

Didactic Model of Crisis Management for Women in Professional Crisis Situations

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Authors AR and VD managed the literature searches, designed the study, managed the analyses of the study, wrote the first draft of the manuscript and edited the manuscript. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

The research aim is to work out and to evaluate the Didactic Model of Crisis Management for Women in Professional Crisis Situations developed by the authors. The target audience is women who wish or are forced to change their occupation due to a professional crisis situation. Study design: research paper. An expert evaluation of the Didactic Model of Crisis Management was performed in Latvia May to June 2015. The model was developed and approbated during the period between June 2014 and June 2015. To achieve the research aims, an expert evaluation of the didactic model for managing a professional crisis was performed. The research was conducted at the Latvia University of Agriculture, Institute of Education and Home Economics Doctoral programme of pedagogy. All the experts involved in the research were selected among professionals who worked in Latvia and had a length of service of more than 10 years. All five experts were experienced in pedagogy and career counselling. Kendall's W was used to identify concordance among the experts.

On the result the Didactic Model of Crisis Management for Women in Professional Crisis Situations was experimentally approbated, and methodology created on the basis of research on women's career change was integrated; the methodology involves a customer development programme for

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career change of women in professional crisis situations. The model was evaluated by the experts. Using the Didactic Model of Crisis Management for Women in Professional Crisis Situations as a scientifically justified basis (based on the principle of gender conformity) and a set of didactic preconditions (education content, kinds of counselling, techniques of counselling), it is possible to contribute to building various skills in women who experience career crisis (career management, decision-making, communication, computer skills, skills to adapt to new circumstances, etc.), thus providing professional counselling for their career support through informing, educating and counselling them on the basis of progressive techniques (e-counselling, e-mentorism).

Keywords: Career support; women's career; job; didactic model; professional crisis.

1. INTRODUCTION

At present when the labour market changes rapidly, new technologies are introduced, requirements for employees change and increase, also women have to develop themselves, their professional abilities, or change their occupation in order to ensure an opportunity to survive in any life situation. A characteristic of a modern labour market is the fact that now any individual has to learn or develop professionally all the time because as soon as they stop educating and developing, there is a possibility to fall into a risk group – those who would lose their jobs. Therefore it is important for women to be resilient and active. It may involve another higher education, professional skills improvement courses, self-education and engagement in professional associations. It is necessary to follow the situation in the labour market, to understand what emergent is at the moment both in one's professional field and in the labour market in general. Every skill acquired by individuals is like an additional bonus, an opportunity that may be useful in case of losing or changing a job. To understand the specifics of a women's career, scientists explain the association between employment and career. The latter is defined as an employment-related position, a sequence of roles, activities and experiences, combining the job, the career and the profession as well as including the unemployment situation. It means that a career can progress not only vertically but also horizontally – during its course, women might get into various situations and be in different employment statuses. So employment is associated with a career through the change of an employment status [1].

The problem is that women experiencing the career crisis fall in difficulties to change the job, as well as increases the risk of depression. The following social studies describe the need for career guidance and support in managing the

crisis, for that reason the authors developed the Didactic Model of Crisis Management for Women in Professional Crisis Situations.

The main differences between men and women can be observed in the labour market, where men occupy higher positions and better-paid sectors of the labour market (stereotype of men as better leaders who are better at sciences, etc.). Therefore, men's salaries, pensions and life prosperity are higher than women. Latvian women receive on average by 15.4% lower wages than men (in the EU - 17.4%). In all age groups, women's risk of poverty is generally higher than men in both Latvian and European Union. However situation in Latvia is different, because of the situation of women is much worse than in other Member States, namely – Latvian women's risk of poverty rate in the EU is the highest - 28% [2].

The State Employment Agency (SEA) had registered 86 604 unemployed individuals at the end of March 2015; in the first three months of 2015, the SEA registered, on average, 2 285 job vacancies (2 023 in 2014, 2 524 in 2013 and 1 603 in 2012). In March 2015 the SEA registered 3 144 vacancies, which was 1 159 or by 58.4% more than in the previous month. In March, the registered number of vacancies was the greatest monthly number of vacancies since August 2013. In the three months of 2015, 17 0641 unemployed individuals became employed; of them, 6 003 (35.2%) unemployed individuals got a job after completing some activity. The greatest demand for labour (based on the number of vacancies registered with the SEA) in March 2015 was observed in manufacturing, the wholesale and retail sector as well as the construction industry. The distribution of unemployed individuals by age group and gender is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 shows that the highest unemployment figures for women and also men are specific for

the age of 50-59 when they need career counselling and career support the most. The employment rate for women aged 15-64 in Latvia in the period 2000-2012 is presented in Fig. 1.

The figures presented in Table 1 and Fig. 2 indicate that in Latvia 46240 women need support for their career development, which would involve both career counselling and an educational programme. The authors of the paper suggest such support, summarising all support activities.

Since, to a large extent, women need to renew their knowledge, skills and competences in career crisis situations in order to maintain their professionalism and ability to fully participate in social events, personal growth and career development as well as hence women's

successful integration into the labour market contributes to the growth of the whole national economy, the authors of the paper, summarising the entire set of support activities, suggest their own model for managing a professional crisis.

Women's career development has been studied by a number of authors. J. Holland [5] sees women's career development as very similar to men's. D. Super [6,7,8] includes women's career development too in his career growth stages. S. Osipow [9] however points to the incapability of career theories to explain women's careers as a separate category. L. E. Isaacson and D. Brown refer to women as a "special group" that goes beyond the existing theories [10]. J. Bimrose [11] notes that women and men are assessed differently and analyses the ways how women can successfully integrate into the labour market.

Table 1. Distribution of unemployed individuals by age group and gender in Latvia on 31.03.2015 [3]

Unemployed individuals by age group	Women	Men	Total
15 - 19 (1.0%)	468	408	876
20 - 24 (8.1%)	3890	3114	7004
25 - 29 (11.5%)	5805	4149	9954
30 - 34 (10.2%)	5103	3703	8806
35 - 39 (9.8%)	4717	3758	8475
40 - 44 (11.0%)	4944	4550	9494
45 - 49 (11.7%)	5098	5016	10114
50 - 54 (14.7%)	6352	6344	12696
55 - 59 (16.0%)	7050	6815	13865
60 and older (6.1%)	2813	2507	5320
Total	46240	40364	86604

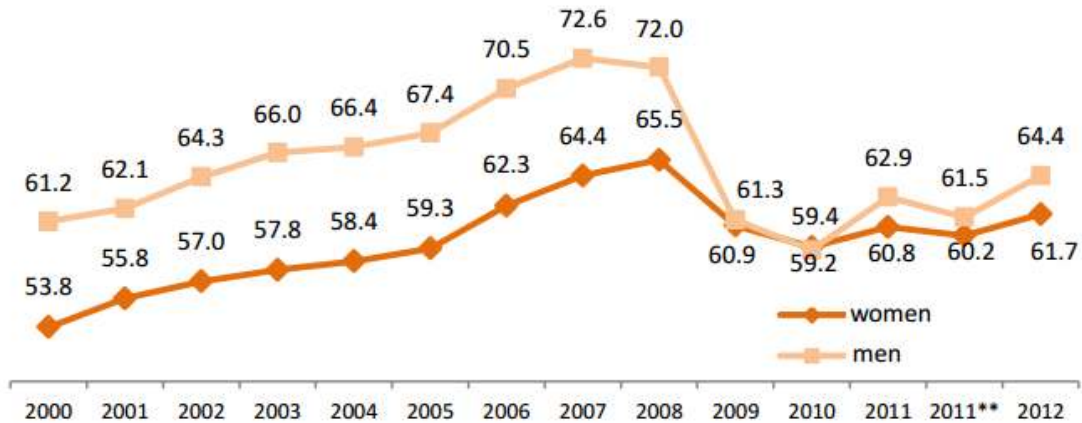


Fig. 1. Employment rate* in Latvia in the period 2000-2012 (%) [4]

*In the age group 15-64. The employment rate – the share of employed people out of total population of the same age group, percentage

**Data recalculation based on the results of the Population and Housing Census 2011

C. Chen [12] focuses on the specifics of consulting women and how to cope with the job and family duties without any conflict. L. Belanger [13] suggests examples how women can engage in business and be successful.

Scientific discussions have resulted in five approaches to women's career development. The first approach focuses on the creation of some theories on women's careers. Their creation is justified by different needs, perspectives, choices, priorities and kinds of career. Such factors as marriage, satisfaction, family finances, social affiliation, the education and occupation of parents, values, social mobility and the choice of friends for women are different than for men [14]. D. Zytowski [15] emphasises marriage and the importance of mother's role and of home in women's careers. The second approach is characterised by the adaptation of existing theories. D. Super classifies women's career paths into seven categories: stable housewife, traditional, stable employment, dual - women combine paid employment with work in their household -, disrupted, unstable - via part-time jobs -, and multiple paths [6]. J. Holland [5,16,17], describing six types of individuals and their respective occupations, believes that it may not be attributed to well-educated middle class women of white race. L. Fitzgerald and L. Weitzman [18] point that women's choice of a career depends not only on their interests, but also on their role in the family and on available finances. The third approach is characterised by comprehensive theories on women's and men's careers. L. Gottfredson [19,20] in 1981 and H. Astin [21] in 1984 developed a theory for careers of both genders. The scientists examined the effects of an environment and of individual traits on career decisions. H. Astin believes that the motivation to work for both genders is the same, only their early socialisation experience and their patterns of opportunities for making career decisions are different. The fourth approach is associated with examining specific and individual choices of a women's career. H. Farmer [22] suggests a theory that associates factors of origin (gender, race, social stratum, location of the school and age) with an individual's psychological factors (self-evaluation, values, attitude to home, perception of achievements) and environmental factors (society's attitude to women's employment, support of teachers and parents). The fifth approach is characterised by social cognitive models appropriate for women's careers. Its authors J. Hackett and N. Betz [23,24,25,26] explain the effects of socialisation

on career formation by employing an individual's self-confidence indicators defined by A. Bandura [27,28]: revelation of achievements, use of others' experience, verbal encouragement, emotional upheaval (the highest degree is efforts, the lowest is self-confidence). R. Lent, S. D. Brown and J. Hackett [29,30,31,25,26,32] suggest a social cognitive theory for careers; its central role is played by cognition, self-regulation and self-reflection, so that an individual can adapt to changes.

While working on their didactic model (Fig. 3) aimed at career support for women in crisis situations, the authors integrated in it some aspects of communication theories concerning communication with women. Matters on the differences in women's and men's perception and communication nowadays are very urgent. A lot of conflicts both in families and at work arise particularly because of the differences in perception and the misunderstanding of such differences. Already in the 1980s K. Gilligan [33] researched women's psychological development, based on the personality and morale theories created by well-known psychologists E. Erikson [34,35] and L. Kohlberg [36], and concluded that women in their nature mostly tended to relationships, whereas men – to independence. According to E. Liebert [37], gender inequality begins in early childhood when, being brought up in a family, a child learns various roles and values. The child identifies him/herself with the parents, copies their behaviour and relationship patterns. Later culture and society show us examples of an ideal woman and an ideal man, thus setting boundaries. N. Slee [38] stresses the *influence of androcentrism on the choice of a profession*, saying that women's talents and endowments are often rejected owing to particularly their family duties. Women's self-confidence is often associated with their body size, leanness and corpulence, sexual attractiveness, colour of hair and skin and virginity [39].

The theory on gender communication styles [40,41,42] stresses that particularly communication differences are those leading to misunderstandings and confusions. Communication between women and men is characterised by different communication norms and different language usage principles, and these differences can obstruct their understanding.

Muted Group Theory [43,44,45] states that individuals with smaller influence are difficult to

perceive by others (cooperation partners, managers and subordinates); consequently, they are forgotten, their ideas and activity are silenced and they are made unobvious. According to this theory, it is difficult for some members of society to integrate into a successful society because men act more differently than women; silence involves a lower status in society. Men and women acquire different experience while performing different tasks in society. Nevertheless, women have an opportunity to transform their unique ideas, experience and their significance for men in a language in order to be listened [46].

Interactive Universalism Theory [47] proposes new communicative ethics based on the concept of universal interaction among all individuals. S.Benhabib aims to extend norms, so that they can fit everyone. Communicative ethics means that everyone is responsible for the voices not being heard and to understand muted voices.

Standpoint Theory [48] explains that individuals are located in various places and exist in different times, different standpoints exist and therefore future perspectives differ. According to the theory, different standpoints are due to different genders, races and sexual orientations and, accordingly, there are different development prospects for every group.

Gender communication theories have well reflected matters of women's careers with regard to the principle of gender conformity (Fig. 2). These theories explain and help to reassess unreasonable assumptions in society regarding the roles and functions of genders. Communication skills are associated with every individual's individual career, as the inability to be a good conversation partner or the inability to present oneself is often a cause for unsuccessful career development.

2. METHODOLOGY

The research questions are: 1) What kind of didactic model is necessary for women for managing a professional crisis? 2) How experts assess the Didactic Model of Crisis Management for Women in Professional Crisis Situations?

The authors have developed a didactic model based on theoretical studies and long-term activities and derived from practical experience. An expert evaluation of the Didactic Model of Crisis Management for Women in Professional

Crisis Situations was carried out to achieve the research aims. The research was conducted at the Latvia University of Agriculture, Institute of Education and Home Economics, Doctoral Programme in Pedagogy. All the experts involved in the research were selected among professionals who worked in Latvia and had a length of service of more than 10 years; three had obtained a Master's degree and two had obtained a Doctor's degree. All the five experts were experienced in pedagogy and career counselling. The experts justified their opinions on the significance of the didactic model for managing a professional crisis on the basis of their experience in pedagogy and career counselling. A questionnaire was designed and sent to the experts together with a theoretical description of the model. Kendall's *W* was used to identify agreement among the experts. Prior to it, the model was approbated and the customer development programme was tested on a group of 16 individuals, which involved participation of unemployed women registered with the SEA participated, from June 2014 to June 2015.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

I. Žogla [49] defines a didactic model as a unity of theory and practical learning, which determines differences in the study process. A didactic model in pedagogy describes and allows predicting expected outcomes from the perspective of pedagogical process. For this reason, it is important to integrate such a model in career counselling, which would involve career education, the career counselling process, career support and career research, in order to achieve an outcome.

3.1 Didactic Model of Crisis Management for Women in Professional Crisis Situations

To provide support to women experiencing professional crisis, the authors have developed the Didactic Model of Crisis Management for Women in Professional Crisis Situations (Fig. 3).

The target audience is women wishing or being forced to change their occupation due to a professional crisis.

The model's objective is to identify the situation in a customer's career and the main ways how to start changing the career, to establish the customer's skills and wishes, to assess how appropriate is the customer's future profession

and to manage the customer's professional crisis.

The model identifies factors affecting the career (educational level, psychological climate at the job, attitude of supervisors, distance between home and the workplace, age, etc.), defines a

professional crisis and identifies and approbates criteria and indicators for determining the professional crisis.

According to the model, career counselling involves a career counsellor and one or more women.

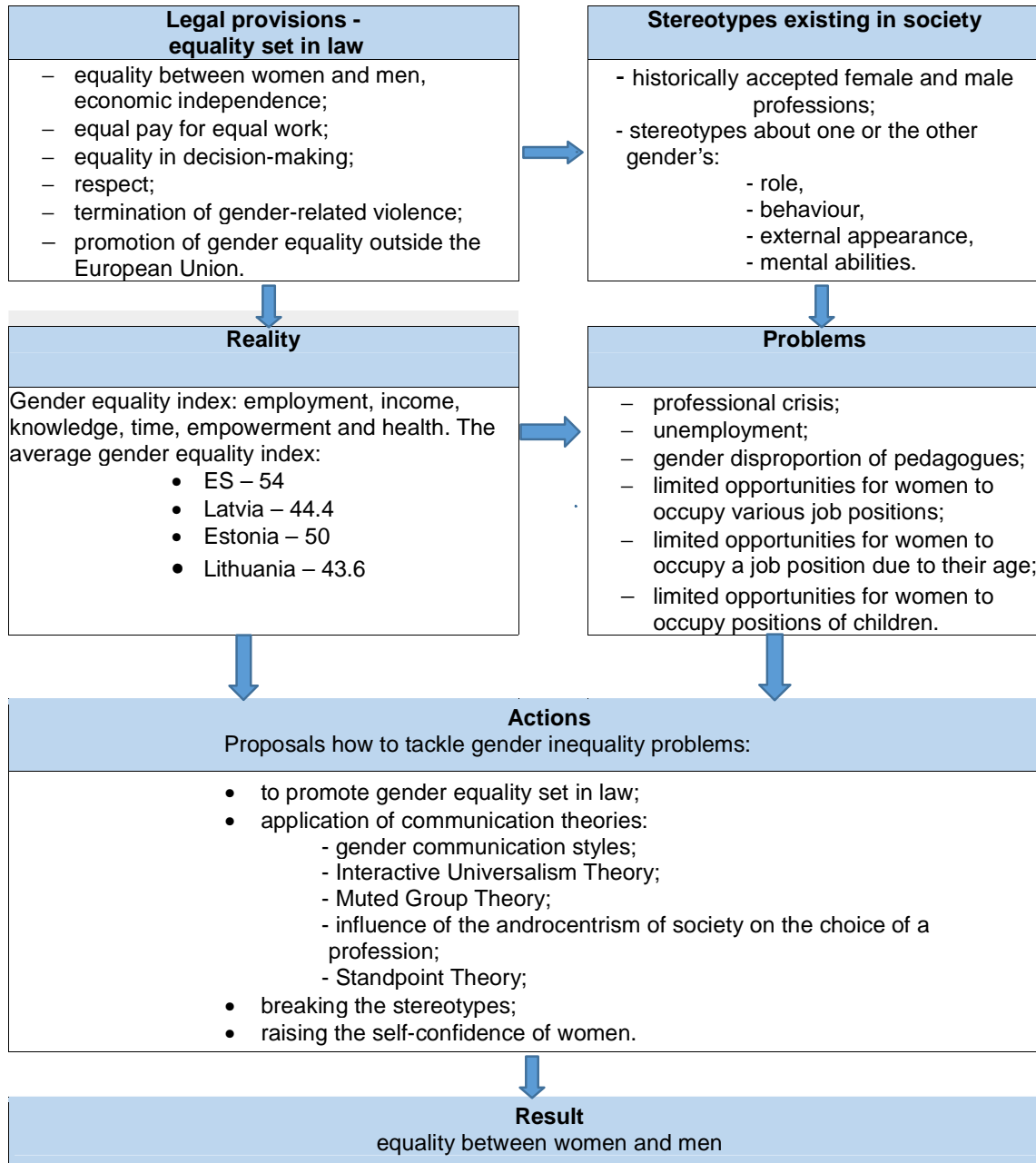


Fig. 2. Dimensions of the principle of gender conformity [authors' construction]

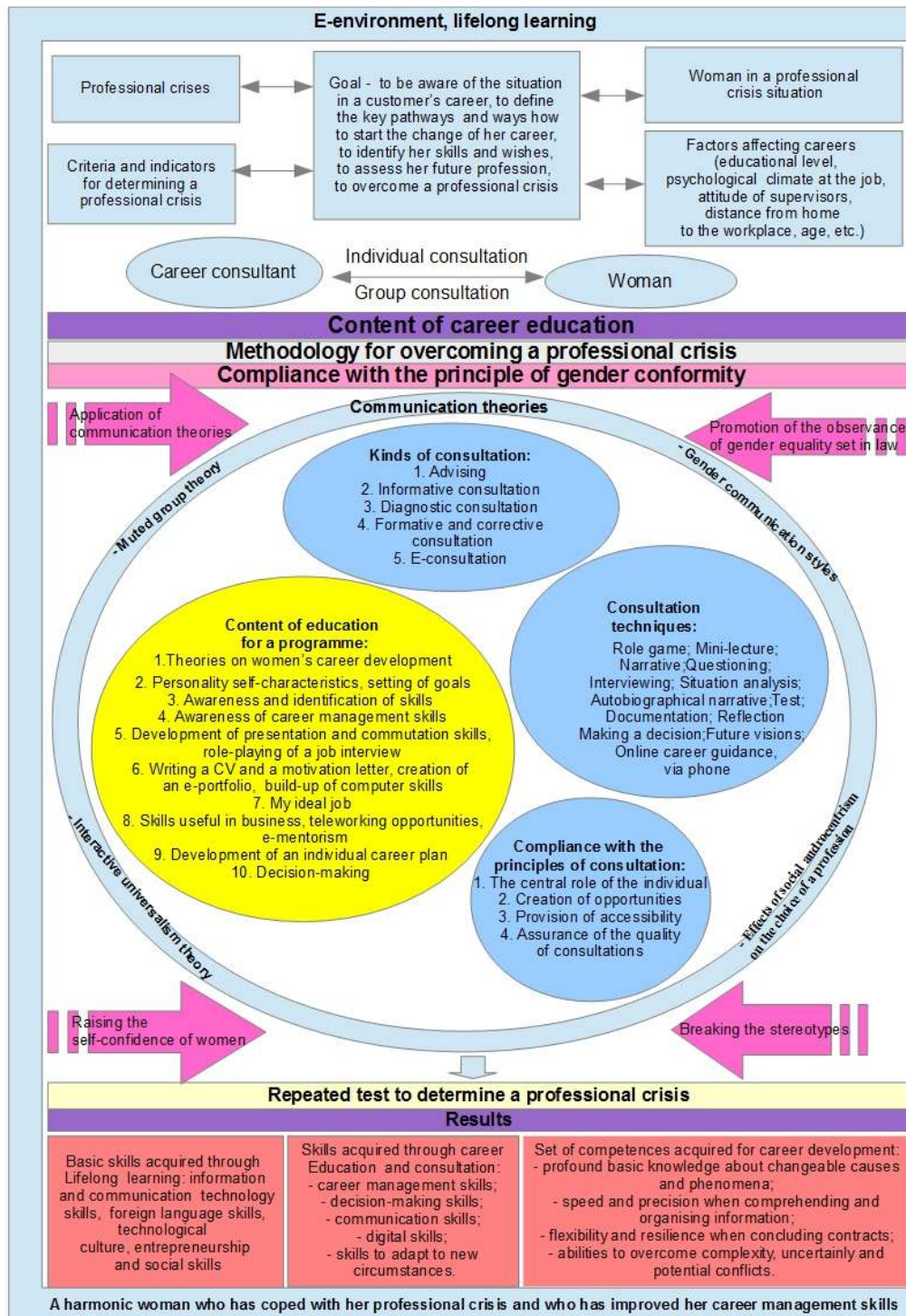


Fig. 3. The didactic model of crisis management for women in professional crisis situations [authors' construction]

A type of consultation (advising, informative and corrective consultation and e-consultation) is

chosen on the basis of customer's wishes or the content of a career consultation.

The model provides a methodology for managing a professional crisis, observing the principle of gender conformity in the course of career counselling (compliance with gender equality set in law, application of communication theories, breaking of stereotypes and raising of women's self-confidence). At European Union level, equal treatment of women and men for promotion in position are regulated by Directive 76/207/EEC of 1976 and Directive 2002/73/EC of 2002 amending the former Directive [50,51]. As regards equality between women and men, Article 23 of the European Union Charter of Fundamental Rights stipulates that equality between women and men must to be ensured in all areas, including employment, work and pay [52].

In Latvia, its legislation provides equal treatment of women and men as well as prohibits any kind of discrimination. Such rights are guaranteed both by the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia [53] and by legal acts regulating labour rights [54]. According to the Labour Law, different treatment based on an employee's gender, age, disability, religious, political or other conviction, national or social origin, property or marital status, race and skin colour is prohibited [55]. The dimensions of the principle of gender conformity, developed by the authors, are presented in Fig. 2.

The model takes into consideration the principles of consultation: *the central role of individuals* (independence, objectivity, confidentiality, equal opportunities and a comprehensive approach); *improvement of accessibility* (transparency, friendliness and empathy, continuity, usability, accessibility – consultation services have to be accessible, flexible and customer-friendly, the services have to be rendered both in person and via phone and e-mail); *assurance of the quality of services* (appropriateness and continuous improvement of consultation techniques, the right to submit a complaint and have a solution, competent personnel) [56].

The objective of the customer development programme integrated in the model is to identify the situation in a customer's career and the main ways how to start changing the career, to establish the customer's skills and wishes, to assess how appropriate is the customer's future profession and whether the profession is in demand and whether the customer is competitive in the labour market, to counsel the customer on how to start seeking a job and how to prepare for the job and to contribute to developing a socially

active and educated personality that would be able to fully and actively integrate and live in modern society.

The customer development programme for career change for women in professional crisis situations is intended to help women who need advice and assistance in a crisis situation and to provide necessary information, to promote their thinking and encourage them to analyse their surrounding environment and their situation, and to raise their self-confidence and to contribute to their professional success. The programme involves 10 individual classes for being familiarised with the customer and her problems and for performing various assignments and tests until, working together, a decision is made.

The programme involves a methodology concerning how to make decisions, identify problems in one's life and to choose appropriate solutions regarding how to present one's ideas and make others focus on them as well as provide an opportunity to everyone to use personalised e-learning activities that match their training needs. Learning activities will contribute to the customer's understanding of conceptions and processes, employing active learning or action-based learning.

3.2 Tasks of the Programme

- To create an appropriate notion of the role of a career in an individual's life.
- To give information to customers about how to prepare for life under a modern mixed economy, develop their ability to make justified, reasonable and responsible decisions that could ensure personal and public wellbeing.
- To create opportunities to develop and improve integrated or general skills.
- To build a skill to work with information – to be able to find necessary information sources, to select, summarise and analyse the acquired information and to identify the main and most important aspects and to abandon unnecessary aspects as well as to draw conclusions.
- To develop projective skills – to be able to define a problem, identify its causes, find solutions, draw an action plan and implement it.
- To develop such features of character as enterprise and courage – to be ready for problem situations, not to be afraid of

taking risk and to be able to cope with losses.

- To build general intellectual skills – critical analytic thinking, forecasting and creative work skills. The content of education for the customer development programme is presented in Fig. 3.

3.3 The Main Career Counselling Techniques Employed by the Programme

Role game: It is a reality simulation technique for playing a role that does not make any consequence in reality through offering “players” an opportunity to perform certain actions or practise certain behaviours and/or abilities. A role game may be employed singly or in association with other techniques: situation analysis, debate, group discussion and professional profile analysis [57].

Situation analysis: Usually real situations that can be associated with customers’ experiences are used for an analysis. The most usual scheme for a situation analysis is as follows: identification – formulation – assessment – solution – decision-making.

Mini-lecture: It involves giving information briefly.

Narrative: It focuses on priorities, choices, self-exploration, oral expression abilities, etc.

Questioning: This is a technique for acquiring information and communicating with a customer.

Interviewing: To choose a profession, interviews are performed with the purpose to identify a customer’s professional goals, interests, prospects and abilities as well as to help the customer plan the career, to encourage the customer to make decisions in the professional self-determination process.

Autobiographical narrative: It helps to better understand whether customers appreciate their life experience and how they develop their identity.

Test: It is a systemised procedure for comparing the behaviours of two or more individuals.

Documentation: A counsellor needs a book for registering customers and has to make a customer file in which all materials that are acquired during counselling are collected. Documentation has to be performed in accordance with Cabinet Regulation of 28

September 2010 No.916 “Procedures of Producing and Formatting Documents” [58].

Situation analysis is employed both in individual and in group consultations. Decision-making helps to summarise and analyse information, make choices and implement them [57]. Feedback (reflection) allows participants to express their opinions, observations and feelings about what happens as well as helps the pedagogue assess any training stage [59]. Future visions assist in planning carer growth and in setting goals [60]. E-guidance involves career support activities and services, using all forms of ICT: online career e-guidance, a phone and the Internet. All the forms may be used to give information, find opportunities for customers to use self-assistance materials, perform interactive actions, including direct conversations with the career counsellor.

In the result, after completing classes in the customer development programme designed by the authors, a repeated test is organized to identify a professional crisis. In the course of implementing the model, women have improved their skills in the result of completing the programme and of counselling: basic skills in lifelong learning - information and communication technology skills, foreign language skills, technological culture, entrepreneurship and social skills; skills acquired through career education and consultation - career management skills, decision-making skills, communication skills, digital skills and skills to adapt to new circumstances; a set of competences acquired for career development [61] - profound basic knowledge about changeable causes and phenomena, speed and precision when comprehending and organising information, flexibility and resilience when concluding contracts, abilities to overcome complexity, uncertainty and potential conflicts. The final result of applying this model to help women experiencing a crisis situation is a harmonic woman who has coped with her professional crisis and improved her career management skills.

3.4 Expert evaluation of the Didactic Model of Crisis Management for Women in Professional Crisis Situations

Expert evaluation was used to elaborate methodological variants. Discussions were

organized with the experts to find out whether they agree and have possibilities to participate in an expert evaluation. All the five experts had a length of service of more than 10 years; three had obtained a Master's degree and two had obtained a Doctor's degree. All five experts were experienced in pedagogy and career counselling. The experts justified their opinions on the significance of the didactic model for managing a professional crisis on the basis of their experience in pedagogy and career counselling. Kendall's W was used to identify correlations between the variables. It is often called the

nonparametric Kendall's coefficient of concordance. The coefficient is computed if one variable is rated by various experts [0]. In determining Kendall's W, criteria ratings on a scale from 1 (inadequate) to 5 (adequate) served as input data. The characteristics of the experts' work experience are given in Table 2.

The results of the expert evaluation of the Didactic Model of Crisis Management for Women in Professional Crisis Situations are presented in Table 3.

Table 2. Characteristics of the experts' experience

Experts	Experience			Association with the field to be expert-evaluated	Education
	Institution, job position	Length of service, years	Length of service in career counselling, years		
A	Head of personnel department	14	2	Experience in selecting and evaluating candidates for positions in the state police as well as in career planning and supportive work for state police officials	Master's degree in Sociology
B	Career counsellor	15	3	Experience in educational and career counsellor work	Professional Master's degree in Education Science (Mg.ed.), qualification of Career Counsellor
C	Career education specialist in the education department	10	3	Experience in educational and career counsellor work	Professional Master's degree in Education Science (Mg.ed.), qualification of Career Counsellor
D	Assistant professor. vice-rector in cooperation and development matters	22	12	Experience in educational and career counsellor work	Pedagogy, Dr. Pa ed.
E	Career counsellor	38	2	Experience in educational and career counsellor work	Professional Master's degree in Education Science (Mg.ed.), qualification of Career Counsellor

Table 3. Results of rating the didactic model of crisis management for women in professional crisis situations by the experts (Data were acquired in May and June 2015 from the experts ranking the appropriateness of the model)

Rating of the plan for every class	Experts										L_i	d_i	d_i^2	Rank R	L_i rank
	A	B	C	D	E	A	B	C	D	E					
	Ratings					Ranks R_i									
Methodology given in the model is appropriate and sufficient to manage professional crisis	5	5	5	4	5	2.5	3.5	3.5	2	2,5	14	-3,5	12,25	1	I
The content of education in the customer development programme promotes the change of women's careers	4	5	5	4	4	5.5	3.5	3.5	2	5,5	20	2,5	6,25	6	VI
Career counselling techniques are sufficient in the career counselling process	4	5	5	4	5	5.5	3.5	3.5	2	2,5	17	-0,5	0,25	2	II
The principle of gender conformity suggested by the authors contains all the necessary dimensions	5	5	5	2	5	2.5	3.5	3.5	5.5	2,5	17,5	0	0	3,5	III
The customer development programme for career change for women in professional crisis situations is appropriate	5	5	5	3	4	2.5	3.5	3.5	4	5,5	19	1,5	2,25	5	V
The model developed by the authors contributes to managing a professional crisis by women	5	5	5	2	5	2.5	3.5	3.5	5.5	2,5	17,5	0	0	3,5	III
n= 6	m = 5										$\sum_{i=1}^n L_i = 105$	0	S=21		

Where: A, B, C, D, E - experts; L_i - sum of ranks; d_i - rank sum minus the average value of the rank sum; d_i^2 - squared d_i ; R_i - rank; $L_{i\ rank}$ - position;

$$L_{vid} = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{L_i}{n} = \frac{105}{6} = 17.50$$

L_{vid} - - average value of the rank sum (rank sum divided by the number of factors to be rated);

$$W = \frac{12S}{m^2(n(n^2 - 1))} = \frac{12 * 21}{25 * (6 * (36 - 1))}$$

Where, W- coefficient of concordance;

n- number of facts to be rated; m- number of experts; S- sum of squared deviations

The experts differently rated the model ($W=0.048$); yet, five opinions may be highlighted: the first place - the highest rating was given to an assertion that the methodology suggested in the model is appropriate and sufficient to manage a professional crisis; the second place - the second highest rating was given to an assertion that the career consultation techniques are sufficient in the career consultation process; the third place - the principle of gender conformity suggested by the authors contains all the necessary dimensions, the authors' model contributes to women's management of their professional crisis; the fourth place - the content of education in the customer development programme contributes to the change of women's careers; the fifth place - the lowest rating - the authors' customer development programme for career change for women being in professional crisis situations is appropriate in lifelong learning.

The authors find that it is necessary to give a broader and simpler explanation of the principle of gender conformity and to expand discussion in the society about observing the principle of gender conformity and its role in women's career development. Such Didactic Model of Crisis Management for Women in Professional Crisis Situations would be urgent and useful for practitioners - career counsellors - who could use it for planning and providing assistance to women in professional crisis situations.

Further, the research gives a summary of the experts' comments and suggestions for enhancing the programme.

Expert A: "The main thing is to make the client be open during all the phases of discussion".

Expert C: "The authors focused on a very pressing problem that prevails in local regions, namely women in professional crisis situations with limited financial and moral resources. The authors have developed and approbated an appreciable model that can assist women in situations when they need to manage a professional crisis. This is impressive assistance of a career counsellor to women in professional crisis situations".

Expert D: "Fig. 2 - the dimensions of the principle of gender conformity - contains both problems and their solutions; however, it is advised to expand on this figure, so that it is clear what the principle of gender conformity means, to specify the legal acts and to add descriptions of

the reality and the problem. The description of the model lacks data that would explain the effects of the model".

The authors comment in relation to this expert remarks is as follows:- a full explanation of the principle of gender conformity will be available in the full text of the dissertation; therefore the authors have approbated the programme and carried out research on the change of women's careers that cannot be included in a single paper for a journal. The experts' suggestion will be taken into account and the model will be expanded on.

4. CONCLUSIONS

As regards women's careers, scientific discussions have resulted in five approaches to women's career development: development of separate theories on women's careers (G. Psathas, D. Zytowski); adaptation of the existing theories (D. Super, J. Holland, L. Fitzgerald, L. Weitzman); development of comprehensive theories on women's and men's careers (L. Gottfredson, H. Astin); research on the choice of a career by individually different women (H. Farmer); development of social cognitive models applicable to women's careers (J. Hackett, N. Betz, A. Bandura, R. Lent, S. D. Brown). The authors agree to the adaptation of the existing theories to women's matters and recognise the application of social cognitive models to tackling women's professional crisis problems.

The principle of gender conformity may be viewed through the following dimensions: promotion of the realisation of gender equality set in law (equality between women and men, economic independence, equal pay for equal work, equality in decision-making, mutual respect, etc.) by applying communication theories (gender communication styles, Interactive Universalism Theory, Muted Group Theory, Social Androcentrism Theory, etc.), by breaking existing stereotypes in the society (regarding women's and men's professions, roles, behaviours, appearance, mental abilities of genders, etc.) and by raising women's self-confidence, thus contributing to tackling women's career development problems in professional crisis situations based on the possibilities of lifelong learning.

Answering to the research question, the usage of the Didactic Model of Crisis Management for Women in Professional Crisis Situations as a

scientifically justified basis (based on the principle of gender conformity and the principles of counselling) and a set of didactic preconditions (education content, kinds of counselling, methods of counselling), makes it possible to contribute to building various skills in women experiencing a career crisis (career management, decision-making, communication, computer skills, skills to adapt to new circumstances, etc.), thereby providing professional counselling for their career support through informing, educating and counselling on the basis of progressive techniques (e-counselling, e-mentorism).

Results of expert evaluation. After approbating the Didactic Model of Crisis Management for Women in Professional Crisis Situations, the research examples showed that after completing the authors' training programme in career education and being professionally counselled the women experiencing a career crisis acquired a set of the following competences for their career development: profound basic knowledge about changeable causes and phenomena, speed and precision when comprehending and organising information, flexibility and resilience when concluding contracts and abilities to overcome complexity, uncertainty and potential conflicts. The expert evaluation (Kendall's $W=0.048$) showed that the experts' opinions were quite different; however the first place - the highest rating - was given to an assertion that the methodology suggested in the model was appropriate and sufficient to manage a professional crisis.

ETHICAL APPROVAL

Both authors hereby declare that all experiments have been examined and approved by the appropriate ethics committee and have therefore been performed in accordance with the ethical standards laid down in the 1964 Declaration of Helsinki.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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