

Summary.

This doctoral thesis presents a broad discussion of supporting young people in the choices they make in their lives and careers. Its primary focus is an attempt at answering the following question: can coaching, the significance of which is currently increasing, be a successful replacement for classic career counselling in schools?

Numerous young people on the threshold of choosing their career path (aged 18-20) are unable to decide on specific solutions and they usually find the situation frustrating, while the risk of making a wrong decision affects their emotional and social life.

This thesis is theoretical-empirical in its character and it is divided into three parts. The first chapter of part one offers a background for the research and a literature overview. Concepts, such as coaching, are explained and presented in relation to pedagogical and psychological currents. Furthermore, the chapter features a discussion of tools used in coaching. The second chapter defines career counselling, as well as its functions in Poland and in the European Union. Moreover, the chapter includes a discussion of tools used in career counselling and a characterisation of the millennials' generation. The third chapter contains a discussion of psychological and pedagogical conditions of the theoretical assumptions, as well as a description of such concepts as emotional intelligence, coping styles, thinking styles, professional orientation and others.

Part two consists in a characterization of the research method. It contains a presentation of the subject and the aim of the research, its problems and hypotheses, a description of the experimental procedure applied and strategies of the studies performed, as well as plans of statistical analyses. The basic problem discussed in the thesis is **whether, and if yes, how, coaching is going to influence school leavers making a decision on their future career.** In order to answer this question, manipulated variables were applied. School-leavers undecided as to what they would be doing in the future (university, work), were divided into two groups. Both groups were tested for emotional intelligence, thinking style, action style, stress-coping style, and professional orientation. Coaching sessions (career coaching) were run in one of the groups. During the sessions, school-leavers were expected to decide what kind of university programme they want to apply for (some contemplated whether to go to university or start working). The other group (control group) did not participate in any support activities (counselling, therapy, coaching etc.). After the experimental procedure had been concluded, school-leavers from both groups were tested again, in order to check whether coaching affected

their emotional intelligence, stress-coping style, thinking style, professional orientation, and, most importantly, whether it helped them make a career decision.

Simultaneous research was done into access to career counsellors in schools of the Upper Silesian voivodeship. This line of research was also supposed to verify whether the career counsellors present in schools have coaching competences and whether the manner of counselling delivery is sufficient and meets young people's educational needs. Additionally, in order to ensure a prognostic value of the project, a study was done into the current job market situation of the generation directly preceding that which formed the experimental groups, i.e. the millennials. They are the ones to introduce generation Z (persons born after 1995) to the job market.

Part three, the last one, consists in a presentation of research results. The results presented here were collected from three stages of research, which enabled a synthesis of knowledge, providing answers to the questions posed for the thesis, and verification of general and specific hypotheses presented in the thesis. Moreover, several stories of the school-leavers participating in the study are presented. The thesis finishes with conclusions and a bibliography. The appendix contains additional materials and detailed information on the performance of the research procedure.