

Career Adaptability of Care Leaver Teachers

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Abstract

In Türkiye, care leavers primarily have a right to be employed in the public sector. These individuals generally work as civil servants or janitors in the public sector. Some of the care leavers are also employed as teachers. Furthermore, with recent legal arrangements, care leavers with university degrees have been granted the priority of using the employment right and being employed in positions relevant to their majors. In this regard, the aim of this study was to examine the career adaptability of care leaver teachers. In this study, phenomenological design was used based on qualitative interviews. The study group consisted of seven post-care adults working as teachers in the public sector. A descriptive analysis was conducted to analyse the data collected from participants through interviews. The findings indicated that professional experience has important effects on the career adaptability of care leaver teachers. Being a care leaver was found to be influential in participants' choosing a teaching profession and constructing their careers, and to limit the impact of the biological family and shape personality traits. Participants also emphasized confidence relatively more than the other dimensions of career adaptability.

Keywords: Care leavers, career adaptability, care experienced teachers, teacher development.

Koruma Altında Yetişen Öğretmenlerin Kariyer Uyumu

Özet

Türkiye’de, koruma altında yetişen bireylerin kamuda öncelikle istihdam hakları bulunmaktadır. Bu bireyler kamuda genelde memur ya da hizmetli olarak görev yapmaktadırlar. Son yıllarda yapılan yasal düzenlemelerle koruma altında yetişenlerin istihdam haklarının kullanımında yüksek öğrenim görenlere öncelik verilerek öğrenim görülen alanlara göre istihdam olanağı sağlanmıştır. Bu araştırmada koruma altında yetişen öğretmenlerin kariyer uyumlarının incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Araştırmada, nitel araştırma yaklaşımlarına dayalı olarak fenomenoloji yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın çalışma grubunu devlet korumasında yetişen ve öğretmen olan yedi kişi oluşturmaktadır. Araştırma verileri betimsel analizle çözümlenmiştir. Araştırma bulguları, kıdemli kariyer uyumunda önemli etkilerinin olduğunu göstermektedir. Koruma altında yetişen öğretmenlerin öğretmen olmalarında devlet korumasında yetişmiş olma önemli bir destek sağlamıştır. Koruma altında yetişme, hem biyolojik ailenin etkisinin sınırlanması yönünden hem de kişilik özelliklerinin etkilenmesi yönünden kariyer yapılandırılmayı etkilemektedir. Kariyer uyumunun güven boyutunda, katılımcıların daha uyumlu olduğu görülmektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Koruma altından ayrılanlar, kariyer uyumu, koruma altında yetişen öğretmenler, öğretmen gelişimi.

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Introduction

Career is an important factor that covers most of the experiences of individuals within their lifetimes. The concept of career has been a hot topic in management literature particularly since the 1970s (Dündar, 2013). Sullivan and Baruch (2009) defined career as work-related and non-work-related experiences that form a unique pattern in an individual's life. This definition involves both physical movements within positions, jobs, organizations, professions, and industries, individuals' perceptions and interpretations about their own careers. Therefore, individuals' careers are influenced by many contextual factors, such as culture, economy and political environment as well as personal factors (Sullivan & Baruch 2009). Likewise, Yeşilyaprak (2014) regarded a career as a combination of the activities a person's roles require over the course of a lifetime. She claims that career is a concept that includes individuals' leisure activities, their non-occupational roles, adaptation and development they achieve while performing their roles. New career approaches suggest that being dependent on a single organization or working within hierarchical structures is not a must for a career. Furthermore, they emphasize that the responsibility of career management has predominantly shifted to individuals from organizations (Seçer & Çınar 2011).

Career Adaptability

Recent developments in work life have shown that a new model is required to understand the work behaviors and mobility of individuals. In this context, Savickas's career construction theory has emerged as an integrative approach (Pişkin, 2017). Career construction theory is essentially the result of transformations relying on previous theories. Trait-factor theories that started in the early 1900s are focused on matching people with vocations. From the mid-20th century onwards, focused on managing one's life roles across a lifespan, became prominent. In the first decade of the 21st century, Savickas's career construction theory started to attract attention (Ulaş-Kılıç, 2019). Career construction theory emphasizes that individuals build their careers through personal and social constructivism. While making this emphasis, the theory portrays the individuals' own realities and how they interpret these realities. It also explains how personal development takes place as a result of constant interactions between individuals and their work environment (Karacan-Özdemir, 2018).

Three components of career construction theory are vocational personality, life themes, and career adaptability. The skills, needs, values, and interests associated with the career of an individual constitute the vocational personality. Life themes are the main issues or points in an individual's life story. Career adaptability means that the individual is ready to cope with the changes that may occur in his entire life and life roles (Pişkin, 2014). Career adaptability is an important concept in career construction theory (Dönmezoğulları & Yeşilyaprak 2019). According to Savickas (2013 cited by Dönmezoğulları &

Yeşilyaprak 2019), fulfilling future career tasks successfully, taking responsibility for career development, discovering career opportunities and having a belief in solving career problems all depend on career adaptability.

Career adaptability is generally understood as individuals' ability to adapt to new or changing circumstances related to their careers (Yiğit, 2018). Savickas (1997) describes career adaptability as individuals' readiness for predictable or unpredictable situations during the transition to work and work life. Career adaptability involves adapting to vocational development tasks, job readiness and personal traumas by solving unusual, misidentified or complex problems (Savickas, 2005). Career adaptability highlights the importance of congruence between individuals and their environments, and the ability to manage the problems faced by individuals through referring to self-control processes (Creed et al., 2009). Savickas has built career adaptability on two basic points: (1) adaptation to the current developmental tasks and fulfillment of these tasks, (2) coping with the career crises the person runs into (Ayaz & Demir 2019).

Savickas (2005) states that career adaptability consists of four dimensions: concern, control, curiosity and confidence. According to him; (1) becoming concerned about one's vocational future as an employee, (2) having personal control over one's vocational future, (3) displaying curiosity for one's self and future, and (4) having confidence in one's own success are traits that make a person adaptable. An individual's concern for his vocational future is the most important dimension of career adaptability. Career concern involves the individual's thoughts and plans about his future life and career options. Career concern requires recalling vocational pasts, thinking about current vocation and making predictions about future professions. Lack of career concern leads to disinterest to career-related issues. It emerges when individuals have no plans or negative attitudes about their own careers (Pişkin, 2017). Career control refers to individuals' assuming responsibility and control over their vocational futures (Savickas 2005). Individuals who have control over their careers, desire to act according to their interests and career opportunities (Kepir-Savoly, 2017). Individuals' taking control of their careers or vocational futures does not prevent them from getting advice or help from others about their careers. Career curiosity involves individuals' curiosity about the fit between themselves and the work world, research and exploration activities to satisfy their curiosity. Curiosity also provides a source of information for individuals to make choices appropriate to their own situation (Savickas, 2005). Career curiosity contributes to individuals to get information about their own interests, abilities, values, and the characteristics required by career prospects (Sarıkoğlu & Bacanlı 2019). Career confidence is the belief in one's ability to overcome one's own career barriers or difficulties that arise unexpectedly during their career development (Eryılmaz & Kara 2018). Individuals with career confidence are skilled

in problem-solving and overcoming obstacles and have the ability to make appropriate choices regarding their careers (Savickas, 2005).

The characteristics that constitute the source of career adaptability help individuals form strategies they use to guide their adaptive behaviors (Savickas & Porfeli 2012). It can be said that each of these traits works differently for each individual according to individual and environmental differences. Therefore, it might be supposed that the career adaptability of care leaver teachers is shaped by different sources, ranging from individual characteristics to the support of foster families or child protection workers.

Career Adaptability of Care Leaver Teachers

It is known that individuals' career adaptability is affected by various factors. Some of these factors are psychological factors, such as talent, personality traits, interest, and intelligence, and sociological factors, such as family status and socioeconomic status (Pişkin, 2014). Savickas (2005) stated that the foundations of personality are predominantly based on the family; because family life and the social environment in which childhood is spent can make serious contributions to the individual's personality development (Yiğit, 2018). Similarly, Creed et al. (2009) emphasized that family, an important social support provider, affects an individual's career development. Furthermore, Wiesenberg and Aghakhani (2007) argued that family members have a strong influence on an individual's career decisions and family support is very important in career development. Therefore, career adaptability becomes more important for care leavers as they usually spend most of their childhood in social environments instead of their biological families.

“Care leavers” are people whose raising was supervised and controlled by the state. Failure to provide the necessary care and parenting conditions leads to a situation in which a child needs to be protected. When it is determined that a child needs protection, this child is either supported with socioeconomic supports while staying with family, adopted, or placed in a foster family or in residential children's homes (Elmacı, 2010). According to 2019 data of the General Directorate of Child Services (ÇHGM), 7.259 children are cared for by foster families, 585 children are adopted, 13.867 children are in residential care, and 130.000 children are supported at their homes without state care (ÇHGM, 2020).

According to the provisions of the Child Protection Law and Social Services Law, it is necessary to take the necessary precautions to ensure that the children, who are identified as needing to be cared for and whose conditions of need for care continue, are raised and have a job or a profession until they reach lawful age (they may be older if they continue their education). In this context, in Türkiye, there are provisions in the Social Services Law (No: 2828) regarding the employment of care leavers in the

public and private sector. Accordingly, one in per thousand of the total staff and positions in public institutions and organizations are reserved for care leavers. Also, in the event that care leavers are employed in the private sector, the employer is subsidized. 50.147 care leavers have been employed in public institutions and organizations since 1988, when the right to employment was first put into practice. Within the scope of the private sector premium incentive practice launched in 2018, 4.198 care leavers have been employed in the private sector (ÇHGM, 2020).

Instead of their biological families, child protection professionals take on the roles of parents or other family members for children in their care. Therefore, it should be taken into consideration that familial factors are predominantly replaced by child protection workers in shaping the career adaptability of care leavers. As mentioned above, life themes, one of the basic components of career construction theory, draw attention to the important points in an individual's life. From the perspective of life themes, past experiences are influential in shaping the career decisions of individuals. Since children in care are separated from their biological families as a result of any important event or trauma, the impact of these important events on their careers is inevitable. On the other hand, given that the vocational personality is shaped in the family (Pişkin, 2017), it is possible to say that the vocational personality of care leavers will be nurtured by different sources than that of the individuals living with their families.

In Türkiye, there is support for individuals in care to be employed in the public sector, which is an important factor in constructing their career. Employment opportunities in public sector can also affect the educational status of a child in care. Perhaps it is for this reason that an amendment giving priority to secondary and tertiary education graduates was made in the Regulation on the Use of the Employment Right Entitled under Social Services Law in 2018, whereas there was no priority in terms of educational status before. State support continues for care leavers even after they enter the workforce. Support and guidance services are provided to care leavers during the transition to social life and employment by the Ministry of Family, Labor, and Social Services (MFLS). Activities, such as "Work Adaptation Seminars", are carried out to adapt these individuals to work life and to troubleshoot problems that they may encounter in work life (MFLS, 2019).

Rationale and aims of the current study

In Türkiye, care leavers have a right to work in the public sector pursuant to the Social Services Law. They are often appointed as civil servants or janitors. With the arrangements made in 2018, the opportunity to be appointed according to university courses was introduced. Due to these arrangements, an increase in the number of care leaver teachers in the public sector is highly likely. Furthermore, according to the recruitment manuals of the State Personnel Administration (DPB, 2019) and the

General Directorate of Labor (ÇGM, 2020), teaching is one of the most preferred professions for university degree holders care leavers. Furthermore, teaching positions have been reserved more than other professions for care leavers since 2019. For example, 15 teaching positions in 2019 and 10 in 2020 were reserved for care leavers, which were relatively more than the number of positions in other professions, such as engineering and lawyer. For this reason, care leaver teachers were chosen as participants in this study. Accordingly, it becomes important to examine the career adaptability of care leaver teachers, as they are a special group to be cared in a special manner. Career construction theory was used in this study since it enables one to explain how individuals and their social environment affect each other in the construction of a career. This study may present new perspectives on what kinds of arrangements and interventions should be made to support the career adaptability of care leaver teachers. This study may also contribute to the care leavers literature, which is lacking in Türkiye.

Although the career construction theory emphasizes that an individual builds his own career, in terms of care leavers, factors such as family and environment that can affect the career construction process have different qualities. Therefore, it can be said that there is a need to interpret and explain the career-related adaptation experiences of care leaver teachers, whose numbers have started to increase in Türkiye in recent years. The aim of this study is to examine the career adaptability of care leaver teachers. The questions asked in line with this general purpose are: (1) What are the factors affecting care leaver teachers in choosing the teaching profession? (2) How do care leaver teachers practice their teaching profession? (3) How does growing up in care affect the career adaptability of care leaver teachers?

Method

Qualitative methodology was used in this study to gain insights about the experiences of care leaver teachers. As Patton (2014) stated, there is no definitive way to distinguish qualitative research types; however, this study can be considered as a phenomenological study since it focused on the phenomenon of a care leaver teacher. In this context, in-depth interviews were conducted to understand how this phenomenon affects the career adaptability of care leaver teachers. The research has full ethical clearance from Amasya University (Ethics Committee Date: 14.02.2020 / Number: 4527).

Participants

Seven care leaver teachers participated in the study. Five of them were men, and two were women. The snowball sampling method was used to reach participants. The study started with two care leaver teachers who were acquainted with researcher, and then five other participants were reached through

the first two interviewees and care leaver associations. During the study, only seven participants could be reached, because the number of care leaver teachers was very limited. Participants were working in three different provinces of Türkiye and teaching in the public sector. Six of the participants were working in schools and one in a children's home. Three of the participants were physical education teachers, one was a visual arts teacher, one was a classroom teacher, one was a Turkish language teacher, and one was a school counselor. In order to preserve anonymity, identifying information, such as age, gender, province, and teaching branch were not given. Thus, a nickname such as P1 and P7 was given to each participant. The age range of the participants is between 20-50 years, and their seniority is between 1 and 35 years. Two participants became teachers by benefiting from the right to employment within the scope of the Social Services Law. One of the participants grew up in a children's home and then in a foster family. Apart from him/her, the other participants had never been placed in a foster family and had only grown up in a residential children's home or orphanage.

Data Collection Tool

As a data collection tool, a semi-structured interview form was used. Koç's work (2019) was mostly used in the creation of the data collection tool, and adapted for the situation of care leaver teachers. In addition to demographic information, there were seven questions in the interview form about how they chose the teaching profession, how they define their career development, career adaptability, and how being a care leaver affected those elements. In terms of the suitability of the data collection tool, pilot interviews were held with two care leaver teachers, and it was decided that the form works fine after making small arrangements in line with the interviews.

Data Collection

The data were collected by researcher in the 2019-2020 academic year. Five of the participants were interviewed face-to-face, and two were interviewed by phone. Four of the face-to-face interviews were held at participants' working places, one of them at a place determined by the participant. Interviews were audio-recorded with the permission of the participants. The length of the interviews ranges between 26 and 51 minutes. The records were sent to the participants, and they were asked to specify the expressions they would like to change or add, if any. All of the participants approved the records and did not make any changes.

Data Analysis

The researcher transcribed the audio recordings obtained from the interviews. No special qualitative analysis programmes were used in data analysis, but Microsoft Word and Excell programmes were used to facilitate the analysis process. A descriptive analysis was conducted to analyze the data collected. The descriptive analysis was not reported in its original form, it was finalized by repeating and reviewing it from time to time, and themes and categories were created. Peer review was utilized in the data analysis, and the analysis was finalized in accordance with the feedback from a colleague who specializes in educational administration and career topics. In the creation of codes and themes, coding was reviewed and compromised until the colleague found common codes and themes. The themes and categories created during the analysis, were given under the relevant headings in the findings chapter.

Validation and Trustworthiness

Considering Creswell's (2021) points, some of the validation and trustworthiness measures taken in this research. The researcher has worked for many years with looked after children and those care leavers and is still involved in projects and events related to these groups. The researcher has also carried out projects with looked after children and care leavers and has been involved in life skills and career planning programs. These experiences helped the researcher to check for misinformation, facilitated interaction with the participants and provided information from different dimensions. In the conduct of the research, the opinions and suggestions of a colleague who is experienced in both career adaptability and qualitative research were also utilized. The audio-recorded interviews were transcribed and sent back to the participants for control and participant confirmation was obtained. The support of a different researcher was also received in the coding of the data and a consensus was reached in the coding.

Findings

As a result of data analysis, three themes have been developed: (1) factors effective in choosing the teaching profession, (2) continuing the teaching profession and (3) being a care leaver. Findings are given under the theme headings.

Factors Effective in Choosing Teaching Profession

The factors effective in choosing the teaching profession according to the opinions of the participants were given in Table 1.

Table 1.

Factors Effective in Choosing Teaching Profession

Categories	Codes
Individual Factors	A passion for teaching
	Academic success
	Dream of having a university degree
	Desire to earn a living within a short time
Environmental factors	Co-worker guidance
	Guidance of the training center's teacher
	The guidance of the teacher in the children's home
	Positive influences of teachers in work life
	Support of the foster family
	Support of school teachers
	Negative effect of primary school teachers
	Job security provided by the teaching profession

As seen in Table 1, the theme *factors effective in choosing teaching profession* was divided into two categories: individual factors and environmental factors. Some opinions about the effective factors in choosing the teaching profession are:

When I chose to be a teacher, I had the dream of going to a university. Meanwhile, I did some sports. One of my friends studying in this field said, "You should go to the university for sure, let's make use of your abilities." Then I took his advice (P1).

Actually, "A" (a child protection worker in a children's home) gave me the idea. Let me put it this way, I met "A" when I was in the 10th grade. Until then, I had no dreams, goals, or anything, like being a teacher (P5).

Practicing Teaching Profession

Categories related to the theme of practicing teaching profession were given in Table 2.

Table 2.

Categories Related to the Theme of Practicing Teaching Profession

Categories	Codes
	Being useful to others

Expectations from the profession	Observing the results of the work Freeing the teaching profession from pressure Increasing the quality of the teaching profession Professional satisfaction
Future plans	No specific plan Postgraduate education Routine preparations to do the job in the best way
Adapting to change	Learning the rules and standards related to the profession Routinely fulfilling the requirements of the profession Support from colleagues With the help of skills gained in state care Keeping up with others Taking care of students
Obstacles	No compelling obstacle was encountered Inability to find resources for events Health problems Teaching branch isn't well known by administrators and other teachers Prejudices about being a care leaver
Future concerns- uncertainties	No specific worry or uncertainty Concerns about applying for postgraduate education Financial issues: anxiety about subsistence Status of the teaching branch (being optional-compulsory) Concerns about the status of the foster family

As seen in Table 2, the theme of practicing teaching profession was divided into five categories: expectations from the profession, future plans, adaptation to change, obstacles and future concerns-uncertainties. Some of the participants' opinions under this theme are:

So, frankly, I don't have a plan for the future (P3).

First a master's degree to improve myself in teaching, but in fact I have suspended it for now, but I suppose I will continue in the future; I am thinking of studying sociology. As a secondary branch... (P5).

Having been in care for years gives you a habit, which makes you adaptable. I can adapt immediately to any condition (P1).

I think people also have a bias towards me because they have too much bias for those who grew up in care or because they don't know them fully. I feel it (P6).

Now let me say it like this: There is no uncertainty in a career, not so much uncertainty (P4).

On the other hand, one of the participants stated that he/she was worried that if the right to employment provided by the state was removed while he/she was in care, he/she would have worries relating to his/her appointment with the right to employment after he/she started working:

I wondered back then if they could get me back again because I had been assigned a special right to employment? I had that thought for a while. Now that thought has disappeared (P7).

Being a Care Leaver

Categories related to the theme being a care leaver were given in Table 3.

Table 3.

Categories Related to the Theme of having been Grown in Care

Categories	Codes
Effects of being a care leaver on teaching	Having been in care helped me to be a teacher
	I couldn't be a teacher if I hadn't stayed in care
	Having stayed in care did not affect my preference for teaching profession
	Having stayed in care affects my teaching approach
Guidance in care	No guidance in care
	There was guidance, but not enough
	The right to employment influenced the guidance in care
	There was guidance
	The influence of friends on one another was in the foreground during guidance
Positive features of being a care leaver	Adaptability to situations
	Ability to act cooperatively
	Problem solving skills
	Resilience against hardships

	Learning to live by the rules
	Learning to be respectful
	Learning to be patient
	Learning to be planned
	Learning to be satisfied with less
Negative features of being a care leaver	Feeling lonely Being shyness Feeling excluded Thinking that the government offers jobs anyway
Longing to be in care	Thinking of working in a children's home Good opportunities are provided in care Sense of gratitude to the state Thought of wanting to be cared for under the same conditions again Being a care leaver should be expressed frankly
Avoidance of being in care	Labeling those in care I don't want everyone to know I am a care leaver

As seen in Table 3, the theme of *being a care leaver* was divided into six categories: effects of being a care leaver on teaching, guidance in care, positive features of being a care leaver, negative features of being a care leaver, longing to be in care, and avoidance of being in care. Some of the participants' opinions on the theme of being a care leaver are as follows:

If I hadn't stayed in a children's home, I wouldn't have had an education today. I owe everything about my education to the children's home (P1).

Frankly, if there hadn't been in a children's home, I wouldn't exist... (P3)

To me, it was what was missing in the children's home. There was not much guidance. I felt the lack of it a lot (P4).

I stayed there with people from many different cultures and families. That's why I have a habit of adaptive behavior (P1).

As a child who stayed in the children's home and experienced that environment, I think now that I can overcome all kinds of difficulties considering that I survived in that environment (P6).

After all, you face difficulties. You make an effort to overcome those difficulties. So you gain resilience (P4).

P4 also states that the financial and material opportunities provided in care were better than those provided by many families:

After all, let me say that most children in family homes don't have the same opportunities as the children in the children's home. Apart from just love and lack of love, I think all of the children staying in children's homes have better opportunities (P4).

Discussion

In a study by Creed et al. (2011), it was stated that care leavers are more likely to prefer less complex social professions than those living with their families. In other words, they may not have very high expectations about their careers (Creed et al., 2011). The same conditions may also be effective in helping care leaver teachers' choose the teaching profession and emphasizing the positive features relatively more than the negative ones. In this study, it is seen that the care leaver teachers chose the teaching profession for intrinsic reasons, such as passion for teaching, academic success, and environmental reasons, such as the guidance of others. Similarly, Ekinçi (2017) stated that intrinsic factors, such as passion, are highly effective in choosing the teaching profession. Furthermore, Çakmak and Kayabaşı (2017) found that the teaching profession was predominantly preferred due to intrinsic factors, such as love of teaching and the profession, educating the next generation and being a role model for students. On the other hand, all but one of the participants stated that they wouldn't be teachers if they were not in care at first. One of the participants emphasized that even if he weren't in care, he would still be a teacher, but being in care facilitated attaining this aim. Thus, it may be argued that having been raised under care is the most important source of support for the participants to realize their career goals, which has also led to a feeling of gratitude to the state among the participants.

One of the reasons for choosing the teaching profession in Türkiye is the job security provided by the state (Işık et al., 2010). In a similar vein, the participants, who were in care before the implementation of employment rights granted by the Social Services Law (before 1988), preferred the profession due to job security. On the other hand, it can be said that "the state will give me jobs anyway" perception has emerged since the right to employment was granted. This situation, as Elmacı (2015) stated, might pose problems for the children about preparing for life and pursuing their education; additionally, it might be an incentive for families to leave their children in children's homes.

Participants in this study made no statement regarding the guidance of the biological family among the effective factors in choosing the teaching profession; however, previous researches has shown that

family has significant influences on an individual when choosing a profession (Ensari & Kalay, 2017; Sarıkaya & Khorshid, 2009; Wiesenbergl & Aghakhani, 2007). Only one participant expressed the positive effects of the foster family. The others, who lacked the guidance of a foster or biological family, stated the inadequacy of the guidance in general when they were in care. This also implies that, despite some limitations (Elmacı, 2010), foster family practice can provide important benefits for the children in care.

Furthermore, as Crawford and Tilbury (2007) stated, child protection workers might not have comprehensive information about the education and vocational options of children in care, and they might care less about the work and education, putting importance on physical care. On the other hand, the findings of this study indicated that although there was some guidance from the child protection workers, friends in children's homes could also influence each other in career issues. Similarly, in a study by Creed et al. (2011), it was revealed that children in care could be affected in their education and career development by their friends, and this effect can be greater than that of parents. What is more, those, who stayed in care, tend to preserve their relationships by hanging out and doing something as part of their daily routine with their friends outside the care system (Doss, 2016). At this point, the effects of the right to employment, granted by the Social Services Law, on the vocational guidance of children in care in Türkiye are worth mentioning. It can be said that care leavers do not always feel motivated enough to keep going with their education due to the job security provided by the government. In addition, child protection workers might think that jobs will be provided to these children by the state, and they might ignore the issues related to their education and careers.

The findings indicated that professional experience had important effects on participants' career adaptability. It is possible to say that as professional experience increases, participants' efforts to adapt to their careers decrease. In a research by Koç (2019), it was emphasized that public school teachers got stuck in routines as their professional experiences increased. In other words, these people cannot use their skills sufficiently, and their efforts to acquire new skills tend to decrease. Similarly, Akpınar and Aydın (2007) found that new teachers considered themselves inadequate compared to senior teachers, which means they need more training than senior teachers when facing the changes in education.

Not surprisingly, growing up in care can affect the teaching approaches of care leaver teachers. They may tend to be more sensitive to the needs and problems of students and make more efforts to help them due to being members of a disadvantaged group in past. With these thoughts, care leaver teachers might strive to demonstrate an inclusive teaching practice for all students by empathizing with the period they were in care. In research by McAllister and Irvine (2002), it was stressed that empathy was an important and necessary factor in working with students from different cultural backgrounds. The abilities of

empathizing with students and recognizing their needs imply that care leaver teachers have caring teacher traits. Furthermore, as found in this study, most participants had a desire to work in children's homes, which suggests that they still have an interest in the child care system and they wish to support children in care as they are care leavers. Therefore, these situations might contribute to participants' becoming caring teachers.

The participants also emphasized exclusion and labeling issues. Although some participants stated that they could frankly say that they grew up in care, some of them wanted to hide it due to labeling. This finding is predominantly consistent with the results of the previous researches. For example, Elmacı (2016) claimed that the labeling of children in care might have negative consequences up to exclusion. In a similar vein, Şimşek et al. (2007) identified labeling as one of the risk factors for children in care. Also, Arnau-Sabatés and Gilligan (2015) found that some care leavers were inclined to hide the information of being cared for so as not to be exposed to the negative effects of labeling in the work environment.

Participants in this study also expressed that being raised in care provided positive features such as adaptability, problem-solving ability, the ability to act cooperatively, and resilience against difficulties. On the other hand, participants associated being a care leaver with negative features such as loneliness, shyness and exclusion. Previous researches on this subject has shown that care leavers might feel more hopelessness (Tümkeya, 2005) and loneliness (Aral et al., 2006), have more emotional and behavioral problems (Şimşek et al., 2007) and have less psychological resilience and problem-solving skills (Sağlam, 2014) than those who grow up with their families. On the other hand, previous researches has also demonstrated that care leavers are generally happy in their work (Arnau-Sabatés & Gilligan 2015), their level of career and work adaptability are better than expected (Elmacı & Milligan, 2020) and they are more successful in adult life (McKenzie, 1997). Greater emphasis on negativity for care leavers may be related to labeling as well as methodological limitations in studies on this subject.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

According to career construction theory, career development is a lifelong process (Savickas, 2005). Therefore, career adaptability efforts continue throughout life. However, based on the findings of this study, it may be argued that as professional experience of participants increases, career adaptability efforts may decrease. The findings also suggested that care leaver teachers might be relatively more adaptable in the confidence dimension. Savickas (2005) associated career confidence with problem-solving competence, struggling and persistence behaviors. In this study, care leaver teachers emphasized the positive effects of growing up in care on problem solving, resistance to difficulties and collaboration skills, which also implies that they have career confidence. Savickas (2005) also argued that false beliefs

about individual and social factors, such as gender, race, and social roles, could often produce internal and external barriers that might hinder confidence development. However, in this study, it was understood that being a care leaver, which could sometimes be a source of prejudice and false beliefs, did not prevent the development of career confidence. Furthermore, although the career concerns of care leaver teachers seem to decrease as their professional experience increases, two things may have the potential to increase their career concerns: the first is to carry out activities related to their profession beyond the school limits, and the second is to work with disadvantaged children. Accordingly, it may be argued that stepping out of routine professional practices and working on issues that are valued may increase career concerns. For example, teachers may be assigned tasks in areas of interest from time to time, except for classical teaching practice. Furthermore, changing workplaces within certain periods can also help teachers get rid of routine.

In terms of control and curiosity, it is possible to say that care leaver teachers with relatively less professional experience are more adaptable. It was seen that the care leaver teachers with relatively less experience might somehow experience some indecision about their careers. As such, it can be said that the career control of the participants is not at a high level. The fact that participants emphasized shyness as a negative feature of growing up in care supports this situation. Because shyness is a feature that can lead to career indecision (Bańka & Hauziński, 2015). Savickas (2005) defined lack of career control as career indecision. As Savickas (2005) emphasizes, care leaver teachers' career control can be increased through decision-making skills training and assertiveness training. Moreover, participants with relatively less experience were more inclined to search for new learning opportunities such as attending trainings and taking a master's degree, which could be regarded as signs of career curiosity. However, they still had indecision about choosing the appropriate learning opportunities.

The right to employment and job security granted by public agencies in Türkiye might prevent care leavers' career curiosity. Savickas (2005) states that the inadequacy of career curiosity causes naiveté about the work world and inaccurate images of the self. Previous research has shown that career curiosity can be increased with various interventions and training programs (Kepir Savoly, 2017; Koen et al., 2012). For this reason, career programs for care leaver teachers can be implemented. Furthermore, it can be said that the training program for adaptation to work life for care leavers by the MFLS is a good practice for care leavers during the school-to-work transition.

Based on the arguments above, it can be recommended that school administrators and other employees working with care leaver teachers first get rid of prejudices and avoid labeling. Considering that they have been taken into care due to problems before administrators should also believe that these people can be successful when appropriate support and conditions are provided. It may be appropriate not to

ask curious questions about the background of those who grew up in care and why they were in care. On the other hand, creating a collaborative working environment can contribute more to the career adaptability of care leavers. Children's homes are one of the support sources for the career adaptability of care leavers. For this reason, not only physical care, but also education and career development should be prioritized in children's homes. In other words, children's homes must be organized as units that support the child's development in all aspects.

Limitations and Further Research Implications

This study is limited to a small group of care leaver teachers. For this reason, failure to carry out a study comparing care leaver teachers with the general population of teachers can be seen as a major limitation. Future research should examine the effects of factors, such as the reasons for staying in care and profession, on the career adaptability of care leavers. In this respect, comparative studies should be conducted on the adaptability differences between care leaver teachers and their non-care leaver counterparts. Furthermore, the career adaptability of care leaver teachers can be better discussed by increasing the number and diversity of the research group and including participants from different cities. In addition, how the right to employment granted in Türkiye affected the care and education of care leaver teachers should be studied.

Conclusion

Growing up in care provided an important support for participants to realize their career goals. Being a care leaver also affected their teaching approaches. Moreover, friends and their social environment had a greater impact on their career choices and career development than their biological families. Care leaver teachers had the self-confidence to overcome career barriers. However, the increase in professional experience might lead to a decrease in career concern, control, and curiosity. Non-routine activities, training programs, and supportive work environment were thought to increase their career adaptability. Being a care leaver is influential in care leavers' choosing a teaching profession and constructing their careers, and to limit the impact of the biological family and shape personality traits. Care leaver teachers might relatively be more adaptable in confidence dimension compared to other dimensions of career adaptability.

As with other individuals' the careers in society, careers of care leaver teachers are constructed through constant interactions between individual and environmental factors. However, in the case of care leavers, child protection workers and social service institutions predominantly replace the role of the biological family, one of the most influential factors in career issues. It is possible to claim that career theories

have mostly been constructed for ordinary individuals in society; therefore, it may be argued that theory development is needed to best portray the career choice and development of care leavers.

Conflict of interest

I have no known conflict of interest to disclose.

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