

Affections in career choice: the perception of high school students¹

Kalyne Jeuken Teixeira²

Elvira Cristina Martins Tassoni³

ABSTRACT

The experiences of young people at different times in their lives have a significant influence on their career choices. This study aimed to investigate indications related to the ways in which teachers and families affect students in the third year of secondary school in their career choices. The empirical material was produced by a questionnaire answered by 289 third-year high school students enrolled in 10 schools located in four cities in the state of São Paulo. Cross-referencing the answers enabled quantitative and qualitative analysis using closed and open answers. The results showed that the ways in which teachers and families affect career choices are different. While the former affects career choices through teaching, their mastery of knowledge, and their supportive and explanatory attitudes, the family's expectations of success, remuneration, and the relationship they have with their profession stand out.

KEYWORDS: Emotional Experiences; Occupational Choice; Interpersonal Relationships.

¹ English version by the authors. This study was financed in part by the Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior – Brasil (CAPES) – Finance Code 001.

² Master in Education from the Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Campinas, Campinas, São Paulo, Brasil. Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6273-530X>. E-mail: kalynejeuken@gmail.com.

³ PhD in Education. Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Campinas, Campinas, São Paulo, Brasil. Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8968-3981>. E-mail: cristinatassoni@puc-campinas.edu.br.

Afetos na escolha profissional: a percepção de jovens do Ensino Médio

RESUMO

As experiências vivenciadas pelos jovens, em diferentes momentos da vida, têm relevante influência em suas escolhas profissionais. Este estudo objetivou investigar os indícios relacionados aos modos de afetar de professores e da família percebidos por estudantes do 3º ano do Ensino Médio em seus processos de escolha profissional. O material empírico foi produzido por questionário respondido por 289 estudantes do 3º ano do Ensino Médio, matriculados em 10 escolas localizadas em quatro cidades no estado de São Paulo. O cruzamento entre as respostas possibilitou análises quantiqualitativas, por meio de resposta fechadas e abertas. Os resultados evidenciaram que as formas de afetar de professores e da família são diferentes. Enquanto os primeiros afetam as escolhas profissionais pela didática, domínio que têm do conhecimento e pelas atitudes de apoio e esclarecimentos; na família destacam-se as expectativas de sucesso, de remuneração e a relação que tem com a própria profissão.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Vivências Emocionais; Escolha Profissional; Relações Interpessoais.

Los afectos en la elección de carrera: la percepción de los estudiantes de secundaria

RESUMEN

Las experiencias de los jóvenes en distintos momentos de su vida influyen en su elección de carrera. El objetivo fue investigar indicios relacionados con las formas en que los profesores y la familia afectan a los estudiantes de tercer año de secundaria en sus elecciones de carrera. El material empírico fue producido por un cuestionario respondido por 289 alumnos matriculados en 10 escuelas, en cuatro ciudades del estado de São Paulo. El cruce de las respuestas permitió el análisis cuantitativo y cualitativo, utilizando respuestas cerradas y abiertas. Los resultados mostraron que los profesores y sus familias les afectan de distintas maneras. Mientras que los primeros afectan a la elección de carrera por su labor docente, su dominio de los conocimientos y sus actitudes de apoyo y explicación, los

familiares se ven afectados por las expectativas de éxito, la remuneración y la relación que mantienen con su profesión.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Experiencias Emocionales; Elección de Carrera; Relaciones Interpersonales.

* * *

Introduction

The research outlined in this article aimed to investigate the signs of influence exerted by teachers and family, as perceived by third-year high school students, during their career choice process. All ethical procedures were meticulously observed throughout the investigation, which was approved by the Ethics Committee for Research with Human Beings under opinion no. 3.400.242.

Bock (2018), dedicated to the theme of career guidance, takes an approach that breaks with the idea of vocation or determination to perform a specific job and highlights the diverse historical and cultural contexts in which people are constituted. Each person makes sense of the different professions through contact with socially constructed knowledge. According to the author, professional choice is multidetermined.

When thinking about a profession, a person mobilizes an image that has been built up from their experience through personal contacts, exposure to the media, reading (biographies, novels, magazines, etc.), hearsay (transposing the experiences of others) (Bock, 2018, p.78-79).⁴

Based on Bock (2028), we consider and defend that the participation of other people plays a central role. What is seen in the media, what is read, and what is heard gains relevance when it is indicated by others, by their

⁴ The authors themselves have translated all quotes.

comments, and by their ways of expressing value or disvalue. Many experiences lived in different cultural and historical contexts make up the senses and meanings that students construct about professions and work. In this process, the experiences lived with people have a significant weight, affecting this construction.

In today's context, faced with immense social inequalities, we are experiencing intense job insecurity and high levels of informality, which result in a lack of prospects for young people. The school can play an essential role in providing access to information, partnership, and support for new paths that can break away from social determinism.

In this way, the literature on career choice confirms the powerful influences of school and family since it is a moment in life characterized by the search for an understanding of oneself, one's wants, desires, and one's own identity, mobilizing different kinds of emotions and feelings in students. Thinking about this process leads us to discuss the affections that permeate this moment and that will influence the decision.

Spinoza⁵ (2021), Vygotsky (2000, 2018), and Wallon (1995) are some of the leading authors who have dedicated their studies to reflections on affect. There is a certain complexity and challenge in conceptualizing affection, which is often understood as synonymous with affection and love. In fact, the affective dimension includes these aspects but is not reduced to them. Based on Wallon (1995), the broadest concept is affectivity, which involves emotions, feelings, and passions that can be pleasant or unpleasant in tone (happy or sad affections, according to Spinoza). We highlight the importance of studying and understanding the concept of affectivity in greater depth in the educational context.

Spinoza (2021) defended a monist perspective as the basis for understanding the human being, stating that the function of the mind is to think about what happens to the body. Perceiving and thinking about

⁵ The spelling of this author's name will be presented in accordance with what is used in the referenced works. When referring to the author's thoughts and not to a specific work of his, the spelling Espinosa will be used.

what affects the body and mind, translated into ideas, results in greater or lesser power to act. Therefore, affections are constitutive of relationships with people and events, which trigger feelings of various kinds in individuals that will influence the intensity of action. In Spinoza's theory, this power is related to the concept of conatus, which refers to an essential vital energy that exists within us. Spinoza shows that affections transform and modify conatus in different ways, increasing or decreasing vital force and, consequently, the power to act. In this way, our relationships with others and the world can leverage or reduce our power to act. For the author, sadness is seen as the passage to a less potent stage of being; joy, on the other hand, is the passage to a more potent stage.

Spinoza (2020) links the affections to the different forms of knowledge: opinion, conviction, and true knowledge. Opinion is vague knowledge based on hearsay and is more prone to error. Conviction refers to a belief, which, although it is a path to true knowledge, "shows us what the thing must be, but not what it truly is" (Spinoza, 2020, p.98). And true knowledge is scientific knowledge, which brings us clarity about how things are. In establishing this differentiation between types of knowledge, Spinoza (2021) defends a relationship between the different ways of knowing and the ideas they can produce about things. He elaborates the concepts of adequate or inadequate ideas, which produce feelings of joy or sadness, altering the conatus and increasing or decreasing the power to act. Thus, we emphasize that the clearer the understanding of a given subject, that is, the closer it is to true (scientific) knowledge, the more it tends to produce appropriate ideas and greater power for action, acting with freedom (emancipation). The less explicit the idea (opinion), the less understanding of the situation, remaining in the field of servitude. By relating Spinoza's ideas to the focus of this research, we can consider that the more knowledge and information students have about the various professions,

the more they will feel prepared and empowered when faced with the challenge of choosing a career, taking the risk of breaking with what is apparently predetermined.

Wallon (1995) defends an integrated view of the human being based on four functional sets: affectivity, cognition, and motor activity, which together make up the person, the fourth set. He shows that the development of the human being occurs through the constant relationship between these sets. He explains that human development is based on stages in which affectivity and cognition alternate in predominance. When people are focused on the constitution and understanding of themselves, affectivity prevails; when they are focused on discovering and understanding the world around them, cognition takes precedence. Considering that the participants in this research are, according to Wallon, in the stage of puberty and adolescence, which begins around the age of 11, the characteristics of this phase focus on a movement towards understanding the self - what beliefs are held, the values defended and who I am, with the affective dimension predominating. At the same time, as there is a constant search for affirmation and a desire for greater autonomy, there is also a concomitant dependency and search for support from peers. Questioning, confrontational attitudes, and opposition to the values set out by adults are frequent. However, adolescents need others for the process of building their personalities, identifying and opposing themselves.

When studying the genesis of human development, Vygotsky (2000) pointed out that people only become truly human when inserted into culture through interaction and mediation. There is no learning relationship without a mediating element that provides conditions and support for the relationship established between the subject and the object of knowledge. "All cultural development passes through three stages: in oneself, for others, for oneself" (Vygotsky, 2000, p.24). The author, therefore, highlights a moment of direct relationship between subject and object, which undergoes experiences of mediation by the other in recurrent interaction processes,

which generate learning and are then internalized by the subjects themselves, resulting in development. He concludes, "I relate to myself just as people have related to me" (Vygotski, 2000, p.25). The concept of mediation in Vygotsky's theory (2000, 2018) is related to his considerations about affect. Affectivity makes up the various experiences and moments we live through, and it's no different in the school environment - various factors can motivate students' choice of a particular profession.

In Cultural-Historical Theory, emotions are related to consciousness and the dimension of meaning, involving the processes of attributing meanings and senses. This relationship is marked by the cultural repertoire, which involves the experiences and interactions established with others. The meaning a person attributes to another person's reaction or an event affects them in different ways. Based on the above, affections involve three dimensions: the other, the experiences lived, and the perception and understanding of what is lived.

Methodology

We assumed that there is no opposition between quantitative and qualitative, as they are ways of processing research data that can complement each other. The instrument was the questionnaire, which allowed for quantitative analysis and broader qualitative discussion of the empirical material about what affects the process experienced by the adolescent participants. For this reason, the study is quantitative-qualitative, as it relates data from closed answers to the questionnaire, which resulted in quantitative information, with data from open answers, enabling qualitative analysis. Faria Rodrigues et al. (2021, p. 168) point out that "using a combination of data from qualitative and quantitative approaches in scientific research can be very important for understanding events, facts, and processes, which requires in-depth analysis and reflection on the part of the researcher."

The study involved 289 volunteer students in their third year of high school at ten schools in four cities in the Campinas Metropolitan Region (SP), seven public institutions, and three private. In order to involve a greater variety of experiences, the study sought to cover schools with different characteristics: peripheral, central, public, and private in different municipalities, which also involved a great diversity of students. The questionnaire was administered in the schools themselves, with the permission of the school management. The research was presented to the students in the classroom, and participation was voluntary. The development of identification codes helped preserve the participants' identity, both for the schools and the students. The letter E, followed by a numeral, refers to the school where the student is enrolled, followed by the letter A (student) and another numeral representing the student. Thus, the first part of the coding refers to the identification of the school, and the final part to the identification of the student. For example, the code E7A39 refers to school 7 and participant number 39 from this institution.

Regarding the characterization of the sample, little grade-age distortion was observed: 46% of the students were 18 years old and 40% 17; the other ages showed the following percentages: 16 and 19 years old, 6% each; 20 and 21 years old, 1% each.

Regarding the percentage of students and the nature of the schools, 92% attended public institutions, while 8% attended private institutions. Due to this quantitative difference, it was not possible to carry out analyses considering this variable, draw conclusions about these different contexts, or establish comparisons.

The questionnaire consisted of 17 questions about the process of choosing a profession. Even considering the instrument's limits, we established correlations between the participants' answers to explain, based on reasoned inferences, the relationships involved in this process and not just describe the final static object of choosing a profession. The questionnaire was designed by the researchers themselves, inspired by the

research instrument by Simões et al. (2013), which investigated the factors that influenced physics students at the Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul (UFMS) when choosing a course.

The questions, which ranged from open-ended to closed-ended, were divided into four blocks to investigate different aspects relevant to this study's aim. The first sought a general and broader characterization of the students regarding age and gender. Next, the questions focused on the student's career choices and the factors that influenced their decision. The third block focused on identifying elements relating to the student's experiences with their teachers during their school career concerning choosing a career. And the fourth explored the family environment and experiences related to the choice.

The data was organized in an Excel spreadsheet, which enabled the use of the pivot table tool and allowed the use of filters and cross-references between the answers. The process of analyzing the empirical material was inferential, developed through interpretations of the student's responses, identifying the modes of affect involved at the moment they experienced. Martins and Lavoura (2018) point out that understanding quantitative and qualitative analyses not as mutually exclusive but as complementary means understanding the object in its multiple relationships in search of knowledge of its totality.

Results

The results showed that experiences in the educational and family contexts affected the students' constructions of the possibilities of choosing a career. The responses regarding the profession they chose showed a wide range of results. There were very different desires, ranging from well-established areas in the job market, such as medicine and law, to more recent emerging areas, such as futurists and YouTubers. In the answers, we observed the influence of the historical-cultural context on the students'

professional choice process concerning contemporary demands regarding the influences of the digital world. These professions arise to meet the needs and advances of today's society, revealing the influence of the historical, cultural, and economic context on the decision.

Concerning the motivating aspects for their career choice, the participants were given the opportunity to select the options that best portrayed these factors: Outstanding teachers, Affinity, and mastery of the content, Family influence, Job market, and remuneration, and they could choose as many options as they wished. Affinity and mastery of the content were recognized as a motivating factor by 69% of respondents, followed by the option Job market and remuneration (41%). Family influence (35%) and Outstanding teachers (25%), although they have lower percentages, are somehow related to the other options, which we can see from some of the students' answers, which will be presented below.

We believe that Affinity and mastery of the content are aspects that can be built up in a very powerful way through the influence of teaching practices and that there is a relationship with the experiences of outstanding teachers. As evidenced by one student's account of his experience with a teacher:

Before I met him, I didn't really like the subject of history; it didn't really get into my head, but after I met him, I got a liking for the subject. I was able to get good grades, and thanks to that, I decided on my profession, as well as the influence of other teachers too. (E7A29)⁶.

In the same way, family influences can be an important element in the relationship with the Job market and remuneration in the search for promising and more significant careers. This issue is portrayed in the words of some students when they comment on the participation of their parents in

⁶ All the citations identified by the code structure are part of the research files. The authors themselves translated all student's answers.

the process of choosing a career: "They expect me to have a good job and to help them later on" (E9A53). "My mother has always been concerned about me and has always helped me to research and study more about the job market, and this has helped me a lot" (E4A10).

Two axes of analysis were constructed: (i) Modes of affect related to the teacher and the school, which include the results of students who chose the options Outstanding teachers and Affinity and mastery of the content; and (ii) Modes of affect related to the family context, which include the responses of students who chose the alternative Family influence, which established a relationship with the influence of the Job market and remuneration.

Modes of affect related to the teacher and the school

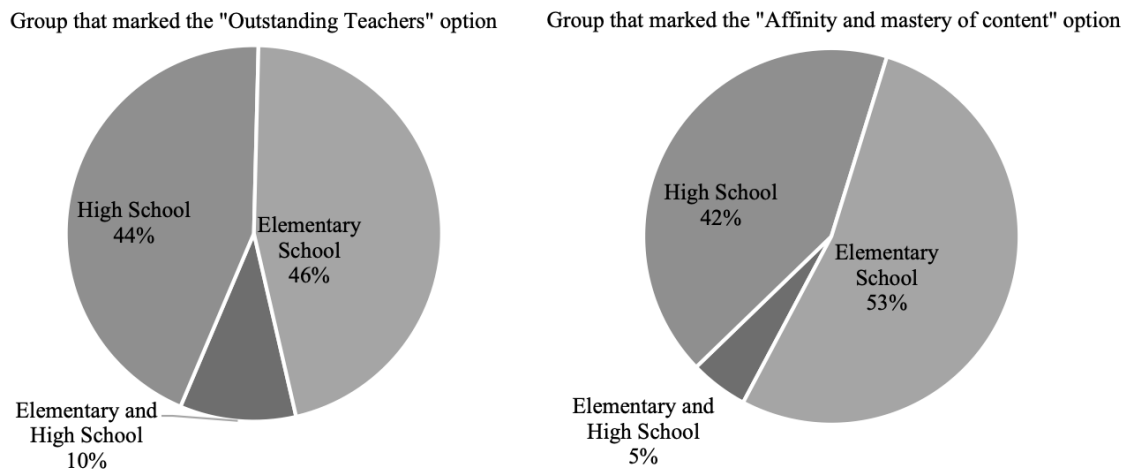
The experiences and relationships lived in the school context, especially with teachers, can affect the way students relate to objects of knowledge, as well as their affinity and interest in the content taught. Outstanding teachers and Affinity and mastery of the content are related to students' experiences and the affections that circulate in them. Thus, affinity with specific content is related to more productive forms of affect, highlighting the influence of teachers. For this reason, we discuss both aspects in a related way in this axis.

Professional choice: outstanding teachers and affinity with and mastery of the content

Of the students who indicated outstanding teachers (25%) as a motivator for their choice, 98% said they remembered a teacher. Similarly, 97% of those who indicated affinity with and mastery of the content (69%) as a motivator for their career choice remembered a teacher. We believe these teachers affected these student's career choices in different ways. We

identified whether there was a predominant stage of education in which teachers were more likely to be highlighted as motivators for career choice, an aspect asked in the questionnaire (Which stage of education was this teacher from?). Figure 1 shows the results.

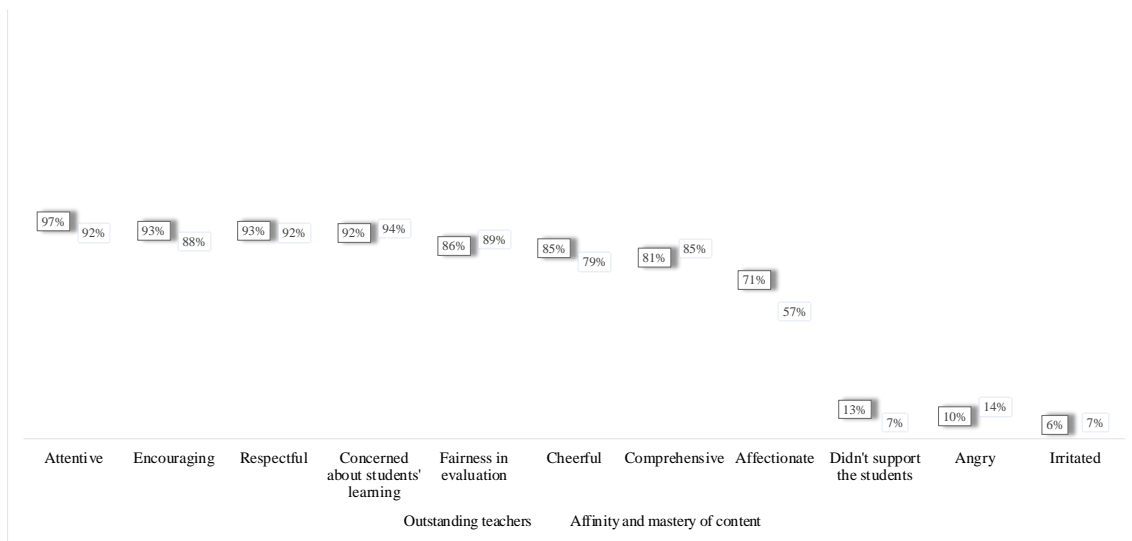
FIGURE 1: Teaching stage of outstanding teachers



Source: Research archive.

The percentages for the stages of education were very close between the two groups. This shows that the teacher's influence on the process of choosing a profession is not concentrated only on secondary school teachers and that the influence of teachers, in general, was a relevant factor at that moment. The data showed affections experienced in interpersonal relationships, identified in a question in which students could tick as many options as they wished that represented the characteristics of the teacher they remembered. The questionnaire offered 21 expressions indicating positive and negative qualities, referring to the teaching profession (10 expressions) and the teacher's personal characteristics (11 expressions), producing different feelings. We have chosen to present these results separately. Figure 2 shows the occurrences relating to the last aspect.

FIGURE 2: Teacher characteristics

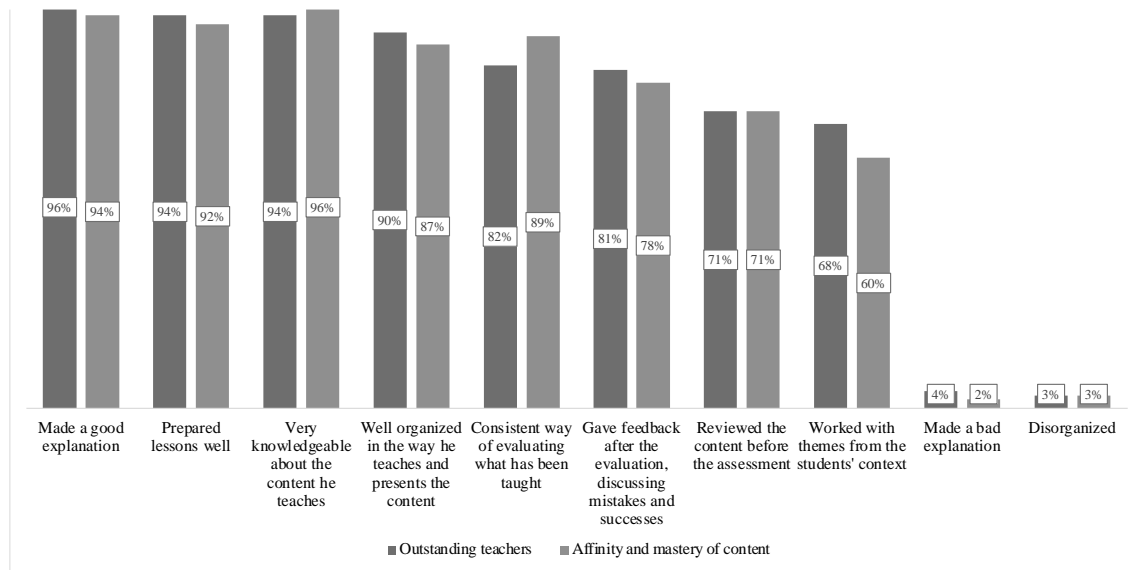


Source: Research archive.

We observed very close figures for the two indications. The experiences recalled show the nature of the affections mobilized in meetings between teachers and students, highlighting characteristics that portray welcoming attitudes, attention, and partnership. We infer that these are very powerful in influencing the relationships built between students and the areas of activity of these teachers, affecting the choice processes.

Figure 3 shows the occurrences related to didactics, that is, the highlights indicated by the students about the form of pedagogical action.

FIGURE 3: Didactics



Source: Research archive.

As in Figure 2, there is an approximation between the figures representing the choice of one group and the other. The didactic experiences recalled by the students indicate affections that mostly boosted the energy for action, mobilizing the students' action towards a more intense approach to the knowledge that circulated in these experiences. However, there were also memories of experiences that diminished the students' power to act because they probably didn't contribute to opportunities for a clearer understanding of the content being worked on at the time.

The most weighted indications, both those related to a way of acting that has a direct impact on the way teaching is carried out and those that refer to some of the teacher's personal characteristics, contributed to having a productive impact on the teaching and learning process. The answers showed that teachers with these characteristics made a mark and were, therefore, remembered, indicating that there is a very close relationship between the perception of affinity and mastery of the content and the relational dynamics of the classroom. Some of the statements in the open-ended answers made this clear: "The teachers

who marked me provided me with positive influences, helping me and supporting me in my decisions in such a way as to give me self-knowledge and guided me to choose what I identify with" (E3A35). "This teacher proved to be an excellent professional in his field. In this sense, he explained his subject in a coherent way, as well as helping to train students as students and citizens" (E4A9).

He was a teacher who motivated me a lot in my studies, gave me good advice, never failed to support me, was very attentive and affectionate, and had an incredible explanation. That's what gave me the strength to continue studying and have the great career I've chosen. (E7A32).

This teacher's teaching strategies aroused a lot of interest in the subject, and this had a great influence on my development during lessons. This helped me choose my dream profession, and over time, I was sure that this was what I really wanted for my life. (E9A43).

We see an emphasis both on specific content-related knowledge and on teaching knowledge. The decisions made by the teacher concerning didactics produce affection that can bring students closer to the knowledge or push them away. The perceptibility of the objectives, the consideration of the knowledge students already have, the way content is organized, as well as the sequence and articulation between them, the choice of strategies and materials, and also the ways of assessing and giving feedback produce affective resonances in students' relationships with knowledge (Leite; Tassoni, 2002).

We'd like to point out that teachers can affect a student's career choice by directly involving the subject they teach, but affections don't only refer to this dimension; the influences go beyond this. We infer that outstanding teachers affected these students' career choices in different

ways: by bringing them closer to the object of knowledge through interpersonal relationships, in the field of self-knowledge, by helping students identify their affinities and tastes, and through supportive relationships and encouragement at different times in the students' lives.

Forms of affect in the family context

The students who indicated in the questionnaire that family influence (35%) was a relevant and motivating factor for their career choice also referred to the job market and pay (41%), indicating a relationship between these aspects. The following analysis of the answers will be based on the group that checked the family influence option.

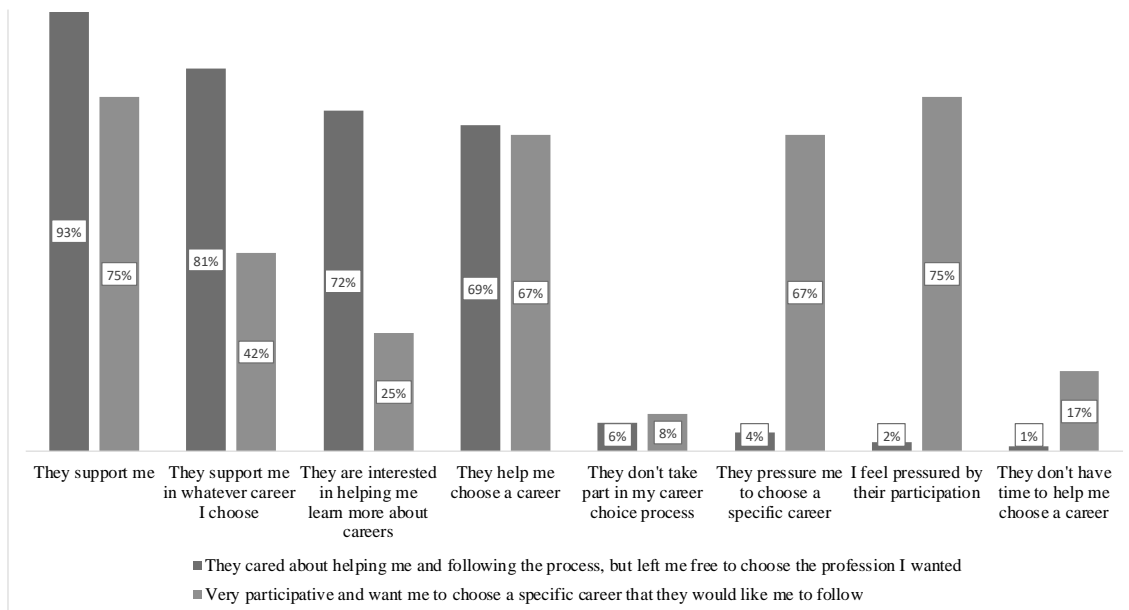
To present the results relating to ways of affecting the family context, we opted to construct two sub-axes: (i) family participation in the students' career choice process and (ii) the student's view of their family's profession.

Family involvement in the career choice process

The majority of students answered that their family members were concerned about helping and monitoring the decision-making process but gave them the freedom to choose the profession they wanted (80%). The options - very participative and want me to choose a specific career they would like me to follow (12%) and did not participate in the choice process (6%)- had percentage rates well below the previous proposition.

We have chosen to present the two most common indications, even though their percentages are very different, 80% and 12%. Figure 4 shows these results.

FIGURE 4: Family participation



Source: Research archive.

We would point out that family support is a source of affection that mobilizes students' actions concerning their career choices. We infer that this support possibly manifests itself through encouragement and the provision of information about the career itself, the job market, and remuneration. The majority highlighted their family's interest in helping them, leaving them free to decide. Our attention was drawn to the fact that of the group of students who pointed out that family members were very participative and wanted them to choose a specific career that they would like them to follow (12%), many felt pressured, as their participation was linked to a direction towards specific careers. In Spinoza's conception, we infer that the preferences and desires expressed by the family can be sources of sad affections, reducing the strength of the power for clearer, more conscious, and objective action about the choice, perhaps placing themselves in a more passive position.

Many of the students who said they had freedom when it came to making their choice also said they perceived a desire on the part of their family for them to follow a specific career path. We think that some

subliminal discourse may lead students to perceive a preference on the part of the family, especially about remuneration, the job market, and/or social projection. Even if the student's perception is that they have the freedom to choose, in some way, their family, by making their interest in a specific career explicit, may show greater appreciation for certain choices. Therefore, although the students indicated they felt free, the results showed the family's signaling about specific professions. Even with the intention of helping, it can affect students in a confusing way and sometimes generate pressure. The desire to please or to make the family proud can be a limiting factor in the process of choosing a career, obscuring the student's decision-making process. This argument is supported by Soares (2018), who states that

family members, in their desire to help, end up making the young person more and more indecisive. Parents' opinions are very important to young people, after all, they are the people they have always believed in, especially during their childhood. Young people know that their parents want the best for them, but this can end up confusing them and limiting them even more instead of opening up ways for them to think (Soares, 2018, p.81).

Soares' (2018) considerations are evidenced in the following response: "Because they say they support me, but they always pressure me and insist on a specific college, so I end up giving in because I think they know me and know what's best for my future" (E9A49).

However, most students in the two groups mentioned felt that the participation of family members contributed to the process of choosing a career - encouragement, support, and encouragement are important sources of affection. Some answers indicated how the family participated at this time contributed to the decision: "With their support, by leaving me free to choose, I feel much safer to make my decisions" (E8A41). "By

creating a calm and pressure-free environment, it was possible to get to know the most diverse professions effectively and, therefore, make the decision easier" (E4A11).

Some comments showed the influence of the family in maintaining the economic-professional activity that supports them, or, conversely, influencing them to look for another area, possibly more promising in terms of pay or less stressful, both in terms of the professional activity itself and the level of competition or saturation: "They encourage me not to give up, and this profession will help my father's company" (E1A33). "They don't want me to follow the same profession as them because they've been frustrated. So I'm trying to go into health" (E6A27). Some students emphasize the contribution of family help in researching professions, allowing them to make a safer and more informed choice. Others showed a change of opinion caused by family concern for the future, related to the prestigious social status of the career and the financial situation that the student can achieve: "Because it's a very important decision that will structure me to have a good financial condition so that I don't have to" (E1A25).

Analyzing these reports, it is possible to see some actions by family members that contributed to the choice process, as described by the students. They emphasized the attitude of encouragement, support for the decision, and help offered in this process, discussing the information and characteristics of the different professions, researching and learning more about each one. More directive actions can be pressure and confusing, inhibiting self-knowledge and reflection. We would like to clarify that the aim of this research was not to explore the participants' concrete social and economic conditions concerning the real possibilities of entering the job market but to operate in the field of aspirations and desires that these young people project for themselves in the future concerning their career choice.

Students' view of their family's profession

The student's experiences with their family members concerning their profession affected their perception and desire to follow the same activity or not. When asked about their desire or aspiration to follow the same career path as their family members, we found that 46% of the students wanted to follow the same profession as a family member (35%), 52% did not, and 2% were unsure. This aspiration is related to the profession of their relatives and how their own family members relate to this area of activity.

In the responses from students who indicated that they would like to follow the same career as their family members, we found the following justifications as the most cited: I identify with the area of work in this profession (83%); the salary is good (80%); I like the tasks they do in the profession (78%); and I see that they are fulfilled in this activity (67%). Students could choose more than one alternative to this question.

For those who said they didn't want to follow the same profession as their family members, the following aspects stood out: I don't identify with the tasks they do in the profession (83%); I don't like the area in which they work (58%); and my family members are very stressed by this profession (32%). In this way, it is clear that the way family members relate to their professions is an influencing factor that brings out different kinds of affection and enables students to attribute different meanings to these careers.

Discussion

According to Wallon (1995), affections are constitutive of relationships. The results of this study pointed to two dimensions of relationships experienced by the students at the time of their career choice: the school context and the family context. These relationships are permeated by diverse experiences that are sources of affection and will

contribute to each student's construction about the possibilities of choice. In addition, identification with the other, together with movements of opposition, are constitutive of the construction of the self.

Vygotsky (2018) discusses, based on Spinoza, that in the different situations in which the individual is involved, sometimes they are in very favorable conditions to deal with the situations, and sometimes they are faced with such complexity that they require a high degree of effort and adaptation. There are also situations in which the individual's conditions and the demands of the situation are in a certain balance. On this basis, Vygotsky argues that the dimension of affect is the result of the individual's own assessment of the correlation between their behavior and the situations they face. In other words, affect has two dimensions - that of experience and that of the changes/adaptations that these experiences can bring about. They refer to the way we experience in body and mind the effect of relationships that increase or decrease our power to act (Sawaia, 2018). Sawaia (2018, p. 19-20), based on Spinoza and Vygotsky, takes a political approach to affections, highlighting that, contrary to a split view between body and mind, the strength of the union between the two is the power to confront

contemporary neoliberal ideology characterized by individualism, the commodification of life, and the fraying of the community fabric [...], which dilutes social inequality into difference [...], the class struggle into infinite differences that must be tolerated.

The way in which each student makes sense of other people's reactions, in the situations/experiences they live through and in the relationships they establish, will affect them, producing different feelings about their career choice. This process of assigning meaning is a complex

connection of historically constructed concepts, which are interwoven in the meanings we share socially (Vygotsky, 2018).

Therefore, the emotions and feelings that result from affection are intrinsically related to senses and meanings. The latter refers to the social values that we as citizens assume to be important (think here of those related to work, profession, and social prestige, among others). The first, the meanings, refer to the movement of incorporating the way reality affects into the meaning. In other words, the condition perceived by the individual in themselves (affect) coincides with the values chosen as important concerning the professional choice. In this sense, the data analyzed in the research showed that the students mobilized predominantly pleasant affections when recalling their school and family experiences related to their career choices. In this way, the condition they perceived (well-being, a clearer understanding of the situation, confidence, for example) coincided with the values they attributed to a professional career.

Based on Espinosa (2020)/Spinoza (2021), we consider that the relationship with teachers and family members produced in the students affection in the field of joy, which can also be confirmed by their reports, and, in a smaller percentage, affections in the field of sadness. Spinoza points out that joy is related to an increase in the power of action, and sadness is related to a decrease in this power. In the research context, the students reported feeling more confident, supported, and interested in the subjects linked to various areas of knowledge that provided the basis for their career choices. They were, therefore, clearer about the situation itself, what to do, and how to act. When ideas are confused, there are many doubts about choices and doubts about self-knowledge; you don't know for sure how to act or which path to take, and the decision can be left in the hands of others, of the family, for example.

Final considerations

The research showed that teachers' ways of acting are linked to their experiences in the classroom, taking into account their knowledge of the area and how they conduct relationships, influencing whether they bring students closer to the objects of knowledge or support and encourage them when they make a choice. We can see that the family also influences this process, but the way they act is often more directive and can put pressure on the students. The two mediating and important reference agencies have an influence, but the ways in which they act are different. Teachers have an effect in the area of knowledge, involving the relationship they establish with the subject and didactics, as well as in the area of the student's self-knowledge when they have the opportunity to identify their affinities and likes for the different areas. In the family context, the opportunities and help offered, expectations regarding the choice, financial remuneration, and even the very relationship that family members have with their professions all affect teenagers' decision-making. Support, incentive, and encouragement permeate the two contexts studied quite effectively.

Understanding these relationships allows teachers to reflect on their pedagogical practices and allows teachers and family members to observe the relationships they establish with students. In addition, this understanding will enable them to perceive the feelings mobilized and how they affect the students' decisions. They can then act to promote greater power for action, making the students more confident and secure during the moment of choice.

The research does not disregard the contradictions and tensions of capitalist society, in which economic and social inequalities are very great and influence opportunities, especially those involving career choices. In this sense, the school is important in providing access to various possibilities, becoming a space for expressing desires and aspirations. This can be a path to change and transformation.

References

BOCK, S. D. *Orientação Profissional: a abordagem sócio-histórica*. 4. ed. ampliada. São Paulo: Cortez, 2018. 214p.

ESPINOSA, B. *Breve tratado de Deus, do homem e do seu bem-estar*. 2 ed. Autêntica Editora, 2020. 175p.

FARIA RODRIGUES, T. D. de F.; SARAMAGO de OLIVEIRA, G.; ALVES dos SANTOS, J. As pesquisas qualitativas e quantitativas na educação. *Revista Prisma*, v. 2, n. 1, p. 154-174, 2021. Disponível em: <https://revistaprisma.emnuvens.com.br/prisma/article/view/49>. Acesso em: 13 ago. 2023.

LEITE, S. A. da S.; TASSONI, E. C. M. A afetividade em sala de aula: as condições de ensino e a mediação do professor. In: AZZI, R. G.; SADALLA, A. M. F. A. (org.) *Psicologia e formação docente: desafios e conversas*. São Paulo: Casa do Psicólogo, 2002. p. 113-141.

MARTINS, L. M.; LAVOURA, T. N. Materialismo histórico-dialético: contributos para a investigação em educação. *Educar em Revista*, v. 34, n. 71, p. 223-239, 2018. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1590/0104-4060.59428>.

SAWAIA, B. B. Prólogo. In: SAWAIA, B. B.; ALBUQUERQUE, R.; BUSARELLO, F. R. (org.). *Afeto & Comum: reflexões sobre a práxis psicossocial*. São Paulo: Alexa Cultural, 2018. p.29-36.

SIMÕES, B. dos S. *et al.* A afinidade com a Física: uma análise feita com estudantes da Universidade Federal do Mato Grosso do Sul (UFMS). *Ensaio Pesquisa em Educação em Ciências*, v. 15, n. 1, p. 67-80, 2013. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1590/1983-21172013150105>.

SOARES, D. H. P. *A escolha profissional: do jovem ao adulto*. 4 ed. São Paulo: Summus, 2018. 200p.

SPINOZA, B. *Ética*. 2 ed. 10 reimp. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica Editora, 2021. 238p.

VIGOTSKI, L. S. Psicologia concreta do homem. Manuscrito de 1929. *Educação & Sociedade*, ano XXI, n.71, julho, p. 23-44, 2000. Disponível em: <https://www.scielo.br/j/es/a/hgR8T8mmTkKsNq7TsTK3kfC/?format=pdf&lang=pt>. Acesso em: 2 mai. 2022.

VIGOTSKI, L. S. *Psicologia Pedagógica*. 3 ed. São Paulo: Editora WMF Martins Fontes, 2018.

WALLON, H. *A evolução psicológica na criança*. Portugal: Edições 70, 1995. 220p.

Received in January 2024.

Approved on August 2024.