TA would be a useful and easily applicable approach to career counselling in practice. Table 1 provides a brief description of the main stages and objectives of the career counselling process, based on the theoretical assumptions of transactional analysis theory.

It is necessary to clarify that the model presented in Table 1 does not claim to be exhaustive and is not the only way to structure and implement a consultative process using transactional analysis as a theoretical approach. It is also important to note that training, a solid understanding of TA theory, and established professional skills for using and interpreting the described constructs and methodologies are necessary before they can be applied as tools in career counselling. Insufficient knowledge of TA theory, methodology and personal constructs can lead to inaccurate profiles and speculative interpretations and conclusions, which is contrary to ethical principles and good professional practice. The exemplary model for career counselling is an aid that would support the work of practitioners or novice counsellors and build on their professional competence.

From our review of the available literature, we found that there is relatively little research on the relationships between ego states, life positions and drivers with occupational choice and career development (Bekir 2024). Research shows that the Parent ego state is more pronounced in individuals in professions such as counsellors, social workers, and helping professionals, military, police officers, and administrators, while the Adult ego state is most pronounced in engineers,

Table 1. A sample model for career counselling based on transactional analysis as a theoretical approach

Stage	Objectives
Initial contact	1. Presentation of the request by the client;
	2. Introducing the client to TA as a theoretical approach to professional and career development counselling;
	3. Informing the client of the consultant's competencies and skills and committing to confidentiality;
	4. Clarifying client expectations.
Negotiate consulting contract	1. Contract for career counselling, including administrative (number and location of meetings, duration, pay, etc.), professional (consultant's skills, approach used, etc.) and psychological level (how content and process will be handled in counselling);
	2. Formulation of short- and long-term goals that are accepted by the client;
	3. Preparation of a work plan.
Analysis of the current situation	1. Clarification of the client's wishes and attitudes for change (new profession, new career development, etc.);
	2. Discussing the specificities of the labour market, the education system, training and mobility opportunities;
	3. Analysing the different options for the client's action.
Assessment of personality characteristics	1. Conduct quantitative and qualitative research necessary to identify personal characteristics (ego states, drivers, life positions, life scripts), professional interests, skills and abilities;
	2. Informing the client about the main personality constructs (ego states, drivers, life positions, life script), their function and influence on decisions, thoughts, emotions and behaviour.
Exploration of the client's history	1. Conduct a semi-structured life script interview (e.g., Life Script Questionnaire, Berne, 1973, 426) to identify early childhood beliefs and decisions influencing career decisions;
	2. Provide a space for self-discovery by exploring parental messages that are part of career beliefs;
	3. Work to acquire skills to recognize and effectively use ego states, drivers, and life positions in work environments.
Decision making	1. Discussion of the summarized results of the quantitative and qualitative research and analysis of the responses from the life script questionnaire;
	2. Analysing the opportunities and challenges for the client to make the desired change;
	3. Decision making by the client and discussion of the necessary follow-up actions for its implementation.
Termination	1. Discussion of the initial expectations, goals and results of the career counselling;
	2. Client's commitment to implement the decisions made;
	3. Conclusion.

financiers, and researchers. The Child ego state is characteristic of industrial workers and low-skilled labourers, artists and other cultural and arts professionals (Bekir, Tair 2019). Based on different theoretical concepts in TA and on synthesized our results from several studies of ego states, life positions, drivers and type of life script, we formulated a multidimensional model for career guidance that can be successfully applied in the career counselling process (for details see Bekir 2024). The model, presented graphically in Figure 1, combines two dimensions related to personal behaviour in work environments into a common framework: relationship focus versus performance focus and activity versus passivity. The theoretical framework is presented in the form of four quadrants, which describe the key personality characteristics that have been identified as predictors of subjective career success in a particular occupational domain.
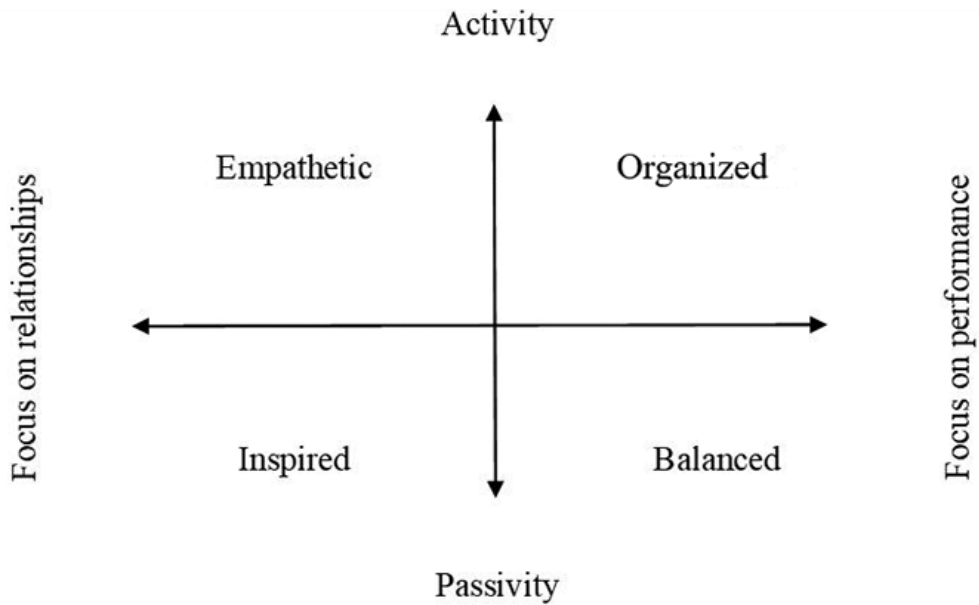
Fig. 1. Multidimensional model of career guidance (Bekir 2024, 138)

The first quadrant, Empathetic (focus on relationships and active in goal achievement), includes general characteristics of individuals who are sociable, concerned about others, consistent in providing help and support, able to take risks, and embark on challenging tasks. Individuals who fall in this quadrant have the leading ego states of Nurturing Parent, Natural Child, Please others and Hurry up drivers. The second quadrant, Organized (focus on performance and active in achieving goals), includes characteristics of individuals who are analytical, attentive to detail, rigorous and demanding, organized, plan even the smallest details, and handle data and information with ease. For people in this quadrant, the Adult ego state and the Be Perfect driver are leading.

The third quadrant, Balanced (focus on performance and passive in achieving goals), includes common characteristics of individuals who maintain composure and emotional coolness in critical situations, can take on many responsibilities, prefer to work alone, do well with routine activities and tasks, create a sense of security and structure. For individuals in this quadrant, the leading ego states are Normative Parent and Adapted Child and the Be strong driver. The final fourth quadrant, Inspired (focus on relationships and passive in achieving goals), describes characteristics of individuals who are energetic, enthusiastic, easily inspired by new ideas, prefer to work in a team or group, and connect easily with others. Leading for individuals in this quadrant are the Natural Child ego state, the Try hard and Hurry up drivers.

Conclusion

Today's labour market offers challenging and increasingly diverse opportunities for professional and career development. Dynamic changes in the corporate environment are a prerequisite for researchers to explore new theoretical and practical approaches to effective career planning and counselling that are adequate to the contemporary reality. In this article, we presented a brief theoretical overview of career models and transactional analysis theory as an applicable approach in career counselling. Significant relationships have been identified in several studies (Bekir 2024; Bekir, Tair 2019) between ego states, life positions, and subjective career success among individuals from eight occupational fields (administrative and technical specialists, healthcare professionals, professionals in the public sector, art professionals, engineers and architects, financial specialists, physicians and teachers). These findings provide evidence for the predictive role of personality characteristics in achieving career success. In a summarized and systematized form, we presented an exemplary model for career counselling and a multidimensional model for career guidance based on the theory of transactional analysis, with the focus on observing the interrelationship of personality - career development and professional realization. The presented theoretical model of the interactions between ego states, life positions, drivers, type of life script, and career satisfaction can be used not only in career counselling but also in individual counselling in general, insofar as career satisfaction is a significant component of an individual's overall satisfaction, quality of life, and subjective well-being.

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