The Way University Students Cope with Real-World Problems: Daydreaming

Murat CANPOLAT[1]

[1]İnonu University, Faculty of Education, Malatya, Turkey 🆔 0000-0003-2106-6474

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	Daydreaming is a type of mental time travel into the future. Although many cultures consider daydreaming a waste of time, the vast majority of people spend part of the day daydreaming. The age at which daydreaming is most intense is self-reported to be between 17 and 29. In this qualitative research, I wanted to find out what university students' daydreams are, who is in their most intense daydreaming phase, and how these daydreams affect their lives. To this end, I conducted qualitative interviews with 41 university students aged 19 and 27. As a result of the thematic analysis, I identified the following three key themes: "daydreaming", "positive aspects of daydreaming", and "negative aspects of daydreaming". Within the framework of the findings, I provided practical advice for professionals offering psychological help.

1. Introduction

Daydreaming is considered one of the fascinating phenomena of human behavior and is a widespread mental activity that encompasses approximately 3% to 70% of daily life (Klinger et al., 2009). During the day, people experience mental freedom, going beyond the moment's demands, not focusing on momentary awareness of the environment, but thinking about off-tasks or topics unrelated to their surroundings (Baird et al., 2011; Killingsworth & Gilbert, 2010). Regardless of the stimulus, this situation accounts for nearly 50% of the daily thinking process (Killingsworth & Gilbert, 2010). This ratio shows that people spend a considerable amount of time daydreaming. It has been found to enable individuals to face future challenges, plan for the future, solve problems, think creatively, and navigate the social world (Andrews-Hanna et al., 2013; McMillan et al., 2013). On the other hand, it prevents people from achieving daily life goals (McVay & Kane, 2010) and causes performance problems (Smallwood & Schooler, 2006). Moreover, daydreaming has been linked to personality traits associated with psychopathology risk and negative emotional consequences (Moberly & Watkins, 2008).

We can generate creative thoughts unrelated to external conditions, such as daydreaming about our next vacation while commuting or reading a book (Schooler et al., 2011). Students may daydream about getting high scores on exams, receiving praise from their teachers, sharing this happy news with their friends and family, or even having a special celebration for their success (Kappes et al., 2011). Other people may be in an entertaining process, dreaming of receiving an unexpected inheritance or winning a large amount of money in the lottery (Taylor et al., 1998). A patient in a hospital may dream of being discharged or spending time outside with friends (Van-Tillburg et al., 1999). Sometimes individuals may resort to the defense mechanism of daydreaming to resolve the conflicts within themselves or with the outside world and to relax (Freud, 2004). As a result, people may daydream differently in different moods. In the literature, daydreaming is a necessity

---

that manifests itself in varying intensity from childhood to old age. Giambra (2000) reported that daydreaming decreases in frequency and duration with age, and daydreams' content, frequency, and duration are also important for functionality. Daydreams with positive content have been reported to positively affect the planning and organization of the individual's goals (Atli, 2016). They also positively influence motivation (Atli, 2016) and keep the individual from emotional conflicts (Lang, 1995). Kappes et al. (2011) argued that daydreaming reduces depression and anxiety. Atli (2016) and Mar et al. (2012) reported that daydreaming increases happiness. It is also claimed that some people have maladaptive daydreaming to solve a problem; therefore, they are detached from reality and their life skills decrease (Greene et al., 2020; Somer, 2002). Maladaptive daydreaming (Somer, 2002), which occurs for prolonged periods, frequently and intensely in a manner that disconnects the individual from reality, impairs functionality, causes significant distress in individuals, and is associated with some dissociative disorders (Ross et al., 2020). As a result, although daydreaming is seen as time wasted wandering above the clouds (Klinger et al., 2009), consciousness maintains cognition with external events (Schooler et al., 2011), allows the individual to know themselves and distances and relieves the individual from the problems they experience (Atli, 2016). Daydreaming is not thought to have sweeping positive or negative consequences, and the content and frequency of daydreaming determine functionality.

The university years are described as young adulthood when romantic relationships intensify and new developmental tasks in work and work skills emerge (Havighurst, 1972). During this period, there are transitions such as leaving the parental home and autonomy in decision making; it is a period when adult responsibilities such as financial independence and employment become tangible (Nelson et al., 2008). These students also face new developmental tasks in developing and maintaining romantic relationships, graduating from college, finding jobs, and working, which causes anxiety (Arnett, 2000). According to a study conducted in Turkey, it has been reported that almost half of single young people between the ages of 17-24 daydreams about their profession and career because they are worried about how they will make a living in the future (IPSOS, 2014). The literature finds that individuals daydream more when tired, stressed, in stimulating chaotic environments, or engaged in unpleasant activities. They daydream less frequently when they feel happy and competent or concentrate and participate in pleasurable activities (Kane et al., 2007). It can be said that young adults daydream to cope with the stress they experience, considering the pleasurable and relaxing function of daydreaming.

It is observed that people spend almost half of their daytime daydreaming (Killingsworth & Gilbert, 2010); thus, daydreaming plays a major role in our lives (Schooler et al., 2011). In the literature, the relationship between daydreaming and mind and cognition (Schooler et al., 2011), intelligence and memory (Baird et al., 2011), dreaming (Gross et al., 2021), personality disorders (Ross et al., 2020), and cultures (Soffer-Dudek et al., 2020) has been investigated. In addition, some studies have examined the relationship between the positive and negative functions of daydreaming (Andrews-Hanna et al., 2013; Greene et al., 2020; Mar et al., 2012; McMillan et al., 2013; Lang, 1995). When these studies on daydreaming are examined, it is seen that this experience is a complex phenomenon with varied dimensions. Daydreaming, a mental activity used by many people, seems to have positive and negative effects that vary from person to person. Examining the literature, one finds insufficient studies on what kind of daydreams university students have in young adulthood when anxiety about the future is intense and what positive and negative effects these daydreams have on their lives. The present study aimed to understand what types of daydreams university students have when they have anxiety about the future and feel responsible for completing certain developmental tasks and what impact these daydreams have on their lives. The findings of this study, conducted using the exploratory power of qualitative research (Creswell, 2003), will help understand what young adults' daydreams are about, identify the impact and function of daydreaming on young adults, and change perceptions of daydreaming. In this context, the research question was structured as follows: What are the daydreams of university students, and what are the positive and negative effects of these daydreams on their lives?

2. Methodology

2.1. Participants

The purposive sampling method was utilized in the present study to collect rich, in-depth data on the daydreaming experiences of university students (Patton, 2002). The Undergraduate Senior Students of Inonu

University Psychological Counseling and Guidance (PCG) were informed of the research and asked to contact students in their circle who would volunteer to participate in the study. The participants in the present study consisted of 41 students studying at a university in Turkey's Eastern Anatolia region (female = 24, male = 17). Of the students aged between 19 and 27 (*M* = 22.14; *SD* = 1.50), two were first freshmen, five sophomores, 11 juniors, and 23 were seniors. The distribution of the departments in which the students studied according to faculties is as follows: 11 = Faculty of Science-Literature, 8 = Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, 8 = Faculty of Education, 7 = Faculty of Health, 4 = Faculty of Engineering, and 3 = Faculty of Law.

2.2. Data Collection and Procedure

The research data was collected in 2019. To reach the participants of the study, 15 PCG senior students reached out to 54 students in their circle who volunteered to participate in the study. 13 of these students stated they would not be available for qualitative interviews on the specified day and time or would choose not to participate in the study. Many of the participants stated that they would like to conduct the interviews with the PCG students they had contacted. Therefore, the study's author organized two briefings with the students who would conduct the interviews to train them on what to consider during the interview process and how to ask main questions and follow-up questions. Training for the PCG undergraduate students, previously led by the researcher, included "psychological counseling principles and techniques" and "individual counseling practices." Each PCG senior student conducted qualitative interviews with approximately three participants at the university`s Psychological Counseling Practice Center. Some of the interviews took place in the canteen or suitable classrooms within the university campus. Before the qualitative interviews began, participants were informed of the research's purpose and content, obtaining their consent. The interviews lasted approximately 10-15 minutes. The interviews were recorded using a smartphone application with the participants' permission. Participants' names and information that could have revealed their identities were changed during transcription. Participants were given code names to protect their anonymity further. In the article's final version, the participants' identities were anonymized by presenting the modified version. Questions of the semi-structured interview questionnaire used to identify the daydreaming experiences of the participating university students are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. *Semi-Structured Interview Questions*

What do you think about daydreaming?
What kind of things do you daydream about?
What do you think are the benefits of daydreaming?
What kind of disadvantages do you think daydreaming offers?
How do you feel after daydreaming?

2.3. Data Analysis

Inductive thematic analysis was used, the procedure of which was defined by Braun & Clarke (2006). In this procedure, the analysis was carried out through the following procedure:

Author (Coder 1) and domain expert (Coder 2) initially shared four of the 41 transcripts equally and randomly. Coder 1 familiarized himself with the texts by reading these two transcripts without notes and then creating initial codes containing deterministic, interesting, and meaningful statements. Afterwards, Coder 2 performed the same procedure. The researcher and the domain expert came together, and the codebook was created considering the similarities and differences. This book contained codes, definitions, and sample expressions. Later, the transcripts were exchanged between the researcher and the domain expert and the original coding was initiated. The actual coding process was carried out according to the codebook, and when new codes emerged, the researcher and the domain expert came together and revised the codebook. Throughout the process, an attempt was made to maintain a holistic and analytical view of the data by writing memos about what the codes meant, their relationships to each other, and under what possible themes they were grouped. After coders coded their documents, they coded the other coders' documents over their uncoded version.

The researcher and domain expert met after completing coding and reached a full agreement on generating nine initial codes and three potential themes. Preliminarily generated candidate themes were verified by checking their compatibility with the coded data content and the entire dataset. The boundaries, names, and definitions of the created themes were clarified following the essence of thematic analysis to cover the entire

dataset with its deep and rich content. After the dataset and the created themes were reviewed one last time, the participants' salient, detailed, and persuasive statements were determined to be used in the article.

2.4. Validity and Reliability

There is no single way to check the consistency of the analysis (Miles et al., 2014). It is suggested that Coder 1 can code over the document coded by Coder 2. However, it is recommended that Coder 1 goes over the uncoded document rather than the coded document to check for consistency (Miles et al., 2014). Coder 1 coded the documents coded by Coder 2 over the uncoded version. Coder 2 also encoded the documents encoded by Coder 1 over the uncoded version. Coder 1 and Coder 2 met to discuss the similarities and differences, and consistency was checked. The researcher and the domain expert met and shared information about the consistency between coders after and throughout the analysis process.

2.5. Ethical

Permission was obtained from the Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Board of Inonu University Rectorate (Date: 11.12.2020, Number of Sessions: E.82100).

3. Findings

Three key themes and nine sub-themes emerged, presented in Figure 1, resulting from the thematic analysis. I preferred to present each sub-theme to allow narrative presentation under the key theme rather than presenting under separate headings to ensure integrity in the presentation of the findings.
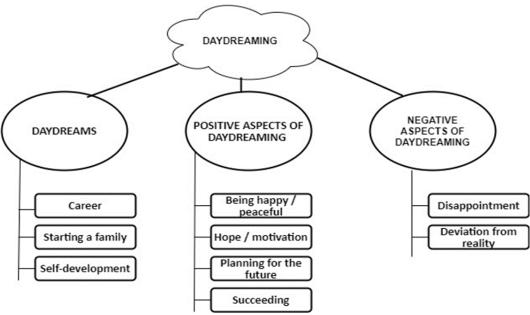

Figure 1. *Thematic Map of Key Themes Related to Daydreaming*

Daydreams

This theme includes the daydreams of the students, who express their daydreams as "beautiful," "good," "free world," "pure-clean," and "something to hold on to." It can be seen that the daydreams of university students are mainly about "career", "starting a family", and "self-development". It can be seen that almost all participants had worries about the future, thoughts of not finding a job or not being hired after graduation, and therefore they mostly had career-related daydreams. Ahmet, a 21-year-old finance student, thinks that it will be difficult to find a job in the future:

> *Like most people who live in this country, I daydream of having a job first. Having a good job already seems like a daydream now. Unemployment is rising, and it's getting harder and harder to get a public service job.*

And he goes on to explain the importance of finding a job in his life by saying, *"Let's save ourselves by getting a job first, and the rest is easy. I mean, if I have a roof over my head and a job to go to, nothing else is necessary."* Bora, a 20-year-old sophomore computer programming student who thinks it is necessary to daydream, explains that his daydreams relate to his job and that he daydreamed that he is well-positioned in his job with these words:

> *A person cannot live without daydreaming. I, too, daydream from time to time. I am 20 years old today, when I turn 30 I think and dream of working in a big company. I dream of the days when I will be a computer programmer in a big company.*

It is also observed that some participants dream of a profession since childhood, long before their college days. Sevval, a 21-year-old junior law student, explains that she can easily find a job after graduating from university, where she has wanted to be since childhood, *"I dream of sitting on a judge seat, which has been my daydream since I was little. I want to be a judge with a normal life."*

Besides university students who dream of working somewhere, some want to be their own bosses. Caner, a 21-year-old junior audiology major, talks excitedly about starting a hearing aid company, which he calls *"my biggest daydream,"* and he will become a manager in that company. University students who dream of having a good job seem to know that it is not easy; they have to work hard and improve themselves. Melek, a 23-year-old senior student in mathematics, is one of those who worry about finding a job after graduation, *"I think my probability of finding a job is low."* She adds that she needs to improve by saying:

> *I dream of getting a good place related to my profession, i.e. the department I study. It's more about getting ahead academically. It's more about staying at a university like this, getting a postgraduate degree and continuing in that direction.*

It is seen that the daydreams that university students express intensely concern *"starting a family"*, followed by daydreams about one's job. For university students concerned about finding a job after graduation, starting a family seems to be at the top of their daydreams because they think they will have no problems finding a job, even if it is, in their own words, *"behind"* their career plans. Gulay, a sophomore computer engineering student, says her job will be ready when she graduates and expresses her daydream by saying, *" I often daydream of a life with my husband and child in which my only concern is growing vegetables and fruits in the garden of our wooden house by the lake, away from the city."*

For those who are not as fortunate as Gulay and those who worry about what they will do after they graduate from university, the daydream of raising a family seems to take a back seat. Kadriye, a Public Relations and Publicity senior student, is just one who is not as lucky as Gulay. Kadriye, who seemed very anxious to find a job, expressed her opinion about the place of starting a family among her goals, saying, *"My primary goal is to get a job to start my career. If you ask me what my daydream is after that, I can say to get married, but of course, with the person I love."*

The Positive Aspects of Daydreaming

This theme includes the contribution of the daydreaming experience to the students themselves, who expressed daydreaming as *"a reinforcement," "a goal," "halfway to success,"* and *"a means to balance"* in their own words. All participants stated that they daydream and that daydreaming helped them in the areas of *"being happy/peaceful," "hope/motivation," "planning for the future,"* and *"succeeding."* Daydreaming, which for some is a way *"when in a state of difficulty and negative emotions"* and for others as an action that *"relieves fatigue before sleep,"* leaves participants feeling happy/peaceful, relaxed, and rested. Adnan, a 25-year-old senior student in the English Language and Literature Department, talks about the effect of daydreaming on him with these words, *"I feel relieved for the moment, I feel happy for the moment. That is, it feels like it has come true when you are daydreaming."*

Daydreaming makes participants happy, gives them hope for the future, and motivates them to realize their dreams. Bahar, a 22-year-old junior student of the Turkish Language and Literature Department, is one of those thinking that *"people cannot live without daydreams"* even if they do, they will be incomplete. She expresses that daydreaming increases the motivation of people at the point of fulfilling daydreams, saying:

> *If there is one beneficial effect of having daydreams are good at, it is the effort of making it real. For example, I've always wanted to be a teacher, I've imagined myself that way. The more I daydream about it, the more I strive. I study harder.*

Ela, a 22-year-old senior student in the Psychological Counseling and Guidance Department, is concerned about finding a job in the future. She says that she wants to be a public worker and is disappointed due to the

low probability of having the job. She expresses how she becomes hopeful and takes action by daydreaming with these words:

> *I think daydreaming motivates a person more. When you envision a daydream in your mind, your desire to make it real increases. For example, it gives me more energy. If I have the feeling I like when I daydream, I want to do it in a better way; I want to push it more. I see it as a source of strength, as a motivation.*

Participants state that daydreaming also helps them plan for the future. Sedef, a 23-year-old junior student in the Turkish Language and Literature Department, loves her field. Still, she dreams of studying in a health department where she is more likely to find a job because, in her own words, her field is *"not a guarantee"* of getting a job. She has fulfilled that dream. She says daydreaming works in planning for the future with these words:

> *If you daydream, you get all your wishes in the long term. Whatever you put at the center of your life, such as a career, a spouse, love, you move towards it. Daydreaming is of great benefit to make them true.*

Negative Aspects of Daydreaming

This theme is about the harmfulness of daydreaming to students, who describe daydreaming in their own words as *"a lost cause"* and *"harmful in the extreme"*. All participants stated that daydreaming must have a certain duration and frequency. If its content is feasible and accessible, it helps; otherwise, utopian daydreaming can lead to *"disappointment"* and *"deviation from reality."* *"It is a reality that daydreams come true or come to naught,"* says Ertugrul, a 23-year-old senior student in the Economics Department. He adds that he daydreams too much, but he is neither a starry-eyed dreamer nor is on a wild goose chase. Thinking that there is a fine line between daydreaming and fancifulness, Ertugrul says that having daydreams that can be fulfilled is beneficial and that having unattainable daydreams will inevitably result in disappointment. Serkan, a 22-year-old student in the Psychological Counseling and Guidance Department, is just one of those who think one cannot live without daydreams. He explains that people who, in his own words, have an *"extremely fanciful lifestyle"* have unrealistic daydreams because of the media effect, and when their dreams fall apart, they become depressed with these words:

> *Television and media are very important factors today. All the people in them make a quick buck, and they get rich in a short time. And all of them lead rich lives. They admire them and daydream about having a life like this. They say, "I will live like that, too." When you always daydream this way and without perseverance, you still make no headway. And then you fall into depression.*

One aspect of daydreaming, which can lead to frustration, sadness, or even depression, is how frequently and for how long you daydream. Participants stated that spending too much time daydreaming can cause a person to move away from the real world, live in a fantasy world, and deviate from reality. Merve, a 19-year-old freshman student in the Classroom Teaching Department, says she loves daydreaming and that she daydreams too much. However, she explains that spending too much time daydreaming is bad with these words:

> *Daydreaming moves people away from real life. If people who need to prepare for an exam constantly daydream about winning the exam and what they will do after the exam, it can be a waste of time.*

Oktay, a 21-year-old junior student in the Philosophy Department, resembles daydreaming to *"heroin"* in his own words. However, he daydreams and is more of the opinion that it is useful. He explains that daydreaming should be in moderation with these words:

> *If you are delusional about everything, if you completely lose sight of what's real and live completely in a fantasy world, as a result of this, psychological problems emerge. Let's think of it like this, like heroin. Maybe nothing happens the first time you use it, but when you start using it constantly, you become addicted.*

4. Conclusion and Discussion

In this study, I collected a range of information about the content, benefits, and harms of daydreaming. I saw that daydreaming is a mental activity that university students experience frequently. The interviews revealed that the participants' daydreams were mostly concerned with the developmental tasks of their own lives and the times they were in. In addition, their daydreams involved time travel into the future under the influence

of future concerns (e.g., career, family formation, and self-development). Participants indicated that non-excessive daydreaming played an important role in their happiness, peace, and planning their future. They argued that it increased their motivational desire to succeed. However, they also argued that excessive daydreaming causes negative consequences such as disappointment and deviation from reality.

This study replicated some of the findings of previous studies. First, the finding that people daydream during the day that does not relate to the here and now (Baird et al., 2011; Killingsworth & Gilbert, 2010), and my finding that participants often daydream about the future to escape difficulties they face are similar to the findings of previous studies. Second, daydreaming is influenced by the context in which it occurs. The majority of the study participants stated that they daydream to relax when they feel bad. The literature indicates that individuals are more likely to daydream when tired or stressed, in a stimulus-chaotic environment, completing a stressful task, or when they are in a negative mood (Kane et al., 2007; Smallwood et al., 2009). In this study, most participants were concerned that they would not easily find a job after graduation, and these concerns caused them to daydream that they would have an easier job in the future. In contrast, the participants who were not worried about finding a job in the future mostly daydreamed of starting a family and self-development. In short, the emotional state and desires we are in trigger daydreaming and determine its content. In other words, the desires that were pressuring the participants and that had not yet been fulfilled occupied their minds, and these desires relieved them for a short time by coming true in daydreaming. Considering that the individual's personal goals or current concerns shape their thoughts during daydreaming (McVay & Kane, 2010) and that young adults use daydreaming as a way to cope with stress, the participants in the study are stressed because they feel the responsibility of the developmental tasks of the period they are in. For this reason, they daydream from time to time, and these daydreams usually revolve around career, family formation, and self-development related to their personal goals or current concerns.

Third, participants generally indicated that daydreaming had positive effects on them. All participants emphasized that they felt it was necessary to daydream and that it was a nice thing to do, provided it did not go too far. They stated that they became happy and relaxed, clarified their goals, were motivated to work for their goals, and positively affected their success by daydreaming. Daydreaming has been reported to have a positive effect on the planning and organization of the individual's goals (Atli, 2016), has a positive effect on motivation (Atli, 2016), keeps the individual away from emotional conflict (Lang, 1995), reduces depression and anxiety (Kappes et al.,2011), and increases happiness levels (Atli, 2016; Mar et al., 2012). However, despite claims that daydreaming prevents the achievement of daily life goals (McVay & Kane, 2010) and causes performance problems (Smallwood & Schooler, 2006), participants in the present study did not mention such an effect.

Fourth, participants indicated that the positive aspects of daydreaming could also have negative effects such as disappointment and deviation from reality. The literature has suggested that some people have long-term frequent and intense daydreaming to solve a problem; therefore, they are disconnected from reality, their life skills are reduced (Greene et al., 2020; Somer, 2002; Winnicott, 2002), and are associated with negative emotional consequences (Moberly & Watkins, 2008). Maladaptive daydreaming (Somer, 2002), experienced over a prolonged period, frequently and intensely impairs functioning and causes significant distress in individuals. It has also been associated with dissociative disorders (Ross et al., 2020). Participants in the study also made statements supporting this finding. They emphasized that one should daydream but not see the world through rose-colored glasses. They argued that it is useful to have feasible and achievable daydreams. The participants also said that daydreaming should be done in moderation; otherwise, it can lead to disappointment and depression. In conclusion, this study presented findings that support the view that daydreaming is influenced by context, that it cannot have exclusively positive or negative consequences, and that the content and frequency of daydreaming determine functionality.

5. Recommendations

5.1. Strengths, Limitations, and Future Research

One of the most important contributions of this study was the finding that daydreaming occupies an important place in the lives of university students who are at the critical threshold of planning their futures. I believe that this research will contribute to the literature on this topic with the findings on what daydreams university students have and how they affect their lives. In the Turkish culture, many consider daydreaming a "bubble",

and older people advise young people to deal with real things and act more seriously and responsibly. Nevertheless, I found that the daydreaming experiences of participants were similar to the Western culture, that participants daydreamed when they felt stressed, and that their daydreaming was influenced by the context they were in (Kane et al., 2007; McVay & Kane, 2010; Smallwood et al., 2009). Another contribution of this study is the finding that one of the main strategies participants use to cope with anxiety is daydreaming. I believe that it may be beneficial for professionals providing psychological help to consider the daydreams of young adults while offering them help and learning the content and function of their daydreams to know the individual better.

This study's limitations should be considered to plan more comprehensive research on this topic in the future. The first limitation of the study is that the data was collected from the participants in a cross-sectional way. During the research process, most participants daydreamed about having a job and starting a family, and they said that these daydreams motivated them. Longitudinal research to be conducted in the future can examine how daydreams change at different stages of development. The second limitation of the study is that the frequency and duration of the participants' daydreaming were not examined. During the research process, all participants daydreamed, but they felt that excessive daydreaming, in their own words, had negative effects on the individual. These negative effects were more related to disappointment and detachment from reality. Further studies can examine the duration and content of daydreaming and its relationship to hope, depression, and similar psychological factors.

5.2. Implications for Policy and Practice

The participants' daydreams mostly consist of starting a profession, earning money, getting married, and having children. Seeing that they come true even in daydreams is good for people, and it makes them happy and contributes to taking action. This study has shown that daydreaming has positive effects on our participants in coping with problems and taking action to solve them. Daydreaming is often seen as an activity in which university students rehearse their problems and develop new coping strategies. When they lose their motivation, they are daydreaming and storing energy. For this reason, professionals working in university centers to provide psychological assistance services should discuss what kinds of daydreams their clients have and how these daydreams affect their lives. In addition, school counselors should inform university students and children about the functionality of daydreaming. Through family education, parents should be told that children should talk about their daydreams, not blame them for their daydreams and that daydreams can give insights from their inner world. Another thing I noticed in this study was that the problems young people were experiencing determined the content of their daydreams. Policymakers should offer solutions, taking into account that the daydreams of young people offer valuable clues to their problems. For example, daydreams about finding a job reflect a problem that occupies their minds.

Ethical Compliance Section

Funding: The author has no funding to disclose.

Compliance with Ethical Standards: All procedures performed in studies involving human participants followed the ethical standards of the Inonu University Social and Human Sciences Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee and the 1964 Helsinki Declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares there is no conflict of interest.

Informed Consent (when applicable): Informed consent was obtained from all individual adult participants included in the study.

6. References

Andrews-Hanna, J. R., Kaiser, R. H., Turner, A. E., Reineberg, A. E., Godinez, D., Dimidjian, S., & Banich, M. T. (2013). A penny for your thoughts: Dimensions of self-generated thought content and relationships with individual differences in emotional wellbeing. *Frontiers in Psychology, 4,* 900. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2013.00900

Arnett, J. J. (2000). Emerging adulthood: A theory of development from the late teens through the twenties. *American Psychologist, 55*(5), 469–480. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.55.5.469

Atli, A. (2016). Views of adolescents in high-school period on daydreaming. *International Online Journal of Educational Sciences, 8*(4), 148-160. http://dx.doi.org/10.15345/iojes.2016.04.013

Baird, B., Smallwood, J., & Schooler, J. W. (2011). Back to the future: Autobiographical planning and the functionality of mind-wandering. *Consciousness and Cognition, 20*(4), 1604-1611. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.concog.2011.08.007

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*, 77-101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approache.* Sage Publication.

Freud, A. (2004). *Self and defense mechanisms* (Trans. Y. Erim). Metis Publications (Original air date, 1939).

Giambra, L. M. (2000). Frequency and intensity of daydreaming: Age changes and age differences from late adolescent to the old-old. *Imagination, Cognition and Personality, 19*(3), 229-267. https://doi.org/10.2190%2FXN4W-1CRE-B0MH-84XT

Greene, T., West, M., & Somer, E. (2020). Maladaptive daydreaming and emotional regulation difficulties: A network analysis. *Psychiatry Research, 285,* 1-4*.* https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2020.112799

Gross, M. E., Smith, A. P., Graveline, Y. M., Beaty, R. E., Schooler, J. W., & Seli, P. (2021). Comparing the phenomenological qualities of stimulus-independent thought, stimulus-dependent thought and dreams using experience sampling. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B, 376*, 1-10. https://doi.org/10.1098/rstb.2019.0694

Havighurst, R. J. (1972). *Developmental tasks and education.* David McKay.

IPSOS (2014). Youth of Turkey: With their dreams, values, concerns and daily lives. https://www.ipsos.com/tr-tr/turkiyenin-gencleri-hayalleri-degerleri-endiseleri-ve-gunluk-hayatlariyla

Kane, M. J., Brown, L. H., McVay, J. C., Silvia, P. J., Myin-Germeys, I., & Kwapil, T. R. (2007). For whom the mind wanders, and when: An experience-sampling study of working memory and executive control in daily life. *Psychological Science, 18*(7), 614-621. https://doi.org/10.1111%2Fj.1467-9280.2007.01948.x

Kappes, H.B., Stephens, E.J., & Oettingen, G. (2011). Implicit theories moderate the relation of positive future fantasies to academic outcomes. *Journal of Research in Personality, 45*, 269-278. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2011.02.006

Killingsworth, M. A., & Gilbert, D. T. (2010). A wandering mind is an unhappy mind. *Science, 330*, 932–932. https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1192439

Klinger, E., Henning, V. R., & Janssen, J. M. (2009). Fantasy-proneness dimensionalized: Dissociative component is related to psychopathology, daydreaming as such is not. *Journal of Research in Personality, 43*(3), 506-510. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2008.12.017

Lang, V. A. (1995). Relative association, interactiveness, and the bizarre imagery effect. *American Journal of Psychology, 108,* 13-35. https://doi.org/10.2307/1423099

Mar, R. A., Masonb,M. F., & Litvack, A. (2012). How daydreaming relates to life satisfaction, loneliness, and social support: The importance of gender and daydream content. *Consciousness and Cognition, 21*, 401-407. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.concog. 2011.08.001

McMillan, R., Kaufman, S. B., & Singer, J. L. (2013). Ode to positive constructive daydreaming. *Frontiers in Psychology, 4,* 1-9. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2013.00626

McVay, J. C., & Kane, M. J. (2010). Does mind wandering reflect executive function or executive failure? Comment on Smallwood and Schooler (2006) and Watkins (2008). *Psychological Bulletin, 136*(2), 188-197. https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/a0018298

Miles, M. B., Huberman, A.M., & Saldana, J. (2014). *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook.* Sage.

Moberly, N. J., & Watkins, E. R. (2008). Ruminative self-focus and negative affect: An experience sampling study. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 117*(2), 314–323. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-843X.117.2.314

Nelson, M. C., Story, M., Larson, N. I., Neumark-Sztainer, D., & Lytle, L. A. (2008). Emerging adulthood and college-aged youth: An overlooked age for weight-related behavior change. *Obesity*, *16*(10), 2205. https://doi.org/10.1038/oby.2008.365

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Thousands Oaks: Sage Publications.

Ross, C. A., Ridgway, J., & George, N. (2020). Maladaptive daydreaming, dissociation, and the dissociative disorders. *Psychiatric Research and Clinical Practice*, *2*(2), 53-61. https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.prcp.20190050

Schooler, J. W., Smallwood, J., Christoff, K., Handy, T. C., Reichle, E. D., & Sayette, M. A. (2011). Meta-awareness, perceptual decoupling and the wandering mind. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences, 15*(7), 319-326. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2011.05.006

Smallwood, J., & Schooler, J. W. (2006). The restless mind. *Psychological Bulletin, 132*(6), 946-958. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.132.6.946

Smallwood, J., Fitzgerald, A., Miles, L. K., & Phillips, L. H. (2009). Shifting moods, wandering minds: Negative moods lead the mind to wander. *Emotion*, *9*(2), 271-276. https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/a0014855

Soffer-Dudek, N., Somer, E., Abu-Rayya, H. M., Metin, B., & Schimmenti, A. (2020). Different cultures, similar daydream addiction? An examination of the cross-cultural measurement equivalence of the Maladaptive Daydreaming Scale. *Journal of Behavioral Addictions, 9(4)*, 1-12. https://doi.org/10.1556/2006.2020.00080

Somer, E. (2002). Maladaptive daydreaming: A qualitative inquiry. *Journal of Contemporary Psychotherapy*, *32*(2-3), 197-212. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1020597026919

Taylor, S. E., Pham, L. B., Rivkin, I. D., & Armor, D. A. (1998). Harnessing the imagination: Mental stimulation, self-regulation, and coping. *American Psychologist, 53*, 429-439. https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/0003-066X.53.4.429

Van Tillburg, M., Vingerhoets, A., & Van Heck, G. (1999). Determinants of homesickness chronicity: Coping and personality. *Personality and Individual Differences, 27*(3), 531-539. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0191-8869(98)00262-1