

# UNIVERSITY STUDENT PROFESSIONAL CAREER: CAREER MANAGEMENT COMPETENCY STRUCTURE

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## Abstract

*University studies is a significant stage for future career designing. It is obvious, that certain competencies are being formed and form during that period. It is likely, that their significance is different, and also certain differences in terms of sex are possible.*

*Research on student career problems in the latter years remain actual. It is likely, that analysing students' positions on these questions, sufficiently objective initial information is obtained. Empirical research (N=265), carried out between October to December, 2014 showed, that six most important career management competencies are significant for students. Carried out career management competency internal structure analysis showed, that problem solving competency (SI=0.89) is the most significant one, the leadership competency (SI=0.74) is the least important. However, evaluating according to significance index, one can claim, that all discerned competencies are sufficiently significant. It has been stated, that problem solving, social, change management and self-awareness competencies are statistically more important for female students than male.*

**Key words:** *career management, competency structure, professional career, quantitative analysis, university students.*

## Introduction

Career management as a lifelong lasting process becomes very actual in today's modern society because of many reasons. First, labour market demand change becomes more and more rapid. People more often have to change activity character and organisation. Second, labour market needs new quality employees at present, not only capable of acquiring certain level professional education, but also able to adequately react to organisational, regional, national, global, social and economic environment dynamics, able to set and implement strategies on how to choose, master, coordinate job and other social roles with personal life values and goals. Human activity meets new requirements, a new career understanding appears. Successful career can hardly be imagined differently today than a man himself planned and controlled process, therefore career management competencies are raised as one of the most important active labour market participants' and career realisation abilities.

Processuality and wideness are characteristic of personal career i.e. it lasts all life and comprises all human life spheres and activities: professional activity, family, leisure time, interests and so on. Therefore, career management competencies are an inseparable part of today's life. *Career management competencies* is a set of competencies, due to which individuals and groups can structurally accumulate, analyse, generalise information about themselves, education and occupation, also can

accept and implement solutions and changes. Such competencies are necessary for citizens, in order they could control constant changes, which describe complicated trajectories of today's education, vocational teaching and job (Lifelong Guidance policy development: career management competencies, 2013).

Career management competencies are complex, people acquire and develop them in different environments, in which certain career management competency elements often repeat or overlap. Because of the content complexity, career management competencies should be analysed as an integral structure. V. Stanišauskienė (2004) states, that career management competency contains personal, social, learning, professional competencies which are systematically related and are not final. R. Kučinskienė (2003) analysing career competency, next to personal, social, learning, professional competency, discerns self-management competency, involving career planning, organisation, motivation, control abilities. Career management competencies are closely related with general competencies. V. M. A. C. T. Kuijpers, B. Schyns ir J. Scheerens (2006) discern 6 main career competency domains, which are necessary seeking successful professional career: carer realisation possibility analysis, labour market research, career process reflection, motivation reflection, career control, social net formation and management.

Seeking to detail career development competencies, a document National Career Development Guidelines (NCDG) ([http://associationdatabase.com/aws/NCDA/asset\\_manager/get\\_file/3384](http://associationdatabase.com/aws/NCDA/asset_manager/get_file/3384)) was prepared by NCDA (National Career Development Association) of the USA. This document details the framework for the National Career Development Guidelines (NCDG). Domains, goals and indicators organize the framework. The domains: Personal Social Development, Educational Achievement and Lifelong Learning and Career Management describe content. Under each domain are goals (eleven in total). The goals define broad areas of career development competency. Under each goal in the framework are indicators of mastery that highlight the knowledge and skills needed to achieve that goal.

- Personal social development domain (Develop understanding of yourself to build and maintain a positive self-concept; Develop positive interpersonal skills including respect for diversity; Integrate personal growth and change into your career development; Balance personal, leisure, community, learner, family, and work roles).
- Educational achievement and lifelong learning domain (Attain educational achievement and performance levels needed to reach your personal and career goals; Participate in ongoing, lifelong learning experiences to enhance your ability to function effectively in a diverse and changing economy).
- Career management domain (Create and manage a career plan that meets your career goals; Use a process of decision - making as one component of career development; Use accurate, current, and unbiased career information during career planning and management; Master academic, occupational, and general employability skills in order to obtain, create, maintain, and/or advance your employment; Integrate changing employment trends, societal needs, and economic conditions into your career plans).

European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network - ELGPN, established in 2007 and seeking to help member countries design and implement effective career guidance systems, organises its activity referring to four priority spheres, one of which is career management competency structure, content and education possibility analysis and formation (Lifelong Guidance Policies: Work in progress. A Report on the Work of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network 2008-10, 2010). Various attitudes to career competency constituent parts are presented here. It is stated, that career management competencies contain the main competencies (self-reflection, decision making, information search and evaluation, goal setting and attainment); personal competency (self-efficacy, self-value and self-reliance) and social competencies (communication, teamwork, personal conflict management).

In the Career Education programme, confirmed by Lithuanian Republic Education and Science Ministry (2014) it is stated, that career competencies are a part of general personal competency, closely related with other general and subject competencies. Four career management competency groups are distinguished in career education programme:

- Self-cognition competency (know and accept yourself – your personality peculiarities,

personality as a whole and personality peculiarity connection with career; cognize social environment, social roles and their influence on personal career)

- Career possibility cognition competency (find and effectively use career information; cognize lifelong learning possibilities; cognize working world possibilities, diversity and change.
- Career planning competency (raise life and career goals; use personal vision and (or) career plan instruments for life and career goal planning and realisation; make career decisions
- Career implementation competency (develop and apply the most important general career competencies; successfully move to a new career environment and settle in it; purposefully search for practice, work or design your own business.

One has to mention the project, that took place “Higher school students’ career education and career observation model development and implementation, qualification improvement of the vocational guidance specialists working with students, creation of the devices for them” on the basis of which students’ career guidance competency education guide was made, in which four career management domains and the competencies identifying them were indicated:

- Self-cognition domain (personality trait, important for career, cognition competency, personal development influence on career cognition competency)
- Career possibility research domain (career information gathering competency, world economic, social, technological tendency research competency, occupational possibility research competency, learning possibility research competency)
- Career planning domain (creating career vision competency, career decision making competency, career plan making competency)
- Career implementation domain (personal finance managing competency, learning process managing competency, work search process managing competency, settling at work competency, career change managing competency, career compatibility with other life spheres).

It is obvious, that career management competencies are universal, equally important for all people seeking career and participating both in global and local labour market. Mastering of them determines personal career success.

Higher schools provide professional qualification, prepare for professional activity, however not enough attention devote to career education. Effective career realisation requires supplementary knowledge, skills and abilities. Over the last decade, university graduate employability is of a big concern. Therefore, career management competence acquisition and development at university becomes actual from the first study years. Thus, the research object is first year university student career management competencies and their importance. Research aim is to analyse career competency structure.

## Research Methodology

### *General Research Characteristics*

Carried out research “Successful career factors” is grounded on mixed methodology (quantitative and qualitative research approaches are applied). The type of research is a survey. This is a limited research, not seeking to apply the outcomes obtained for all Lithuanian university student population. The research is focused on social and humanitarian study sphere. However, it is believed, that the carried out research will allow to prepare and conduct an exhaustive whole student population research. The research was carried out in the months September to December, 2014. The initial research results and especially of a descriptive character were published earlier (Lamanauskas, Augienė, 2015a, 2015b). Also, career understanding structure analysis was carried out and the results were published (Lamanauskas, Augiene, 2015c).

### Research Sample

Research sample contains the students of three Lithuanian universities: Siauliai University – SU, Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences – LEU and Klaipeda University - KU. 300 questionnaires were prepared. 265 questionnaires were acknowledged acceptable. Response quota is 88 %. More exhaustive information about respondents and research instrument was presented in the article published earlier (Lamanauskas, Augienė, 2015a).

Research sample was structured applying a consecutive 'bunch' system method. It is considered sufficiently representative for obtaining meaningful data. On the whole 265 respondents participated in the research. According to sex, the distribution is as follows: female students – 201 (75.8 %), male students – 64 (24.2 %). All respondents are first year students.

### Research Instrument

The authors' prepared questionnaire was used in the research. The questionnaire was comprised from close and open questions. The respondents were asked to evaluate the statements about career, work values and competencies, and also to evaluate the influence of the studies on the future professional career. Four open questions were also presented in the research instrument. The results, obtained after analysing the submitted answers, have been analysed and published earlier (Lamanauskas, Augienė, 2014). The results, defining the internal structure of the abilities, are presented in the article.

The ranking scale is applied in the instrument: *agree/important, partly agree/important, do not agree/not important*. A demographical part is also presented in the questionnaire (sex of respondents, course, study programme). The questionnaire content validity was checked by two independent experts.

### Data Analysis

27 ability Factor analysis was made, applying the main component method and Varimax rotation with Kaiser Normalization. The main aim of the factor analysis is to reduce the number of variables. The number of factors was established on the basis of Kaiser Criterion i.e. those factors are analysed, which Eigen values are equal or bigger than one. Data, obtained on the basis of sample absolutely suit for carrying out factor analysis. Two methods were applied in order to evaluate whether the data set was appropriate for the factor analysis: Bartlett's Test of Sphericity and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test. Sample suitability for factor analysis results are presented in Table 1 and 2.

**Table 1. KMO and Barlett's test results.**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test		0,766
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ )	2457,375
	df	703
	p	0.0001

Table 1 and 2 indicates, that the values are quite high (Rivera, Ganaden, 2001; Nasledov, 2005). Bartlett's test of Sphericity shows that the data correlation matrix is not equal to 1 and that data are correlated, therefore they are suitable for factor analysis. Kaiser, Meyer and Olkin (KMO) test proves, that factor analysis suits for the data (KMO = 0.766).

**Table 2. Ability array reliability**

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	Ability number
0.859	0.864	27

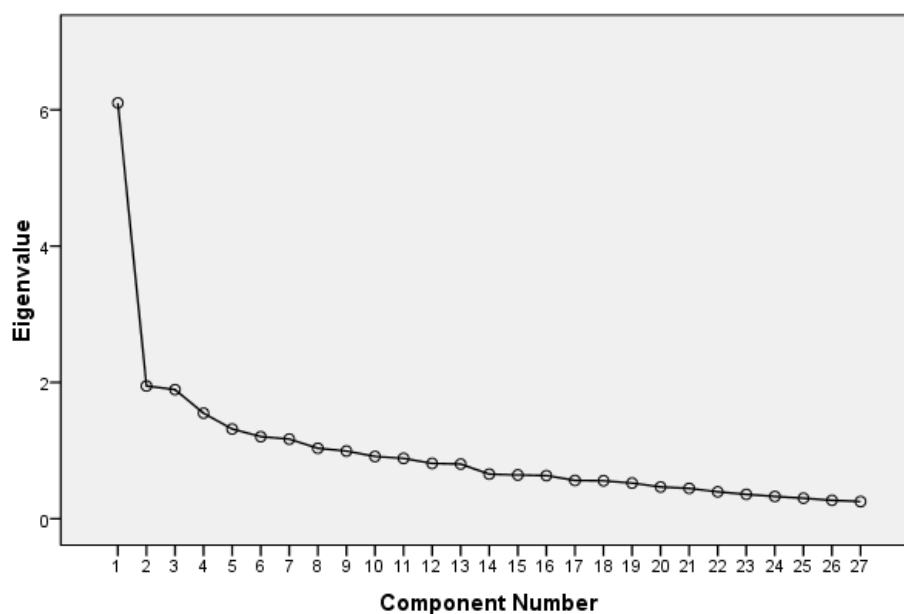
From methodological point of view, Cronbach alpha coefficient meaning for a well- made construct should be bigger than 0.6 (Yaffee, 2003), in other author's opinion, not less than 0.7 (Garson, 2010). In this case, Cronbach alpha coefficient meaning is bigger than 0.7, and Spearman-Brown increased reliability coefficient meaning is close to Cronbach alpha coefficient meaning, which means, that variance of the answers to different questions is similar. Factor loading, not smaller than 0.40 for each variable was applied, in order to include the variable, taking into account recommendations (Ferguson, Cox, 1993). To define difference between variables, Independent Samples Test – t-test for Equality of Means is applied.

For data analysis statistical software package SPSS was applied.

## Research Results

27 ability factor analysis was carried out. The factors were extracted based on real values (Eigen Value Statistics). 6 factors were extracted, which account for 51.89% of common variance.

**Scree Plot**



**Figure 1: Scree Plot.**

In the graph one can see, that best expressed are the first six components. The real values of the other components consequently are decreasing (close to 1 or smaller).

In Table 3 initial variable communalities are presented i.e. initial variable variation parts, which are explained by common factors. One can reasonably assert, that in the selected main components sufficiently enough information remained about variables, because their communalities are not smaller than 0.20.

**Table 3. Communalities.**

Abilities	Initial	Extraction
1	1,000	.380
2	1,000	.581
3	1,000	.427
4	1,000	.413
5	1,000	.565

Abilities	Initial	Extraction
6	1,000	.338
7	1,000	.513
8	1,000	.374
9	1,000	.304
10	1,000	.442
11	1,000	.496
12	1,000	.631
13	1,000	.668
14	1,000	.323
15	1,000	.551
16	1,000	.472
17	1,000	.734
18	1,000	.703
19	1,000	.471
20	1,000	.710
21	1,000	.593
22	1,000	.550
23	1,000	.549
24	1,000	.569
25	1,000	.606
26	1,000	.623
27	1,000	.425

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Total 6 variable variance is presented in Table 4.

**Table 4. Total Variance Explained**

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	6.101	22.594	22.594	6.101	22.594	22.594	2.743	10.161	10.161
2	1.948	7.214	29.809	1.948	7.214	29.809	2.436	9.023	19.184
3	1.894	7.014	36.822	1.894	7.014	36.822	2.353	8.714	27.898
4	1.549	5.735	42.558	1.549	5.735	42.558	2.316	8.579	36.477
5	1.316	4.875	47.433	1.316	4.875	47.433	2.092	7.747	44.224
6	1.204	4.459	51.893	1.204	4.459	51.893	2.071	7.669	51.893

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

So, in Table 4 one can see, that six main components (factors), which *Eigenvalues* are bigger than 1, explain 51.89 % of common variance. It is obvious, that the first factor explains the biggest part of common variance (10.16%).

In Table 5, six extracted factor loadings are presented after rotation procedure, also, factor significance indexes are calculated, it is shown how abilities are distributed into factors.

**Table 5. Career management competency factor analysis results (SI – significance index, SD – standard deviation).**

<b>FACTOR 1</b>		<b>Factor loadings</b>	<b>Significance index SI and standard deviation SD</b>
<b>Problem solving competency</b>			
20.	Solve problems	0.81	
21.	Apply theoretical knowledge in practice	0.71	SI=0.89
19.	Plan the time	0.59	SD=0.15
22.	Overcome difficulties	0.50	
<i>Internal compatibility</i>		Cronbach's Alpha	0.73
<b>FACTOR 2</b>		<b>Factor loadings</b>	<b>Significance index SI and standard deviation SD</b>
<b>Social competency</b>			
13.	Collaborate with colleagues	0.77	
12.	Work in a team	0.75	SI=0.85
11.	Be able to communicate with people	0.60	SD=0.16
10.	Quickly adjust to novelties	0.59	
9.	Show the initiative and be enterprising	0.43	
<i>Internal compatibility</i>		Cronbach's Alpha	0.71
<b>FACTOR 3</b>		<b>Factor loadings</b>	<b>Significance index SI and standard deviation SD</b>
<b>Change managing competency</b>			
15.	Manage complicated situations	0.62	
5.	Evaluate yourself and others objectively	0.61	
4.	Adapt to changing circumstances	0.55	SI=0.85
8.	Control information	0.46	SD=0.15
23.	Be responsible for your activity	0.45	
22.	Overcome hardships	0.40	
<i>Internal compatibility</i>		Cronbach's Alpha	0.71
<b>FACTOR 4</b>		<b>Factor loadings</b>	<b>Significance index SI and standard deviation SD</b>
<b>Self-awareness competency</b>			
7.	Think critically	0.62	
2.	Cognize your personality peculiarities	0.59	
3.	Accept criticism	0.55	SI=0.83
26.	Think creatively	0.53	SD=0.15
1.	Work independently	0.43	
<i>Internal compatibility</i>		Cronbach's Alpha	0.59

<b>FACTOR 5</b> <b>Communicative competency</b>		<b>Factor loadings</b>	<b>Significance index</b> <b>SI and standard</b> <b>deviation SD</b>
24.	Know foreign languages	0.72	SI=0.76 SD=0.19
25.	Be able to use ICT	0.69	
27.	Build useful professional relationships	0.52	
26.	Think creatively	0.50	
<i>Internal compatibility</i>		Cronbach's Alpha	0.66

<b>FACTOR 6</b> <b>Leadership competency</b>		<b>Factor loadings</b>	<b>Significance index</b> <b>SI and standard</b> <b>deviation SD</b>
17.	Manage various activities	0.84	SI=0.74 SD=0.22
18.	Organise activity process	0.75	
16.	Negotiate	0.59	
<i>Internal compatibility</i>		Cronbach's Alpha	0.68

*Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 11 iterations.*

*In the table the factors are arranged according to significance index, therefore their numeration has been changed*

*In table 5, one can see, that two statements (6 and 14) did not fall into any factor.*

The results show, that, in students' opinion, the most significant for their successful career is *problem solving competency* (SI=0.89), which identifies with problem solving, theoretical knowledge applying in practice, time planning, overcoming hardship abilities. It is obvious, that students understand, that it is a usual thing for the employers to believe, that their employees will be able to solve themselves various constantly appearing problems. Being able to solve problems (0.81) – is, first of all, being able to cognize a dilemma at the right time, to define it correctly, consider it properly and to assign it to a concrete category and contextualise. The other important aspects of being able to solve problems are – being able to approach them from different perspectives, proper direction, allowing to seek for decision realisation, to choose the most suitable one and to apply it in practice. According to importance, the second ability in the problem solving competency is the ability to apply theoretical knowledge in practice (0.71). The majority of employers in the labour market require work experience and theoretical professional knowledge. This determines successful employability. It is obvious, that knowledge and skill acquisition in certain activity is considered the main successful activity condition by the students. According to importance, the third ability in the problem solving competency is time planning ability (0.59). Effective time planning is actual for every active contemporary man, who wants to be successful and seek career. Tension, stress and chaotic work pace hinder to attain career goals. The fourth ability according to importance in the problem solving competency is overcoming hardship ability (0.50). Seeking successful career one has to overcome hardships arising not only at work, organisation, but also in life. An assumption can be made, that students understand quite well the changing social context, competitive labour market, constant changes taking place and understand, that in the development of career they will have to solve various problems seeking successful personal career.

In students' opinion, seeking successful personal career, the second according to significance is *social competency* (SI=0.85), which identifies with collaboration with colleagues, ability to work in a team, ability to communicate with people, quickly adjust to novelties, initiative and enterprise. It is obvious, that students know today's career context and understand, that these abilities can help them realise themselves and seek personal career. The students most often highlight, that ability to collaborate with colleagues (0.77), work in a team (0.75) and being able to communicate with people (0.60) can have the biggest influence on their career. Latterly, one of the most valued abilities of the employers is the ability to work in a team i.e. be able to collaborate and communicate, have common goals, carry out team tasks. Today, only working in a team we can achieve more than working individually, because people have various abilities and necessary support can be received.



In students' opinion, seeking successful personal career equally important is *change managing competency* (SI=0.85), which identifies with complicated situation managing ability, ability to objectively evaluate yourself and others, ability to adapt to changing circumstances, ability to control information, to be responsible for your activity, overcome difficulties. Social and economic changes have influence on all human life spheres, especially on his activity. Therefore, in order to manage career process, it is necessary to know well, what new requirements arise for a man due to transformations taking place in the world, how career context changes, in which the man works and realises himself. It is obvious, that students understand, that career changes today have become an inseparable every man's career daily routine.

In students' opinion, seeking successful personal career, the third according to significance is, *self-awareness competency* (SI=0.83), which identifies with the ability to critically think, cognize your personal peculiarities, accept criticism, to think creatively, independently work. Self-cognition is one of the most essential steps in career managing process. During it a person goes deep into himself, seeks feedback about himself, all personal characteristics are evaluated. Self-cognition has big influence on person's identity formation, the most important information is gathered for career decision making. Therefore, one can make an assumption, that seeking personal career students understand self-awareness importance.

In students' opinion, seeking successful personal career, the fourth according to significance is *communicative competency* (SI=0.76), which identifies with knowing foreign languages, knowing how to use ICT, to build useful professional relationship, to creatively think. Knowing foreign languages (0.72) students identify as the most important communicative competency ability. An assumption can be made that students, first – understand, that in today's world economy, the demand for learning a foreign language is growing, because governments as well as enterprises or organisations seek to build international economic relationship. Setting up an international enterprise or subdivision means that they join a wide and full of competence international market, therefore the requirements are raised for the workers to know foreign languages. Knowing languages increases personal career potential. You find an opportunity to join multicultural work associations. However, it is necessary to emphasize, that knowing one foreign language is not enough already, searching for a job at present. It is asserted, that in future as well specialists, knowing two or more languages, will have perfect possibilities to employ themselves. Second, - students understand, that new EU labour market possibilities having opened, emigration rate being high in Lithuania, they, having finished studies and knowing foreign languages, can hope to find a job abroad. Being able to use ICT (0.69) occupies an important place for students. ICT abilities are one of the main abilities, seeking effective and productive work results in the professional activity and career. Important enough, in students' opinion, is the ability to build useful professional relationship (0.52). It is obvious, that students understand, that only communicating with people they can get necessary information about career and learning possibilities. Therefore, it is important to create a wide and effective social professional net – to establish, foster and keep relationship with various people. Effective social professional net can become the best information source about career, effective help having faced career obstacles.

In students' opinion, seeking successful personal career, *leadership competency* (SI=0.74), which identifies with the ability to guide various activities, organise activity process, negotiate is quite significant. All people in their career in one way or another lead – the followers, organisation staff, the team and so on. This determines every man's leadership demand – every man has his life ambitions, and in order to achieve them inspiration as well as motivation and values are necessary. Leadership is a possibility and a challenge to realise yourself. Therefore, leadership latterly is acknowledged very important not only in the organisation management, but also in the level of an individual. Leadership is important not only for the leaders, occupying the leading position in the organisation, but also for the people, not related directly with the leading position in the organisation. It is obvious, that students understand leadership competency as a necessary competency for successful activity and career.

Factor significance analysis according to respondents' sex was carried out. The results are presented in Table 6.

**Table 6. Factor significance indexes according to respondents' sex**

	Sex				Total	
	Female		Male		SI	SD
	SI	SD	SI	SD		
Factor 1	0.91	0.14	0.84	0.17	0.89	0.15
Factor 2	0.87	0.15	0.79	0.19	0.85	0.16
Factor 3	0.86	0.13	0.81	0.19	0.85	0.15
Factor 4	0.84	0.13	0.78	0.20	0.83	0.15
Factor 5	0.77	0.18	0.73	0.22	0.76	0.19
Factor 6	0.75	0.21	0.71	0.24	0.74	0.22

A statistically significant deviation has been obtained in terms of sex on the first, the second, the third and the fourth factors (Table 6). The null hypothesis  $H_0$  about equal averages is rejected at the level of significance for these factors and makes  $p < 0.002$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $p < 0.010$ ,  $p < 0.011$ . In Table 6, one can see, that the first factor ( $t = 3.08$ ,  $df = 263$ ,  $p < 0.002$ ), the second factor ( $t = 3.44$ ,  $df = 263$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), the third factor ( $t = 2.59$ ,  $df = 263$ ,  $p < 0.010$ ) and the fourth factor ( $t = 2.54$ ,  $df = 263$ ,  $p < 0.011$ ) are statistically more significant for female students than for male.

No significant deviations have been noticed on factors five and six. In all cases  $p > 0.05$ .

## Discussion

According to R. Kučinskienė (2003) career management competency acquisition and application is one of the main modern career requirements for market participants. On the one hand, personal career goals exist, on the other hand, the requirements of the market, and more exactly, the requirements raised by the employers. The carried out research obviously grounded the significance of six main competencies to professional career. For example, the distinguished self-awareness competency is one of the most important competencies in career management competency structure. As the researchers notice, this competency allows adequately realise your personal features and attitudes and referring to this knowledge carry out personally applied career management decisions, determining successful career (Raščiuvienė, 2013). It is understandable, that career competencies are not final. On the contrary, they are constantly changing. In this respect, self-awareness (in some aspect self- education) competency is very important. The research results by V. Rosinaitė (2008, 2009) revealed, that systematic career competency education positively influences Lithuanian higher school students' career competency expression. On the other hand, it is important that students not only acquired knowledge and understanding about personal career management in the study process but also understood the relations between separate career management competencies. The research carried out by the other researchers with college students also ground the importance of self and working world cognition, decision making and problem solving, adjusting to constantly changing labour market, ability and activity to improve your personal competencies (Putauskienė, 2014). This correlates with the carried out research, because one of the most important ones is problem solving competency.

The research, carried out by foreign country researchers also ground the main career competency importance to professional career. For example, it has been stated, that the factors career control and networking are strongly associated with career success (Kuijpers, Schyns, Scheerens, 2006). It has been accentuated, that competency development does not end in the study process. Competencies can be further actively developed. All the main competencies can be developed in adults (Boyatzis, 2008). In any case there is the relationship between competency development, employability and career success (De Vos, De Hauw, Van der Heijden, 2011).

## Conclusion

Carried out research revealed career management competency structure. 6 main competencies were distinguished and the abilities identifying them: problem solving, social, change managing, self-awareness, communicative and leadership competencies. One can assert, that all competencies are significant, because statistical significance indexes are significantly higher than 50 percent. The most expressed in career competency structure is problem solving competency (SI=0.89), the least – leadership competency (SI=0.74). Besides, a statistically significant deviation was fixed in terms of sex. For girls problem solving, social, change managing, self-awareness competencies are more important than for boys. However, communicative and leadership competencies are equally important for boys and for girls. Such difference is possibly determined by the study programme character of the students', having participated in the research. In this respect, it would be reasonable to carry out a more exhaustive research.

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**List of abilities****Abilities**

1. Work independently
2. Cognize your personality peculiarities
3. Accept criticism
4. Adapt to changing circumstances
5. Evaluate yourself and others objectively
6. Keep learning
7. Think critically
8. Control information
9. Show the initiative and be enterprising
10. Quickly adjust to novelties
11. Be able to communicate with people
12. Work in a team
13. Collaborate with colleagues
14. Adapt to the environment
15. Manage complicated situations
16. Negotiate
17. Manage various activities
18. Organise activity process
19. Plan the time
20. Solve problems
21. Apply theoretical knowledge in practice
22. Overcome difficulties
23. Be responsible for your activity
24. Know foreign languages
25. Be able to use ICT
26. Think creatively
27. Build useful professional relationships

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