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Career Decidedness of Vocational School Students: A Research on Medical Documentation and Secretarial Students

Yüksekokul Öğrencilerinin Kariyer Kararlılığı: Tıbbi Dokümantasyon ve Sekreterlik Öğrencileri Üzerine Bir Araştırma

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to determine the career decidedness of vocational school students studying in the field of medical documentation and secretarial and to examine these data according to various variables such as gender, age and class status etc. A total of 117 students from the medical documentation and secretarial program of Ankara University Vocational School of Health Services were included in the research using the quantitative research method. 75 of these students answered the questionnaire. Akçakanat and Uzunbacak's measurement tool (2019), consisting of 6 items adapted to Turkish was used to collect data in the research. As a result of the research, it was determined that students have moderate career decidedness. It was also found that there was a positive relationship between the age of participants and their career decidedness.

Keywords: Career; Career Decidednes; Career Decision-Making; Medical Documentation and Secretarial Students.

Öz

Bu çalışmanın amacı, tıbbi dokümantasyon ve sekreterlik alanında eğitim gören meslek yüksekokulu öğrencilerinin kariyer kararlılıklarını belirlemek ve cinsiyet, yaş ve sınıf durumu vb. çeşitli değişkenlere göre bu verileri incelemektir. Nicel araştırma yöntemi kullanılan araştırmaya; Ankara Üniversitesi Sağlık Hizmetleri Meslek Yüksekokulu Tıbbi Dokümantasyon ve Sekreterlik Programından toplam 117 öğrenci dahil edilmiştir. Bu öğrencilerden 75'i anketi cevaplamıştır. Araştırmada veri toplamak amacıyla Türkçeye uyarlanmış 6 maddeden oluşan Akçakanat ve Uzunbacak'ın ölçme aracı (2019) kullanılmıştır. Araştırma sonucunda öğrencilerin orta düzeyde kariyer kararlılığına sahip oldukları tespit edilmiştir. Ayrıca katılımcıların yaşı ile kariyer kararlılığı arasında pozitif bir ilişki olduğu da tespit edilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kariyer; Kariyer Kararlılığı; Kariyer Kararı Verme; Tıbbi Dokümantasyon ve Sekreterlik Öğrencileri.

Bu makalenin araştırma ve yayın süreci "Araştırma ve Yayın Etiğine" uygun şekilde yürütülmüştür.

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Introduction

The word career derived from the French word carriére, which means 'route, profession'. The definition of career can vary according to each person's perspective, ability, desire for progress, strength of progress. It is certainly not possible for a boundary to be drawn and quantified. The perspective and work intensity of the employees can shape the framework of the career. Career, business and life trying to reach every employee in the limit and non-specific; it is the ability of employees to move themselves from one point in their life and from one point in the field in which they earn their living professionally. From this point of view no career boundaries can be drawn. Car repair, plumbing, footballer, teacher, lecturer, bureaucrats etc. each of the very different areas is one in which one can develop himself.

Because a career is a line that rises not when one's title rises, it develops the way one meets life while doing one's job and work. With evolving technology and human life, people's perspectives on career understanding are also changing. With the opening up of different business areas over the years employees can change their careers. The opening up of different areas where employees can increase their careers shows that career increases and job promotion activities have a dynamic structure. As career refers to the rise in the process from the beginning of an individual's employment to his / her retirement by taking on various tasks for the same job within the same organization; it also refers to working in different jobs in different organizations operating in different areas of the profession (Çalık, Ereş, 2006). Employees who want to improve their position in the profession by climbing the career ladder are busy constantly developing themselves in terms of professionalism and intellectual.

Career choice and decision are individuals determination of current job opportunities and professions, the evaluation of whether these professions will meet their own expectations and the decision on the most suitable one among the options (Arslan and Bayraktar Uyar, 2020, p. 271; Doğan and Bacanlı, 2012, p. 915; Sampson et al., 1992, p. 68; Yeşilyaprak, 2011, p. 7). During the process of career decision, individuals may have both cognitive and psychological difficulties, and so this situation causes them to feel tense and stressed and affects their psychological and physical wellbeing (Mann et al., 1989).As of November 2019, there have been changes in the career perspective of students especially due to the severe psychological damage caused by COVID-19 disease, which has spread throughout the world over time especially in the People's Republic of China. Students studying in the field of medicine also had positive/negative effects on career changes.

In the study, the opinions of students studying in the Medical Documentation and Secretarial Program of Ankara University Vocational School of Health Services measured by the survey. By analyzing the results of the survey, it was determined that the career decidedness levels of the participating students were moderate. In addition, female participants 'career decidedness levels were higher than male participants' were, and there was a positive correlation between participants' age and class status parameters and career decidedness.





Career Decidedness

A career is to progress by working hard in a chosen field of work and to gain more talent as a result. Employees take on more responsibility as they climb the career ladder, they gain more respectability. On the other hand, the career has a combination that shows the person's work experience, activity and hierarchical position. Individuals accumulate useful experience over the years in a position then develop their abilities and move to a higher position. Career is a focal point for employees work life. The employee's communication with many people around the business and working in cooperation with them will have a positive impact on his job satisfaction psychologically over the years.

Career in terms of personnel is important for many reasons and these reasons can be listed as:

- Mediates the employee to establish respectability in his/her profession and status at work,
- A goal and focus point for the employee,
- Reinforces the maturation of the employee in a social and social sense,
- Enables the employee to earn more income in some cases and to gain more status in some cases,
 - Mediates the desires of the employee in order to achieve job satisfaction psychologically.

When viewed from its historical perspective, the word career first came to be used with the emergence of modern industrial organizations. The concept of career has changed considerably over the past century. In the world due to the Industrial Revolution, the Fordist/ Classical Form of organization has been followed for many years in business life. To this end large factories were established, labour and machine communication developed, followed by an overwhelmingly capitalist system in which people worked longer earned more but were more physically worn out. With the development of technology, the transformation towards Post-Fordist organization began to accelerate. Large factories were replaced by smaller and personal production centers. With this change, deregulation (deregulation) began in wage relations. Falling real wages, erosion in collective bargaining, increased labor intensity, more individualized labor negotiations and career progress have been the resulting consequences of this process (Dunford, 1995, p. 185-196).

In the Post-Fordist system, qualified personnel (core workforce) were given opportunities to develop themselves and this situation started to improve democratic governance in organizations. Although a democratic system has been developed, in fact the reason people are driven and the real purpose of making them work happier is to make money. In order to achieve more revenue, the personnel must be happy, motivated, their needs and expectations must be met (Şeşen, 2017, p. 109). As a result of these situations, employees and organizations have started to have common career goals. The merger of employees and organizations under a single organization took place and the concept of organizational career began to develop.

In today's rapidly changing world, the traditional form of career has been replaced by a more complex and complex situation. The process of business and career development which is evaluated with new concepts and perspectives is undergoing a major change day by day. While 2



million employees were laid off annually in the 1980's, the number of employees laid off in the 1990's reached 3.2 million and in the 2020's the number of staff laid off around work affected by technology change of labor understanding, global economic crises and pandemic diseases increased. This has also changed the way employees view their work life and career (Özdemir, 2013, p. 257-258). Employee's degrees of organizational commitment have begun to decline and more individual career goals have begun to develop. In the face of these new developments, employees found that loyalty to a particular institution or business was not very beneficial and meaningful and began to change jobs frequently.

The following concepts come to the fore when examining the development process of career and career development in business life: (Aydın, 2007, p. 18-22)

• Preparation phase for work: This phase is the process of the individual from the initial education to the end of the undergraduate education. During this period, young undergoes the first stage of self-recognition. The individual's strengths and weaknesses, values and desired lifestyles first begin to manifest themselves at this stage. As a result of this process, the individual makes the first professional choice. It is usually 7-25 years old.

• Introduction to organization: This phase usually takes place between 25 and 30 years of age. At this stage, the individual finds work related to his or her professional image or education. The individual is now the employee, after this phase. When the individual starts work, he / she realizes that the reality with the job expectations is very different. He may be disappointed when he sees that the reality is very different, and at this stage his perspective on career first begins to change.

• Initial career opportunities: This phase usually covers 30 to 40 years of age. At this stage, the individual is engaged in self-acceptance at work. At this stage, the individual is seeking to achieve their first success. At this stage, the employee has different ideals and an extreme ambition. The employee struggles for success on the path he has chosen at this stage and looks for ways to improve his profession.

• Mid-career opportunities: At this stage, employees between the ages of 40-55 are more mature and experienced. At this stage, the employee is thinking of further growth and progress. However, the employee now makes more cool decisions in business life at this stage. In some cases, the employee may also struggle to maintain the point at which he or she has reached this stage.

• Final career opportunities and retirement process: The age range is 55-70. At this stage, the employee now makes the final preparations to pursue career productivity and leave the business life during his last term.

Today, with the change of career understanding there is a tendency to move away from hierarchical structure within organizational structures. The career perspective of employees has now started to shift towards academic areas where they can further develop themselves after their undergraduate education. For this purpose, the employees are employed in vocational training, graduate training, overseas training, training from different professional branches etc. they take it.



Employees view of their career opportunities is simply to not only earn more money, but also earn status etc. it brings to the fore their desire to acquire the skills to do different jobs in different countries. Today, employees are not just experts in one job; they want to be well-rounded employees who do many jobs. Developments in this direction represent the transcendence of boundaries in terms of level, function and scale for organizations. The sense of non-limitedness in the organization structure has also changed the career perspective in this direction. Expressed as unlimited careers, this new perspective also affects organizational boundaries, roles, positions, and the nature of jobs (Bird, 1994, p. 335).

Method of Study

It is an important issue to get adequate technical training for the implementation of career plans and to work hard enough for the implementation of these plans immediately. Thanks to the proper career plans people are able to reach their goals more easily and efficiently. While employees continue their goal-oriented services the development of businesses that enjoy the support of employees and provide them with the necessary opportunities is proceeding in parallel. Prospective businesses examine their employee's career plans and career concerns to enable them to improve their business performance and take advantage of these opportunities in the future (Tanoli, 2016).

It is important for employees to think about their future career plans as well as whether or not they have a future career plan and/or how much they can stick to the career plans they have determined and/or be able to stick to them in the future. It's important that employees can feel loyalty towards their career plans. The determination that employees feel towards the career goals they set is defined as 'career decidedness'. The concept of career decidedness, refers to an individual's commitment to career choice and satisfaction with that choice (Yaşar and Sunay, 2020, p. 1614).

According to Eryilmaz and Mutlu's point of view (2017, p. 229) "career decidedness and career development is a lifelong process". Historically, career decidedness defined as a failure to make a decision about a job and a delay in demanding and ending the decision-making process (Xu and Bhang, 2019, p. 3). The concept of career decidedness refers to the individual's commitment to his/her choice of career and his/her satisfaction with this choice (Miller, 2011). Also career decidedness refers to the level of confidence or certainty about the career paths that people want to pursue and develop after their education period (Li, Ngo and Cheung, 2019, p. 1). Career decidedness of the students during the period of education is important for the following life periods. It can be a difficult process for students who do not have career decidedness to prepare for their future careers (Zakay and Barak, 1984, p. 1-5).

It is an important advantage to work on the continuity of career decisions to ensure the stability of employee's previous decisions and gain an important place in the eyes of society. To this end, employees need to have a healthier professional development process overcome potential barriers and uncertainties. A person who is confident in career determination will work more efficiently, willing and careful. He will make his decisions more logical and strategic.

Research questions and hypothesis

• Do medical documentation and secretarial students' career decidedness differ by gender?





• Do medical documentation and secretarial students' career decidedness differ by class status?

• Do medical documentation and secretarial students' career decidedness differ by age?

Within the scope of the research questions, the hypothesis of the research was formed as "The career decidedness of the students differs according to their gender, age and class status".

Participants

The research was carried out using quantitative research methods. A total of 117 students from the medical documentation and secretarial program of Ankara University Vocational School of Health Services were included in the research using the quantitative research method. 75 of these students answered the questionnaire. The results obtained in this survey are limited to the medical documentation and secretarial program of Ankara University Vocational School of Health Services.

Data Collection Tool

The data collection tool consisted of two parts. In the first part of the data collection tool, a questionnaire consisting of the demographics data such as gender, age, class status of the participants and in the second part, the one-dimensional Career Decidedness Scale adapted to Turkish by Akçakanat and Uzunbacak (2019) were used. The scale's data reliability (Cronbach Alpha) was calculated at 0.88.

Data Analysis and Findings

Data collection tool was applied to participants using electronic survey. An electronic questionnaire was sent to 117 students. 75 students who voluntarily participated in the research answered the questionnaire. SPSS22 program was used in the analysis of the data. First of all, the data related to the personel information of the participants were analyzed. In order to determine the differences between the groups, the distribution given was checked according to Skewness and Kurtosis values. It was determined that the data showed normal distribution. Independent samples t-test was used to determine the difference between gender, class status and career decidedness. Correlation test was used to show the relationship between age and career decidedness. In the text, Table 3 and Table 4 is to 'p<.05 value' were according to analyzed.

Table 1

Personal Information	Groups	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
mormation			
Age	M= 20.5867		
	Male	17	22.7
Gender			
	Female	58	77.3

The distribution of the personal information of the participants





Class Status	Freshmen (1)	42	56		
	Sophomore (2)	33	44		
Total		75	100		

When survey responses are measured with the likert type scale, the results obtained can be interpreted. The average age, gender and grade level distributions of the participants are given in Table 1. According to the table, the number of female students is considerably higher than that of male students. The average age of students is 20-.59. 56% of the participants are at the Freshmen and 44% are at the Sophomore.

Table 2

Career decidedness scores of participants and Skewness-Kurtosis values

Scale	Ā	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Career Decidedness	3.12	.60425	-1.270	1.956

When survey responses are measured with the likert type scale, the results obtained can be interpreted. According to the research data, the average score of the participants career decidedness scale is 3.12. In other words, the career decidedness levels of the participants were moderate. According to this result, students have a medium career decidedness. (See Table 2).

Table 3

Scal	Gende	Ν	Ā	Ss.	р	Differen
е	r					се
	Male	1	2.941	1.1440		
	(1)	7	2	4	0.09636	
Career					9*	1>2
Decidedne						
SS	Femal	5	3.431	1.0278		
	e (2)	8	0	9		

T-test results of participants according to gender variable





* n < 0E			

* p<.05

When survey responses are measured with the likert type scale, the results obtained can be interpreted. According to the gender variable in Table 3, there is no statistical difference between the participants' gender and career decidedness. According to the results, the average of female participants obtained from the career decidedness scale was higher than male participants. In other words, career decidedness of female participants was found to be significantly higher than male participants.

Table 4

Scale	Class		Ν		Ā		Ss.		р	Differen
	Status									се
	Freshme		4		2.992		.6635			
Career	n (1)	2		1		6			0.0343	2>1
Decidedne	Sophomo		3		3.287		.4792	97		
SS	re (2)	3		9		1				

T-test results of participants according to class status

* p<.05

When survey responses are measured with the likert type scale, the results obtained can be interpreted. Table 4, shows whether there is a statistical difference between grade level and career determination. According to the results, there is no statistical difference between the participants' class status and career decidedness. The average of Sohomore participants obtained from the career decidedness scale was higher than first class status participants. In other words, as the class status increases, career decidedness increases.

Table 5

		Age	Total
	Pearson Correlation	1	.059
Age	Sig. (2-tailed)		.615
	Ν	75	75
	Pearson Correlation	.059	1
Total	Sig. (2-tailed)	.615	

Correlation test of participants according to age variable



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N	75	75

When survey responses are measured with the likert type scale, the results obtained can be interpreted. The results of career decidedness according to the age distribution of the participants were given in Table 5. According to the results, a high positive correlation found between the participants ages and career decidedness. Therefore, as the age of the participants increases their career decidedness increases.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The career journey of young people begins primarily with the choice of profession and the choice of profession is also influenced by many factors such as an individual's education, abilities, environment, personal characteristics. In the second stage, the career decisions necessary for the creation of career steps are made (Alkan, 2014).

According to research results, it was determined that the career decidedness of the participating students was moderate. In the researches conducted by Perrone, Zanardelli, Worthington, Chartrand (2002), Yaşar and Sunay (2020) the career decidedness levels of the participants were determined as moderate. In this sense, it can be said that there is a similarity between our research and these two studies. According to this result, we can say that Medical Documentation and Secretarial students do not have career decidedness during the education period.

According to the results it was found that female participants had higher levels of career decidedness than male participants. This is due to the high number of female students participating in the research. In this sense in Turkey, girls are more willing to participate in the training and working life.

According to the results, career decidedness increases as the class status of students increase. Students are also increasingly determined about what work to do at the end of their educational life. As a result of the correlation analysis, a positive relationship found between the participant's ages and career decidedness. In the researchers conducted by Spitzer (2000), Levin et al. (2019) and Yaşar and Sunay (2020) support this situation. As the ages of the students increase, their sense of responsibility increases. This enables them to make better decisions about their careers.

As a result, it was determined that the career decidedness levels of the participating students were moderate. In addition, female participant's career decidedness levels are higher than male participants are and a positive correlation found between the age and class status parameters of the participants and career decidedness.

Identifying important points that will increase developments in professional choices and career decidedness and studies that will improve achievements in these points should be taken to the forefront. Following practices and activities that support and encourage employees, especially on issues affecting socioeconomic situations such as disasters and epidemics (Covid-19 etc.) will also increase the efficiency of career decision making.





Quantitative research on career determination approaches should find a place in our country's academic world more. The findings of the study also show that academic institutions have not been fully aligned with their approaches to career stability, and the transition has not been completed. Deficiencies in this issue should be overcome as soon as possible. Surveys on the career stability scale can be applied at regular intervals in units of universities, especially in which the career development of students is planned and directed, such as Career Centers, allowing important conclusions to be made for the future.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Limitations and Suggestions

In the research, career decidedness attitudes of only Medical Documentation and Secretarial Program of Ankara University Vocational School of Health Services students examined and evaluated. Failure to examine students' attitudes in different Medical Documentation and Secretarial Program in Turkey and compared not be considered as a limitation of the study. Attitudes of program coordinators, school administrators and educators are very important to increase the career decisions of Medical Documentation and Secretarial students. In addition, students should be aware of career opportunities and develop themselves professionally.

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