Examining the effect of the future readiness psychoeducation program on gifted students’ career decision-making competencies and future expectations

Abdullah Eker

Kilis 7 Aralık University, Education Faculty, Special Education Department, Kilis, Turkiye

Abstract

There is a great need for intervention programs related to career studies in today’s world where the importance of career studies is increasing day by day. Gifted children also feel necessary to career guidance more due to many factors such as their special talents, multi-potentials and early career awareness. The purpose of this study is to examine the effect of the "Turkish Science and Art Centers (SAC) Future Readiness Psychoeducation Program" developed for gifted middle school students who also continuing education in SAC. The aims of program are increasing career awareness, decreasing career decision making difficulties and effecting positively to future expectations. Thirty-two 7th grade students who were identified as gifted in Kilis province participated in the study. The study was designed in a pre-test post-test one-group quasi-experimental design. The data were analyzed using Mann Whitney U and Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test from non-parametric techniques according to group structure. Career Decision Difficulties Scale (CDDS), Adolescent Future Expectations Scale (FESA) and program evaluation form were used as data collection tools. When the results of the study were evaluated, it was seen that the career development program prepared for gifted students reduced their career decision-making difficulties and positively affected their future expectations. It was observed that gifted female students had higher career decision-making difficulties than male students, while there was no significant difference in terms of future expectations. When the evaluation form data and opinions of the participants were examined, it was seen that the satisfaction with the program was high, the activities could be enriched in terms of practice, and it would be more beneficial to spread the activities over a wider period of time and implement them as a single activity in each session.

To cite this article:


Introduction

One of the main purpose of human in life is self-satisfaction. Therefore making meaningful to our lives is closely related to the Jobs and the specialties that we choose according to our abilities. The need for vocational guidance and career counseling services is increasing day by day due to reasons such as the rapid increase in information, globalization, transformations in society and individual life, the increase in options and the difficulty of decision-making processes. Deciding on a successful and fulfilling career in line with their own abilities and potentials is a developmental task for gifted children as well as for every student. However, supporting the career development of gifted students, who have higher career anxiety and career ambivalence due to multipotentiality, is of special importance. Studies conducted with
gifted children show that gifted children do not need less career guidance than their normal peers, in fact they need it more because of their 'higher level potential' (Silverman, 1993). Career development is generally defined as a lifelong process. There is a great need for intervention programs related to career studies in today’s world where the importance of career studies is increasing day by day. Gifted children also feel necessary to career guidance more due to many factors such as their special talents, multi-potentials and early career awareness. (Milgram 1991). Many genetic, physical, personal, social, educational, economic and cultural factors affect career development. Career education can be defined as all the knowledge, skills and ideas that individuals acquire in order to choose a suitable profession.

Due to their individual characteristics, gifted students show some differences from their peers in the field of career development as in other developmental areas. For example, these students may have an earlier career awareness due to their early cognitive maturation. However, the fact that they have different abilities at the same time and show interest in more than one subject due to their versatility may cause them to experience more confusion in vocational orientation. These students may also experience emotional problems in the face of high expectations from their families, peers and even society in general (Achter & Lubinski, 2005, Robinson, Shore & Enerson, 2007, Stewart, 1999, Ogurlu, 2016). Studies show that although gifted students have higher positive planning skills (Güleç, Karaburçak, Tatar, & Akalan, 2020), these students narrow their career options in much earlier years without considering all possible career options, focus only on professions with high status and income, and fail to develop appropriate coping methods against the pressures of their environment in this direction (Greene, 2003, Grothaus, McAuliffe, & Craigen, 2012, Sürręcz, Kontaş, & Bacanlı, 2015, Özcan, 2017).

Multipotentiality is the state of being successful and talented in many different areas (Greene, 2006) and researchers emphasize that this is a common characteristic of gifted individuals (Kerr, 1998). At first glance, this seems to be a positive characteristic, but it poses difficulties for gifted individuals when choosing a career. When choosing a career, gifted individuals may make early decisions, make wrong decisions, and sacrifice some of their abilities due to their multiple potentialities (Wessel 1999). Individuals with talents in many fields are often directed by their parents and teachers to popular professions that are considered more suitable for them, such as medicine, engineering and science. Greene (2003) argues in his article that gifted individuals can make better decisions about their future by encouraging them to think about their own values, life goals and leisure activities rather than their different potentials. In addition to the above, in his 2006 article, he emphasizes that gifted children and their parents should be told that career development today is not limited to a single profession and that people can choose different professions in different periods.

Some gifted children decide on their future careers as early as their primary school years due to their early intellectual development. This situation is called early decision-making or early identification in the field. Students who experience this situation are passionately attached to their chosen profession and work excessively. Kerr (1991) stated that early career choice and focus, especially in artistic fields, are key to life success.

In addition to talents, interests and values, there are also personality traits that are effective in determining the careers of gifted individuals. The most important of these is perfectionism. Perfectionism is a bidirectional trait that pushes a person to think in a success-oriented manner; in other words, it can have both positive and negative effects on a person. A positive vision of perfectionism enables a person to accomplish very successful things. However, a negative perfectionism creates fear of failure, fear of making mistakes, fear of not doing well, and causes the person to postpone decisions. In other words, negative perfectionism causes gifted individuals to postpone decisions about career choices or to ask others - parents, teachers - to take responsibility for them. In addition to perfectionism, traits such as being too sensitive, being too innovative, and having an excessive sense of justice are personality traits that affect career development in gifted individuals (Berger, 1989: 19).

In 1986, Schroer and Dorn (1986) conducted a career motivation program in which 39 girls and 32 boys participated and it was found that after the program, the girls’ indecision about career choice increased due to the awareness they gained about the future. Many studies have shown the positive effects of the systematic implementation of a program for gifted students in order to get to know their personalities and professions on their career and future plans. Career counseling programs have been established since 1980, especially in the United States, within the institutions that
provide education for gifted students. One of these programs was opened by Barbara Kerr as GIFTS in Nebraska. These programs are research- and experiential-based programs that aim to overcome students’ career-related problems. Kerr and Ghrist-Priebe (1988) investigated the benefits of this program on 87 gifted children, 56 in the experimental group and 31 in the control group. The results of the study showed that the career program contributed positively to the gifted children’s career awareness.

The concept of career decision-making difficulties has an important place in individuals’ career processes. Sampson, Peterson, Lenz, and Reardon (1992) explained career decision-making as an individual’s choice of profession or education program, job or school. In cases where the individual cannot make a decision, it causes him/her not to enjoy life and to experience daily life stresses more intensely, while making a healthy decision enables him/her to perceive life positively and to be happy (Çolakkadiıpoglu & Güçray, 2007). Career indecision is defined as all the problems experienced before, after and during the process together with the difficulties experienced by the individual during the decision-making phase in the career process (Gati and Saka, 2001). The decisions made in this process have a significant long-term impact on the individual’s lifestyle, emotional state, economic situation, productivity, and careers (Campbell & Cellini, 1981).

Gati and Saka (2001) conducted a study on 95 career counselors and 259 young adults to examine the validity of the Career Decision Making Difficulties Scale. As a result of their study, it was found that the opinions of career counselors and young adults (clients) were close to the opinions of career counselors and clients that difficulties caused by inconsistent information and lack of preparation were experienced more than difficulties caused by lack of information.

SAC career psychoeducation programs have been established in order to support the career development of gifted students who were attended to science and art centers and to help them make the most appropriate career choice for their potential. In this context, “Future Readiness Psychoeducation Program” was prepared for middle school students attending science and art centers. Student application booklets were also created for each of the psychoeducation programs for ease of implementation (NME, 2022).

The basic approach of the SAC Program is based on Parsons’ three-stage vocational guidance model, which is briefly expressed as self-knowledge, option recognition and decision making. In addition, qualitative applications of Holland typology, narrative approach and other postmodern approaches were utilized in order to achieve the outcomes in the activity process. In the decision-making step, which is the third stage of the Parsons model, in addition to the acquisition of decision-making skills, developmental studies on the personal characteristics of the students that will provide the necessary competencies of the students were included in the Basic Approach and Principles of the SAC Future Readiness Psychoeducation Program (NME, 2022).

This program has been prepared based on the basic needs for career development of students attending support education programs in SACs. The general aim of the program is to support students’ self and professional development, to help them make the most appropriate career choice for their potential and to enable them to structure their careers as productive individuals. In line with this general aim, it is envisaged that students will gain the following objectives. 1. To enable them to recognize themselves in terms of their interests and abilities. 2. To enable them to recognize vocational options. 3. To contribute to the development of decision-making skills (NME, 2022).

The comprehensive guidance and psychological counseling programs model was taken as a basis in the design of the SAC future readiness psychoeducation program. It was also important to ensure that the program was carried out in coordination with the activities in the classroom guidance program and structured in a way to support the achievements in the field of career development in the classroom guidance program. In the process of designing the program, we first tried to determine the needs of the students for career guidance. Then, the competencies (objectives and outcomes) that we want students to gain were identified. Then, it was determined in which content the determined competencies would be presented, which activities would be used in the presentation of the content and how to evaluate whether the goals were achieved or not.
Research Problem
The problem of the study is “What is the effect of SAC future readiness psychoeducation program on gifted students’ career decision-making competencies and future expectations?” Depending on the problem of the study, answers to the following sub-problems searched:

➢ What is the distribution of difficulty levels according to the scores obtained after the Career Decision Making Difficulties Scale and Adolescent Future Expectations Scale were administered to gifted students as pre-test?
➢ What is the distribution of difficulty levels according to the scores obtained after the post-test of the Career Decision Difficulties Scale and Adolescent Future Expectations Scale administered to gifted students?
➢ Is there a significant difference between the mean scores of the scales applied before and after the experiment?
➢ What are the evaluations of the gifted student group about the program implemented?

Method
In this section, the research model is explained, the sample group participating in the study, the scales used in the study, the techniques of analyzing the data obtained and the application process are explained.

Research Model
This study designed with pretest-posttest one-group semi-experimental method. In the one-group pre-test and post-test model, an independent variable is applied to a group and measurement is made before and after the application. In the model, if there is a significant difference between the arithmetic mean of the pre-test and post-test scores of the group from the measurement tools, it is accepted that the application is effective (Balcı, 2004: 142).

Participants
This study was conducted in the spring semester of the 2022-2023 academic year with a total of 32 students, 18 girls and 14 boys, in the 7th grade level attending Kilis Science and Art Center. Since the most appropriate age group as the target group of the program content was seen as the 7th grade, the 7th grade level was selected in the study. The sample group was selected according to the purposeful sampling method. All participants involved all application sessions.

Data Collection Tool
Three different data collection tools (two scales and one form) were used to solve the problems addressed in the study. The first scale is CDDS, which was developed by Gati and Saka (2001) and adapted into Turkish by Bacanlı (2008). The Turkish form of the scale consists of 34 items. The items are scored on a 7-point Likert scale. Secondly, the "Adolescent Future Expectations Scale (FESA)" was used to predict the perceived effect of the career development program on the future expectations of gifted students. Developed by McWhirter and McWhirter (2008) (FESA-Future Expectations Scale for Adolescents) and adapted into Turkish by Tuncer (2011) in 2011, the "Adolescent Future Expectations Scale" consists of four subscales. "Work and Education" subscale consists of 11 items, "Marriage and Family" subscale consists of 7 items, "Religion and Society" subscale consists of 3 items and "Health and Life" subscale consists of 4 items. Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of this four-factor structure was found to be 0.925 (Tuncer, 2011). The total score of the scale is obtained by summing all item scores in the scale and dividing by the total number of items. An increase in the scale score indicates an optimistic attitude about the future (Tuncer, 2011). Finally, the evaluation findings of the participants regarding the program process were collected with the program evaluation form developed by MoNE. This form was developed in 10-point scoring type. It also included a question asking for written evaluation opinions.

Data Analysis
In this study, in the analysis of the data obtained as a result of the application of the scales as pre-test and post-test, percentage, frequency, arithmetic mean, standard deviation values were found in accordance with the sub-objectives of the research. In addition, non-parametric statistics were applied since the data did not show normal distribution according to the one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test. Variance analyses of the participants’ pre-test and post-test scores were calculated using the SPSS package program. Sub-themes were formed by content analysis of the opinions stated by the candidates in the evaluation form. In the content analysis method, similar data are brought together within the framework of certain concepts and themes and interpreted by organizing them in a way that the reader can
understand (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2005). Within the sub-themes created, direct quotations from the views of the candidates without changing their meanings were made and presented to the reader as S1, S2...Sn

**Intervention Process**

The applications carried out in the research were carried out by the Kilis SAC guidance service and the researcher in a 4-week, 8-session process in the spring semester of the 2022-2023 academic year. The content determined for the competencies and outcomes of the SAC future readiness psychoeducation program was designed to be presented to students through activities. Within the scope of the program, a total of 8 activities were conducted with the participants.

**Findings**

Before analyzing the pre-test and post-test data obtained from the CDDS and FESA scales, the Kolmogrov-Smirnov (KS) test was applied to determine whether the data were normally distributed. Since p<0.05 in both scales, it was observed that the data did not show normal distribution. Since the data did not show normal distribution, Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test was used for nonparametric dependent sample analysis.

**Comparison of the experimental group’s pre- and post-experimental CDDS scale scores**

The table below shows the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test results of the scores of the experimental group before and after the experiment on the CDDS for Grade 7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Posttest-Pretest</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Rank Mean</th>
<th>Rank Sum</th>
<th>Z</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative Rank</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>12,60</td>
<td>378</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Rank</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2,60</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.87*</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Based on negative ranks

The results of the Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test regarding whether the pre- and post-experiment scores of 7th grade gifted students showed a significant difference are given in Table 1. The results of the analysis show that there is a significant difference between the pre- and post-experiment scores of the students who participated in the career decision-making program on the career decision-making difficulties test, z=2.87, p<.01. When the rank means and sums of the difference scores are considered, it is seen that this difference is in favor of negative ranks, that is, the post-test. Because as the score obtained from the career decision-making difficulty test increases, the difficulty of the student increases. According to these results, the career education program had an effect on reducing the career decision-making difficulties of 7th grade gifted students.

**Comparison of the Experimental Group’s Pre- and Post-Experimental FESA Scale Scores**

The following table shows the Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks Test results of the scores of the experimental group before and after the experiment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Posttest-Pretest</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Rank Mean</th>
<th>Rank Sum</th>
<th>Z</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative Rank</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16,88</td>
<td>253,2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Rank</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17,73</td>
<td>283,68</td>
<td>.43*</td>
<td>3,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Based on negative ranks

The results of the Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test regarding whether the students’ future expectancy scores before and after the experiment showed a significant difference are given in Table 2. The results of the analysis showed that there was no significant difference between the pre- and post-experiment scores of the gifted students who participated in the career education program at SAC (z=.43, p>.05). When the rank averages and sums of the difference scores are considered, it is seen that this result, although not significant, is in favor of positive ranks, that is, the post-test. This is because as the score obtained from the FESA test increases, the student’s future expectation increases positively. According to these results, it is seen that the career education program did not have a significant effect on the positive increase in the future expectations of the students.
The examination of the experimental group’s CDDS and FESA scores according to gender variable

The Mann Whitney U-test results of the pre-test scores obtained from the CDDS and FESA scales according to gender groups are given below.

### Table 3. U-test results of pre-test scores of CDDS and FESA scales by gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Rank Mean</th>
<th>Rank Sum</th>
<th>U</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CDDS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>22.73</td>
<td>318.22</td>
<td>153.5</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17.32</td>
<td>311.76</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FESA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20.16</td>
<td>362.88</td>
<td>158.4</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>22.14</td>
<td>309.96</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<0.05

The Mann-Whitney U-test results of the total scores of gifted male and female students on the CDDS before the program are given in Table 3. Accordingly, it was found that the decision-making difficulties of female students before the program were significantly higher than male students, U=153.50, p<.05. This finding shows that the career indecision experienced by female students before the program was higher than male students.

According to the Mann-Whitney U-test results of the total scores of gifted male and female students on the FESA before the intervention, it was found that there was no significant difference between the future expectancy levels of male and female students before the experimental study, U=158.4, p>.05. This finding indicates that there was no significant difference between the gender groups in terms of future expectancy scores before the program. The comparison of the post-test scores of male and female students on the CDDS and the FESA post-test is given in Table 4.

### Table 4. U-test results of the post-test scores of the CDDS and FESA according to gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Rank Mean</th>
<th>Rank Sum</th>
<th>U</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CDDS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13.32</td>
<td>239.76</td>
<td>101.5</td>
<td>2.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13.13</td>
<td>183.82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FESA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>28.26</td>
<td>508.68</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>2.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>29.01</td>
<td>406.14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<0.05

The Mann-Whitney U-test results of the total scores of gifted male and female students on the CDDS after the program are given in Table 4. Accordingly, while the decision-making difficulties of female students were significantly higher than male students before the program, there was no significant difference after the program (U=101.50, p>.05). This finding reveals that the positive effect of the program was higher in reducing the career indecision experienced by female students before the program. As stated in the previous analyses, the program had a significant effect on both gender groups in reducing career decision-making difficulties, but it can be said that the effect on female students was higher.

According to the Mann-Whitney U-test results of the total scores of gifted male and female students on the FESA after the intervention, it was found that there was no significant difference between the perceived future expectancy levels of male and female students after the experimental study (U=217, p>.05). This finding reveals that the program had a similar effect on the future expectations of the gender groups.

**Analyzing the evaluation form assessments of the experimental group**

The activity evaluation form for each of the 8 different activities developed within the scope of the SAC Preparation for the Future Program was filled out by the students. Accordingly, students were asked to rate how they found the activity from one to ten and to report their opinions in writing. An average score of 6 out of 10 points was taken as the criterion for liking the activity. Rating averages are given in Table 5.
### Table 5. Descriptive analysis results of program rating scores of events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Events</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Min.</th>
<th>Max.</th>
<th>Ss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Session</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Self Assessment - DNA Tree</td>
<td>7.32</td>
<td>6.41</td>
<td>8.93</td>
<td>10.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Self Assessment – My Window</td>
<td>8.47</td>
<td>7.36</td>
<td>9.51</td>
<td>10.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Session</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of Options-Career Path</td>
<td>7.83</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>8.33</td>
<td>10.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of Options-Awareness Stops</td>
<td>5.74</td>
<td>5.16</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>9.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Session</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of Options - Step by Step to Tomorrow</td>
<td>7.91</td>
<td>7.23</td>
<td>8.41</td>
<td>10.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of Options-Career Festival</td>
<td>8.10</td>
<td>7.87</td>
<td>8.54</td>
<td>10.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Session</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making Competence - Decisive Steps</td>
<td>8.11</td>
<td>7.82</td>
<td>9.89</td>
<td>10.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Overall</td>
<td>8.11</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>9.41</td>
<td>10.32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On average, students gave the highest average score to Activity 1, while the lowest average score was for Activity 4. On average, seven of the activities were above the "6" points accepted as the satisfaction criterion, while one activity was slightly below six points. When we look at the student opinions about the activities, it is seen that the students had a little more difficulty and boredom in the awareness stops activity and stated that it was too abstract.

**Gifted students’ opinions on SAC preparation for the future program**

All of the students in the experimental group who participated in the program activities stated that they found the SAC Preparation for the Future Program useful. In particular, they stated that they gained sufficient information about the importance of the concept of career and its value for them and that the activities related to this subject should continue in an applied manner. Another issue that the majority of the students stated was that the program was too tight and they sometimes had difficulty in doing two separate activities in one session. They also stated that they could do the activities in a more detailed and applied way. Some excerpts from the opinions of the students in the experimental group are presented below.

“The psychoeducation program coincided with a period when I was very indecisive and it was very useful for me. We are going to the eighth grade and we are worried about our future. The program helped me to know my self-awareness and my options better.” S3

“The program was conducted in the evening when we were mentally tired. Although we did the activities with fun, we had difficulty doing two activities in one lesson. It was rushed. Thanks to the student workbooks, we actively participated in the process. I would like these activities and the activities of recognizing-experiencing professions to continue at certain intervals in the following years.” S14

**Conclusion and Discussion**

The aim of this study was to examine the effect of the “SAC Future Readiness Psychoeducation Program”, which was prepared to increase the career and future awareness of gifted students receiving support education in SAC, on the career decision-making difficulties and future expectancy levels of the students. In the context of the target outcomes of the psychoeducation program, career indecision and future expectations were determined as dependent variables, and data were collected before and after the experiment with the CDDS and FESA scales, whose Turkish psychometric standardization had been previously performed. According to the findings of the study, the psychoeducation program was found to be effective in reducing the career decision-making difficulties of gifted students. When the results of the study are examined, it is observed that the career decision-making difficulties scale scores of the students who participated in the program decreased significantly after the experimental procedure compared to their career decision-making difficulties scores before participating in the program.

Considering these findings, it can be said that the program was effective in reducing the career decision-making difficulties of 7th grade gifted students. As Reese and Miller (2010) stated, there is a great need for intervention programs related to career studies in today’s world where the importance of career studies is increasing day by day. Many studies that are effective in reducing career decision-making difficulties support the findings of this study. The effect of these programs on different age groups has been proven. In the studies conducted by Savickas (1990), Lam and Santos (2017),
Mitchell and Krumboltz (1987), it is seen that the programs prepared are effective in reducing career decision-making difficulties.

In addition to successful programs, there are also programs that are ineffective in reducing career decision-making difficulties. One of these is the program prepared by Gati, Ryzhik, and Vertsberger (2013). This program, which was prepared to reduce career decision-making difficulties, was implemented in an intensive manner in five days. The fact that this program was not effective showed that long-term programs are more useful in reducing career decision-making difficulties.

Since gifted students demonstrate their need to discover their interests at an early age, the career development process starts earlier than expected (Matthews & Foster, 2005). However, it is known that gifted students differ from their peers in terms of psychosocial development, cognitive development and learning needs (Reis & Renzulli, 2010). Therefore, it is important to conduct studies on the career development of gifted students. Guiding gifted students to discover their interests and aspirations positively affects their beliefs about the future (Emerich, 1992; Muratori & Smith, 2015). This study is the first study in terms of evaluating the effect of the program on career decision-making difficulties in gifted students. Aydoğdu (2022) examined the relationship between career decision-making difficulties and perfectionism characteristics of gifted students and found that career decision-making difficulties increased as negative perfectionism tendencies increased.

The fact that the decision-making difficulties experienced by gifted female students according to the pre-test results of the scale were significantly higher can be interpreted as a result of the fact that career and future anxiety is higher in gifted girls than boys. In support of these findings, Kerr (1988) indicates that gifted girls are more open to external influences in their career span and gifted girls have higher future concerns than gifted boys. Therefore Greene (2003) emphasized that gifted adolescent girls may have higher career imbalance, due to situations such as desiring to be perfect in every field, setting ideals that they cannot achieve or oppositely low expectations for their selves.

When the results of the study were examined, it was observed that the positive future expectations scale scores of the students who participated in the program increased significantly, after the experimental process compared to the scores they received before participating in the program. Tallent-Runnels and Yarbrough (1992) found that gifted children who participated in a future problem-solving program were more interested in the future than students who did not participate in this program.

Persson (2009) stated that gifted children enjoy pursuing a goal and thinking about the future. Oğurlu (2016) conducted a study with 65 gifted children and found that there is no hopelessness among gifted students in Turkey and that gifted adolescents have positive future expectations. According to the results of the research, it can be said that SAC Preparation for the Future psychoeducation program is useful in terms of achieving the target outcomes related to creating future awareness. When the related literature is examined, it is seen that there are many studies that support these findings.

When the participants’ evaluation form assessment form and their opinions about the activities were examined, it was predominantly stated that the satisfaction with the program was high, the activities could be enriched for practice, and it would be more useful to spread the activities over a wider period of time and implement them as a single activity in each session.

When the results of this study were evaluated in general, it was seen that the SAC Future Readiness Psychoeducation Program prepared for gifted students was effective in reducing students’ decision-making difficulties and increasing their future expectations positively. It was observed that gifted female students had higher career decision-making difficulties than male students, and there was no significant difference in terms of future expectations.

**Recommendations**

➢ In future research, the study can be conducted with a control group and with different samples. The effects of the program in terms of different variables can also be investigated.
➢ The differences between students with normal development and gifted students in terms of career ambivalence and future expectations can be examined comparatively.
➢ In future studies, its effectiveness in other grades and levels can be evaluated. A follow-up study can be conducted to observe the long-term benefits of the practices in which areas.

Limitations of Study
The study is limited to a single group of 32 seventh grade gifted middle school students and the intervention process. For this reason, a simple experimental design was used to determine the effectiveness of the support psychoeducation program and since there was no control group. The effect of the support education program in different SACs could not be compared.

Acknowledgment
In order to collect data from the study group in the research, the necessary ethical permission for research was obtained from Ethics Commission of the Kilis 7 Aralık University (decision dated 24/03/2023-2023-3/3.4) by applying official procedures. In addition, permission was obtained from the families of the students studying at the Kilis Science and Art Center with a parent consent form.

References


