
Nóra HEGYI-HALMOS

Career Socialisation and Professional Identity

In society and the labor market, we have different positions and statuses, and we have to perform the tasks that go with those roles. According to traditional role theory in social psychology, "a role is a specific mode of response, an indoctrinated, habitual, automatic and mostly unconscious chain of behaviour that takes place in the context of typical social attitudes, emotions and self-identifications." (Buda, 1965 quoted in Csepeli, 2001, 102-103) The elements of behavior required to occupy a status or position are determined by the roles the occupant of the status must perform. These roles are associated with attitudes, values, and behavioral patterns (Hidy, 2001). In the case of occupations and professions where the roles and tasks can be clearly described (doctor, teacher, architect), the set of roles required can be more easily formulated. However, the industrial revolutions and the development of technology have led to an increase in the quantity and quality of occupations and jobs. As the division of labor becomes more differentiated, more and more new occupations are being created or significantly transformed in terms of their content. The immediate environment, the family, often does not have the correct information to help young people choose a career and socialize in the changing world of professions (Borbély-Pecze, 2017).

In many cases, the positions (occupations) on the labor market today require a more varied set of roles from the individual, and it is more challenging to clarify the roles since these occupations do not have rigid position descriptions but are instead loosely defined and highly variable (Goffman, 1978). One such occupation is community organizer, where it is possible to function successfully in various fields, even with different attitudes and strengths. Identity formation in careers with such a complex set of roles is, therefore, challenging, even though a solid professional identity is an essential prerequisite for success in any profession.

Career socialization

Career socialization is part of socialization during which individuals learn the behavioral tools, values, roles, and attitudes required to perform a particular career or profession. Socialization theories (Super, 1980; Schlossberg, 1981; Holland, 1997) emphasize the role and importance of social learning and examine the social impulses that may influence career choice, such as the social demands that are made on individuals in a particular occupation (Hegyí-Halmos, 2018). A key concept in career socialization theories is occupational roles, i.e., the behavioral norms and habits associated with a particular occupation, acquired through imitation and experiential learning. András Zakar (1988) refers to these theories as sociological and socio-economic theories, which emphasize primarily the dependence of career choice behaviour on the environment. Young people's career choices are not only determined by their characteristics but also consider economic and sociological factors, i.e., they evaluate the available careers from an economic and prestige point of view (Hegyí-Halmos, 2008).

Among the theories of career socialization, the theory of P.W. Musgrave (1967) is perhaps the most complex. He was primarily concerned with the acquisition and taking on of different social roles. In his concept, he emphasized the importance of the different social roles that can be acquired and taken on throughout the life course. He argued that many alternatives are available to individuals throughout their careers, with various roles to choose from. However, the choices and decisions made along the way can determine and limit further options. Musgrave also explored the possibilities of social role learning, calling it latent role learning, the process by which individuals learn the attitudes, values, and behaviors associated with occupations or career roles. Learning about different roles helps individuals to choose the one that best suits their potential. The essence of Musgrave's theory is anticipatory socialization, i.e., trying out different roles and gaining experience with the requirements and role

expectations of different occupations (Hegyi-Halmos, 2008). Musgrave divided the process of occupational socialization into four stages of development:

- Pre-career socialization is latent role learning, during which the individual learns about different career roles and matches them to his or her characteristics.
- Career transition is a period of entry into professional life during which individuals make decisions based on their existing role experiences and preferences.
- Professional socialization, during which the typical role behavior of a given career is learned, either from those already working in the profession or through work placements or training by trainers. Individuals try to adapt their self-image to the expectations of their colleagues and superiors.
- In case of a possible career change, tertiary socialization is typical (Szilágyi, 1993; Zakar, 1988; Hegyi-Halmos, 2008).

Sociological, socio-economic, and social psychological theories take a static view of the career choice process. Although they examine several important factors, they place less emphasis on the potential of the individual and neglect the active role of the individual in the process of career development. Their theories are often highly simplistic and, like all static models, fail to describe the many different systems of influences that are involved in the process of career choice (Szilágyi, 2005).

According to Martin Kohli (1981), individual activity plays a significant role in shaping life paths. He distinguishes between objective and subjective life courses. He considers objective life course to be the succession of different positions over time, the actual occupational behavior, while subjective life course "refers to the subjective interpretation and formation of experiences of moving from one position to another, and thus also to repeated choices between different options." (Szilágyi, 1993, p. 57) According to Kohli, career choice can be conceived as a choice between different career patterns, where the choice is always open to the chooser. He believes that certain objective career norms are socially predetermined, the orienting factors of a career decision behavior. Career choice is a subjective perception and shaping of objective life path norms. Kohli has examined career choice and career development as a process that is both socially directed and structured and dependent on deviations from and individual interpretations of objective career norms (Szilágyi, 2004).

Identity development is often thought of as linear because of its relative stability. It is also reflected in Holland's (1997) understanding of career identity as a clear picture of an individual's goals, interests, and abilities. In his view, small changes contribute to a stable identity, while frequent and significant changes can lead to a diffuse identity (Koltói & Kiss, 2020).

Mark L. Savickas (2002) has focused much attention on the relationship between identity development and career identity. He is credited with the constructivist approach to career construction theory (Career et al., CCT). In his view, careers are not chosen but constructed, i.e., continuously built through the interactions of society and the individual. In the construction of a career, the individual is an active agent throughout, and it is therefore more important to focus on the career and its continuous development rather than on the choice of career. The aim is to enable individuals to use work for their self-actualization and self-expression, and to this end, it emphasizes the importance of careful career planning, openness, internal control, and belief in one's effectiveness. Savickas's model emphasizes the development of self-awareness and career awareness and introduces the concept of career adaptability, which refers to the skills an individual needs to manage decision-making situations that arise during a career independently. In his model, he considers the experience of self-efficacy in the construction and analysis of an individual's life career as extremely important (Borbély-Pecze et al., 2013; Szabó et al., 2010; Hegyi-Halmos, 2008). Savickas emphasizes the importance of a narrative approach in understanding the formation of career identity; according to him, the individual's career choice story is linked to his own life story, and during the career choice process, the individual constructs his narrative, which links the past, present, and future. He breaks down identity development into stages, during which the individual undergoes cognitive, emotional, and social maturation. During identity development, identity crises may occur, during which the individual may experience doubts and uncertainty. These periods allow individuals to reassess their career identity (Savickas, 2013).

Among the domestic models, the research of Klára Szilágyi (2005) on career socialization should be highlighted. Szilágyi divided the life course into two phases, career adaptation and career activity, and then further subdivided these into the phases of general education and vocational training. At the same time, career activity is divided into the phases of professional integration and beneficial professional activity. In his opinion, this process is linked to psychological components such as personality development and developing aptitude for a career. Klára Szilágyi has investigated and formulated the relationship between career maturity and aptitude in her research among medical students. In her opinion, career readiness can develop during university education. Naturally, the more apt a student is for a particular profession, the greater the chances of success in developing career readiness. The author has considered it essential to analyze in detail the characteristics of the career choice process, the aptitude characteristics, and the personality characteristics. Among the career choice characteristics, the preservation of the career vision and the effort to achieve the career goal influence career socialization. The development of the necessary skills to an appropriate level and the development of specific skills determine success.

Regarding personality traits, the primary motives for career choice may be rearranged (Szilágyi 1993, 2005 cited in Hegyi-Halmos, 2008). According to Szilágyi's research, either differentiation or stagnation occurs in career socialization during the university years. In his studies of medical students, he observed differentiation in intellectual abilities, special skills, and emotional relations while stagnation in the development of interest orientations and motivation (Szilágyi, 2011).

Magda Ritoók (1978, 1986, 2008) has primarily researched the personal conditions of identification with the chosen career, i.e., the conditions of career identification. She started from the concept of career socialization, which she interpreted as a process whereby the individual becomes part of the social division of labor, adapts to his or her environment, and thus becomes an effective and recognized member of society. He saw the process of career identification as a component of career socialization, a process that develops in parallel with the life course. According to his theory, career identification is a relational concept, "an indicator of the quality of the match between the requirements of the career and the dominant personality traits of the person doing the work, a dynamic reflection of the career and personality development process, which reflects the individual's career satisfaction, achievement, and social activity, and which also indicates, in a specific way, the individual's self-actualization in work." (Ritoók, 2008, 16) As conditions for the emergence of career identification, the author identified primarily the correspondence between the experiential content of the career and the individual's experiential needs, which, of course, may vary from career to career and from individual to individual. Those who can identify with their career to a high degree and are fully committed to a task experience greater pleasure in their career. Mrs Ritoók stressed the crucial role of personality traits as a prerequisite for career identification and consequently considered personality development to be of utmost importance both in the family and at different levels of the educational system in order to promote successful career identification (Ritoók 1986 cited in Hegyi-Halmos, 2008).

The concept of professional identity

An individual's self-image is a fundamental determinant of his or her professional career. There are many definitions and interpretations of identity and professional identity. Professional identity is the part of one's self-image related to one's profession (Tajfel, 1981). Slay and Smith (2011) define professional identity as a kind of professional self-image, i.e., the image we use to define ourselves professionally.

As a result of postmodern social transformations, identity as a static state is being challenged, as we are constantly changing, learning, and adapting to the world around us to become what we are. The individual's self-image and identity change dynamically due to his/her experiences, but at the same time, he/she strives for security and stability, thus filtering the information flowing toward him/her by his/her self-evaluation (Sipos, 2020). The internal interest, experience, and acquisition of professional knowledge and skills strengthen the level of professional identification. The relationship between the individual and the profession can become close due to the encounter with immediate demands and

expectations and the successes and failures that occur during practical work. Vocation is a high-level relationship to our work activities where role expectations associated with the career become internalized, and our activities are guided by our beliefs (Váriné, 1981).

Societal factors are important determinants of our professional self-image. By choosing a profession, an individual becomes a member of a professional community, i.e., professional identity also defines a sense of belonging to a group. The social psychological approach to professional identity is based on the social identity theory (Koltói & Kiss, 2020). Tajfel (1978), in his social or associational identity theory, states that a person's positive self-image results from identification with the positively valued groups of which the individual is a member (Kende, 2021). Social identity theory is concerned with how social identities (belonging to a nationality, ethnic group, gender, occupation, or profession) influence an individual's attitudes and behavior, either within or about other groups. Peer identity is highly influential when the individual has a powerful sense of belonging to a particular group and feels a strong emotional attachment to the group. The process associated with forming social identity is characterized by a tendency to conform to in-group norms (assimilation) and intergroup bias (a more positive evaluation of the group or those within the group about those outside the group). Social identity theories thus refer to the self-stratification of individuals about group membership, while personal identity refers to how individuals define themselves. The former refers to a kind of 'we' concept, while the latter refers to a concept of 'self'. As an integration of the two concepts, Turner and colleagues (1985) have developed the theory of self-categorization, according to which one's self-concepts (self-image) encompass both personal identity and social identity. Depending on the context, personal or social identity may be more salient for the individual (Leaper, 2011).

Based on Tajfel's (1981) theory, we can distinguish between cognitive (knowledge), affective (emotions associated with belonging to a group), and evaluative (valuing belonging to a group) aspects of identity. Considering a profession as a group, the cognitive element of professional identity formation is integrating professional identity into individual identity, i.e., when we consider ourselves members of a professional community. The emotional element is the commitment to a particular group, while the evaluative element is the collective self-evaluation. Among the aspects of social identity, the emotional components are perhaps the most influential since the degree of commitment to a group is the most influential on the behavior, values, and attitudes that align with the group's expectations (Koltói & Kiss, 2020).

Our professional identity is shaped by our values, expectations, and beliefs; according to Caza and Creary (2016), it fundamentally determines our attitudes, emotions and how we behave in our work. The professional self-image develops with the professional identity (Váriné, 1981). One's professional identity can serve as a framework for one's self-concept, i.e., through developing a professional identity, the individual can give purpose and meaning to his/her career to formulate how to be a valuable member of society (Caza & Creary, 2016).

More broadly, modern understandings of professional identity approach the issue from three perspectives. Firstly, our understanding of ourselves as professionals; secondly, the integration of our professional skills and attitudes; and thirdly, the context of belonging to a professional community. On the one hand, professional identity is an image of the self as a professional and the professional competencies associated with it. Individuals form their new professional identity by integrating their attributes and the competencies acquired during their professional training, which they can further develop based on feedback from the professional community. The process of professional identity formation is, therefore, both intrapersonal and interpersonal. In the intrapersonal process, individuals develop their professional knowledge and competencies through theoretical and experiential learning with the support of trainers and other professionals. They then receive feedback on their professional skills from professionals in the field during their practice based on the skills they have acquired in their formal education. Professional identity is consolidated when an individual is able to integrate personal and professional identity through the integration of experience and theory and to self-assess. The interpersonal aspect highlights the role of the professional community. Socialization within the professional community is essential for developing a professional identity. The acquisition of expectations, norms, attitudes, values, and ways of thinking can be achieved through these

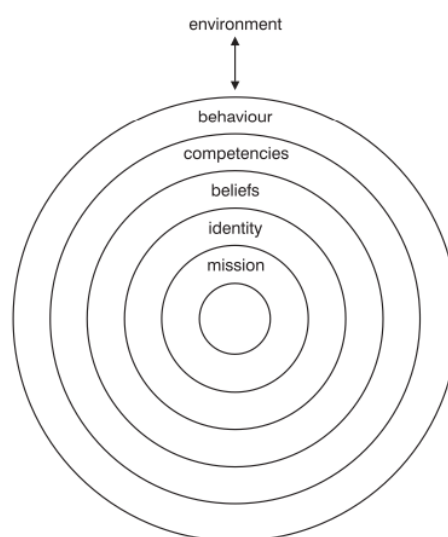
communities and immersion in professional culture (Gibson et al., 2010). Thus, the unity of theoretical and practical training is essential in professional preparation, and the use of professional practice in a natural professional environment is crucial for forming an identity.

The structure of professional identity

Developing a professional identity is a continuous work of discovery, which requires reflection, involvement, and conscious work on the part of the individual. They need to know their professional skills and attitudes and be open to feedback from others. Collaboration between teachers and students is essential in the process of becoming a professional and in the process of developing and developing a professional identity. It is not only essential for trainers to transfer knowledge and develop competencies but also for them, as professionals in the field, to transmit values and attitudes to students that are in line with the expectations, values, and attitudes of the professional community. Professional preparation should not be limited to developing knowledge and skills but should also be understood as the unfolding and shaping the self (Maroney et al., 2019). Brown, in his dynamic model of professional identity formation, states that "identity is formed in specific professional communities through socialization, interaction and learning" (Bomrose and Brown, 2019, cited in Koltóí and Kiss, 2020, 585); thus, this model also emphasizes that direct involvement in work activities plays a vital role in identity formation, as it allows young professionals to gain direct experience and experience belonging to the profession (Koltóí & Kiss, 2020).

It is worth mentioning Fred Korthagen's onion model (2005), whose layers help to understand how the professional self-image is built up from implicit and explicit elements (Figure 1). The model presents different levels that determine the functioning of a profession (Korthagen presented his model for the teaching profession). The model is based on the idea that the internal levels determine the individual's functioning at the external levels, but the reverse effect can also be observed. The deepest levels in the model are the professional identity (self-identity) level and the mission level, which essentially deals with what inspires the individual and what gives meaning and significance to one's work or life. This level is, according to Korthagen, a transpersonal level, as it involves the meaning of our existence and the role we see ourselves as playing in society (Korthagen & Vasalos, 2005).

Figure 1 Korthagen's onion model, source: Korthagen and Vasalos, 2005



Caza and Creary (2016) also highlight that in forming a professional identity, the individual takes an active role by acting and interacting with others in a social context. In identity formation, individuals seek to develop a self-image that best corresponds to their image as members of a particular profession.

Caza and Creary (2016) raise the question of how professional identity structures are formed for those who have to fulfill multiple, complex roles throughout their life or even work. Nowadays, there are many professions, occupations, or positions that require a diverse set of roles from the individual, where the tasks to be performed tend to be loosely defined, variable, and complex. In such cases, the structure of professional identity is also more complex. Similarly, a complex identity structure characterizes those engaged in multiple work activities simultaneously or who change careers or professions in their lives, as, in this case, they have to develop a new professional identity. Identity structures can, therefore, range from the simple to the complex. Its complexity is determined by how individuals consider their multiple identities similar in terms of their typical characteristics. A person who reduces multiple professional identities into a single professional identity has a simple professional identity structure. A university professor may define himself simply as a researcher, while another with a more complex identity may define himself as a researcher and a lecturer at the same time. The complexity of identity is not determined by how many different roles an individual identifies with but by how the individual structures these identities about each other. Caza and Creary present five types of professional identity structures, from simple to more complex, illustrated through the example of the university professors above. In the first - the authors call this structure an intersection - the individual defines him/herself at the intersection of two professional identities, i.e., the professor sees his/her professional identity as the intersection of the identities of the teacher and the researcher. He can identify with those who also experience their identity in this way.

In a dominant identity structure, the individual defines him/herself as a primary professional identity to which all other identities are subordinated. The professor defines his professional identity as a researcher and allows this identity to dominate his teaching identity. He sees himself as a researcher, identifying more with the group of researchers (regardless of the field they are researching) than with the lecturers. In a structure of compartmentalization, the individual defines him/herself in multiple professional roles but experiences each professional identity at different times. The professor speaks of himself as a teacher and a researcher but experiences these identities simultaneously, alternating his dual identity. In this way, he identifies with both professional groups but separately. She considers both roles and identities essential and valuable but chooses and experiences only one at a time. The following two identity structures are more complex, in which the individual organizes his identity around several identity components at once. A holistic identity is typical of professionals who have to conform to multiple professional identities, such as a counselor or even a community organizer, who may work in multiple contexts with a highly complex set of roles. An individual with a holistic identity structure creates a complex professional identity structure, identifies with multiple identities, sees him/herself as a member of multiple professional groups, and considers all professional identities equally important. The fifth identity structure is called augmentation by Caza and Creary. The multiple professional identities of an individual with this identity structure are distinct but complementary (augmenting, enriching), often appearing together in the same situation. An individual with an augmentative identity structure identifies with multiple professional identities simultaneously, respecting each identity separately and simultaneously but not attempting to view them as a more holistic category (Caza & Creary, 2016).

Summary

Professional identity thus encompasses what a professional knows what he or she is capable of doing when dealing with particular situations, and it includes the values and attitudes that drive his or her actions (B. Erdős et al., 2021). In developing a training curriculum, traditionally, more emphasis is placed on developing knowledge and skills than on developing and improving attitudes, and these components are also more challenging to measure. Our planned study aims to use identity structure analysis (ISA) (Weinreich, 2004) to identify the main elements of community organizers' professional identity, the interrelationships, and dynamics between each element, and then to incorporate the findings into the curriculum development process for a bachelor's degree in community organizing.

As outlined above, the identity of a profession is determined by several factors linked to the individual's personal values, goals, and experiences and influenced by the external environment. The following factors play a role in shaping professional identity:

- Interests and skills - an individual's interests and skills determine what professions and careers they find attractive and what they feel they can succeed in.
- Personal values and motivations - an individual's intrinsic values and motivations influence their commitment to a profession.
- Family and social expectations - family and social norms can influence career choices.
- Learning and work experiences - previous learning and work experiences shape an individual's perceptions and expectations about the chosen occupation.
- Cultural and social context - the cultural and social context can influence the prestige and attractiveness of the profession and the formation and shaping of professional identity
- Personal relationships - inspiring role models, supportive people, and mentors can help individuals develop, strengthen, or change their career identity.

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