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Corresponding Author: Temel Kalafat / kalafattemel@hotmail.com

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Psychological Resilience and Self-Esteem Related Components on Career Adaptability and Career Optimism

Temel Kalafat, Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Turkey
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5794-9813>

Abstract

The purpose of the present research was to examine the relationships between career adaptability (CA), career optimism (CO), resilience and self-esteem. A hierarchical regression analysis was specified to determine whether career adaptability and optimism predicted by resilience and self-esteem components. The participants in the research group were 39 males and 138 females with an age range of 21–30 years old ($M = 22.26$). The 150 of the participants were senior college students and 27 of participants were teachers in an exam preparation course. As a result of this study, it was seen that there was no gender difference in terms of career adaptability. However, when the career optimism is examined, it is seen that women draw a more positive picture than men. When the factors affecting career adaptability and career optimism are examined, psychological resilience, self-liking and self-competence behavior are defined as factors affecting career adaptability. However, only self-competence is seen to be effective on career optimism.

Keywords: career adaptability, career optimism, resilience, self-competence, self-liking

1. Introduction

Theorists conducting research on career choice as a developmental process emphasize that there are professional tasks that individuals should achieve in each period (Ginzberg, 1984; Super, 1983; 1990). Successful completion of these developmental tasks and the readiness to make educational and professional choices is explained by the concept of career maturity (Kuzgun, 2000; Super, 1955; Super & Overstreet, 1960). But these definitions are insufficient in the work life flow of today's world. First, the concept of maturity is an age-related definition, but the professional behavior in adulthood varies depending on the environment rather than age (Savickas, 1997). Variables such as job change, having multiple jobs, socio-economic events, illness, accident, workplace closure, temporary dismissals, new structuring and automation in the workplace make it difficult for individuals to choose a profession. At the same time, these changes make it difficult for the individual to work for many years in the same job. Therefore, it is thought that the use of the concept of career adaptability rather than career maturity in adult life will be more accurate (Savickas, 2002; 2005).

When considering career adaptability, psychological counselors should consider two important points. First, the expectations of society where the client is faced (social), the second is how the client responds to these community expectations (individual). The first point pointed out by these two structures is that they achieve their professional development tasks when they are structuring their career (Savickas, 2005). The second point explains the adaptation responses given to complete these tasks. Fugate, Kinicki, and Ashfort (2004) say that optimism, openness to learning, openness to experience, internal locus of control, generalized self-efficacy are adaptive skills that enable the individual to be successful both in business and daily life. The career adaptability behavior that leads individuals to this career-related outcome is explained by the four key components of Savickas (1997; 2002; 2005); concern, control, curiosity and confidence. The specific attitudes, beliefs and competences within each component explain the mechanisms used to achieve basic developmental tasks, to get used to professional transformations and to deal with personal traumas. This attitude, beliefs and competences in theory explain how professional self-concept is synthesized together with professional roles. In this sense, a person's self-liking and self-competence is defined as positive skills in terms of career adaptability and career optimism. The belief that an individual is interested in his/her career and that s/he has control of his/her career affects positive career behaviors (Savickas, 2005). Therefore, in the study, career adaptability and optimism are considered as the basic concepts of the individual's career development behavior.

Concepts such as resilience, self-liking, and self-competence are discussed as concepts that affect career adaptability and optimism because resilience defines adaptation to stressful situations, coping with difficulties, standing despite negative situations (Carver, 1998; Tusaie & Dyer, 2004). Resilient qualities are protective factors that helps people to maintain. Also it is developmental assets that help individuals survive with problems and consist of a range of variables identified in the field including self-esteem, self-efficacy, subjective well-being, self-determination, locus of control and support systems (Flach, 1997). Luzzo ve Hutcheson (1996) found that the individual exhibits more internal control of obstacles and more career retention when s/he takes responsibility. Therefore, self-competence perception of the individual positively affects career behavior. Perrone et al. (2004) found that perception of coping competence (self-confidence in overcoming career barriers) increases positive career attitudes and behaviors. Lent et al. (2001) also found that individuals with high self-efficacy perception perceived fewer obstacles in their career processes. If the perception of coping competence is low, the expectation of obstacle perception and negative outcome expectation increase. High coping competence perception versus low coping competence perception of the difficulty in a task causes the individual to perceive less obstacles to achievement of the task or to be less affected by the obstacles (Bandura, 1986, 1997; Hackett, & Byars, 1996; Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994). Lounsbury, Moffitt, Gibson, Drost and Stevens (2007) found that eight basic personality traits were associated with job and career satisfaction. These personality traits are defined as assertiveness, emotional stability, extraversion, openness, teamwork predisposition, customer-oriented work, optimism and work motivation.

In terms of studies conducted in Turkey, Güner and Emeç (2006) say that optimism increases both academic achievement and life satisfaction. Mercan (2016) examined the effect of positive psychological capital on career adaptation of individuals and found that these positive characteristics increased career adaptation behavior. Positive psychological capital contains features such as resilience, hope, and self-efficacy. In addition to these studies, it is seen that the occupational gap and the feeling of being boreout negatively affect the level of career adaptability and optimism of individuals (Karadal & Erdem, 2018). Therefore, the positive characteristics of individuals seem to increase their career adaptability and optimism. But, in Turkey, the researchs about effects of positive traits on career adaptability and optimism are limited. It is assumed that the correct definition of these positive characteristics that affect

career adaptability and optimism will have a positive effect on the quality of future career programs.

As seen in the studies given above, many personality traits affect the behaviors of the individuals' career adaptation and optimism. Therefore, in this study, the effects of psychological stability, self-liking and self-competence perception on career adaptability and career optimism of those who prepared or practiced the profession of teaching within the challenging economic conditions of today are examined.

2. Method

2.1 Research Design and Sample

The present study was carried out according to descriptive research model but not generalization and carried out with students who randomly selected from Sakarya University, Faculty of Education and teachers of an exam preparation course. The student participants were taken from different classes whether they are voluntary or not. The participants in the research group were 39 males and 138 females with an age range of 21–30 years old ($M = 22.26$). The 150 of the participants were senior college students and 27 of participants were teachers in an exam preparation course. While 116 of the respondents said that they had been worked, even if they worked for a short period of time like as one hour or two hours, 61 of the respondents said that they have no work experience (This question for teachers was asked to cover the period prior to their present work).

First in the study, it was checked that the answers of the research group were normal distribution. For this purpose, skewness and kurtosis values of the responses of the individuals were examined. Skewness Measure of the symmetry of a distribution; in most instances the comparison is made to a normal distribution. A positively skewed distribution has relatively few large values and tails off to the right, and a negatively skewed distribution has relatively few small values and tails off to the left. Skewness values falling outside the range of -1 to +1 indicate a substantially skewed distribution. (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2013). The results obtained from analyzes were found within accepted value range and parametric analyzes were applied.

2.2. Instrument

2.2.1. Career Futures Inventory

This instrument was developed by Rottinghaus, Day and Borgan (2005) and adapted Turkish culture by Kalafat (2012). The scale consists of three subscales these are career adaptability (CA), career optimism (CO) and perceived knowledge (PK). In this study only two subscales (career adaptability-11 items and career optimism-11 items) were used. Cronbach alfa values for subscales were found as .85 for career adaptability, .87 for career optimism. In this study, the Cronbach alpha value was found to be .73 for career adaptability subscale and .84 for career optimism subscale.

2.2.2. Brief Resilience Scale

The Brief Resilience Scale (BRS) was developed to measure the level of individual resilience by Smith et al. (2008). The adaptation of Turkish culture was done by Doğan (2015). The scale consists of one dimension and six items. The Cronbach alfa value for scale was found as .83. In this study, the Cronbach alpha value of the scale was found to be .76.

2.2.3. Self-Liking/Self-Competence Scale

This instrument was developed by Tafarodi and Swan (2001) and adapted Turkish culture by Doğan (2011). The scale consists of two subscales. These subscales are The Cronbach's alpha

coefficient was found to be .83 for the “self-liking” and .74 for the “self-competence”. On the other hand, the test-retest reliability coefficient was found to be .72 for both factors. The scale consists of sixteen items. In this study, the Cronbach alpha value of the self-liking subscale was found to be .90 and for self-competence subscale was found .73.

2.3. Data Analysis

First in the study, descriptive statistics were analyzed and then the level of career adaptability, career optimism, resilience, self-liking and self-competence were analyzed. After these analyzes, it was checked whether the career adaptation, career optimism, resilience, self-liking, self-competence changed depending on gender and job status. Finally, the effects of self-liking, self-competence and resilience on career adaptability and career optimism were examined by multiple regression analysis. The tables for these results are given below.

3. Findings

3.1. T Test Results about Career Adaptability and Career Optimism for Men and Women

The t-test was used to determine whether the levels of career adaptability, career optimism of the participants differ according to gender and whether they work or not. It was examined by multiple regression analysis whether psychological resilience and self-related parts were effective on career adaptability and career optimism. The results are shown below.

Table 1: T Test Table about Comparison of Career Adaptability Levels of Women and Men

	Group	N	Mean	Sd	t	df	p
Career Adaptability	Men	39	41.9487	5.92474	-1.446	174	.470
	Women	137	41.3223	4.38912			

As a result of the t-test conducted for the levels of career adaptability of women and men, it was observed that the levels of career adaptability values of women and men did not differ [$t_{(174)} = -1.446$, $p < 0.05$]. According to these results, there is no difference between the level of career adaptability of men ($\bar{x} = 41.94$) and women ($\bar{x} = 41.32$).

Table 2: T Test Table about Comparison of Career Optimism Levels of Women and Men

	Group	N	Mean	Sd	t	df	p
Career Optimism	Men	39	34.8462	4.67095	1.569	173	.123
	Women	136	36.0809	2.85723			

As a result of the t-test conducted for the levels of career optimism of women and men, it was observed that the levels of career optimism of women and men did not differ [$t_{(173)} = 1.569$; $p < 0.05$]. According to these results, there is no difference between the level of women's career optimism ($\bar{x} = 36.08$) and the level of career optimism of men ($\bar{x} = 34.84$).

3.2. T Test results about Career Adaptability and Career Optimism about working status

Table 3: T Test Table about Comparison of Career Adaptability Levels of Depending on Job Status

	Group	N	Mean	Sd	t	df	p
Career Adaptability	Not Work	61	40.5385	4.83275	1.852	174	.066
	Work	115	41.9257	4.67158			

As a result of the t-test conducted for the levels of career adaptability of depending on whether the participants have already worked in a job. It was observed that the levels of career adaptability of participants differ depending on work [$t_{(174)} = 1.852$; $p < 0.05$]. According to these results, the levels of career adaptation of individuals who have worked before ($\bar{x} = 41.92$) are higher than those who have never worked before ($\bar{x} = 40.53$).

Table 4: T Test Table about Comparison of Career Optimism Levels of Depending on Job Status

	Group	N	Mean	Sd	t	df	p
Career Optimism	Not Work	61	35.7049	3.55126	-.256	174	.799
	Work	115	35.8421	3.29005			

As a result of the t-test conducted for the levels of career optimism of depending on whether the participants have already worked in a job. It was observed that the levels of career optimism depending on work [$t_{(174)} = -.256$; $p < 0.05$]. Career optimism levels of individuals who have worked before ($\bar{x} = 35.84$) did not differ from those who had never worked before ($\bar{x} = 35.70$).

3.3. Results of Multiple Regression Analysis about Resilience and Self-Liking, Self-competence Effects on Career Adaptability and Career Optimism

Before multiple regression analysis was performed, it was tested whether the data set provided the necessary preconditions. In this context, first of all multicollinearity controls between independent variables were made by correlations. The correlation table for multicollinearity is given below.

Table 5: Correlation Results between Independent Variables for Multicollinearity (N = 177)

Variables	1	2	3
1. Self-liking	-		
2. Self-competence	.64***	-	
3. Resilience	.37***	.39***	-

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Two variables with correlations of a value of 0.7 or higher are not required to be used in the same analysis by researchers. In this case, one of the variables is disabled or a new variable is created from the scores of the two highly correlated variables (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019). When the values are examined, it is seen that there is not such a high correlation. An important statistic here is the Durbin Watson statistics. One of the important assumptions of the regression

is that there is no correlation between independent and dependent variables. There is also no correlation between the error terms. The Durbin Watson statistics look at whether there is a correlation between the error terms. This statistic makes an assessment between 0 and 4. If the statistical value is around 2, it is interpreted as no correlation. Values close to 0 indicate high positive correlation, and values close to 4 indicate high negative correlation. In our study, Durbin Watson statistics value is 1.791. So this is around 2 and reveal that there is no correlation between error terms (Dikmen, 2017). For the analysis of other multiple regression assumptions, Normal Probability Plot (P-P), Regression Standardized Residual, Scatter-plot results were checked. The results of the analysis showed that the regression analysis met the prerequisites. Therefore models have been tested.

Table 6: Findings of Regression Analysis about Resilience and Self-Liking, Self-Competence Effects on Career Adaptability

	Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	p
	(Constant)	24.298	2.098		11.583	.000
1	Self-competence	.304	.099	.266	3.076	.002
	Self-liking	.198	.083	.205	2.398	.018
	Resilience	.194	.074	.186	2.628	.009

R = .534 R² = .273, F = 22.976, sig = 0.05

In the above table the value of R² is given. The R² found was 0.273. In other words, three independent variables (resilience, self-liking, self-competence) can explain 27.3 % of the change in the dependent variable (career adaptability). Although this effect is not very high, it is an important result that will help to identify the variables that affect a phenomenon in the social sciences. Regression analysis was performed by using the enter method. All variables were included in the model evaluation at the same time. The results show that self-liking, self-competence and resilience are effective on career adaptability (R = .534, R² = .273, p < 0.05). These variables explain 27.3 % of the total variance.

Table 7: Findings of Regression Analysis about Resilience and Self-Liking, Self-Competence Effects on Career Optimism

	Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	p
	(Constant)	40.781	1.709		23.863	.000
1	Self-competence	-.203	.081	-.250	-2.509	.013
	Self-liking	.022	.067	.032	.322	.748
	Resilience	-.016	.060	-.021	-.261	.794

R = .240 R² = .057, F = 3.489, sig = 0.05

Multiple regression analysis was used to examine the effect of self-competence, self-liking and resilience on career optimism. However, when the results are analyzed, it is seen that these variables explain only 6% of the total variance (R = .240, R² = .057, p < 0.05). Therefore, self-liking, self-competence and resilience variables can be said to have no effect on career optimism.

4. Discussion

In the study, firstly, it was checked whether the levels of career adaptability and career optimism of women and men differed. As a result of this study, it was seen that there was no gender difference in terms of career adaptability and career optimism. Although women are exposed to more stress than men in their work and school life, it is surprising that their career adaptation and optimism does not differ. When the literature is examined, it can be seen that women encounter many personal and social difficulties compared to men (McWhirter, 1997; Mardin, 2000; Şenses, 2001; Emslie & Hunt, 2009) and they become more psychologically stronger by improving their problem-solving skills. In this sense, women are becoming more and more successful in business life (Soysal, 2010). For example, in a study conducted by Türküm (2001) it is seen that female students are more interested in coping with stress, seeking social support, using more types of problems and are more willing to receive psychological help. Similarly, in another gender-related study conducted by Luzzo (1995), it was revealed that career obstacles perceived by female university students were higher than males, but girls' career maturity was higher than that of males. Therefore, it was expected that there would be a gender difference in both features. But it is not quite easy for men as well as being more difficult working conditions for women in Turkey. Therefore both women and men may develop equal degree career adaptability and optimism level.

When the levels of career adaptability and career optimism of individuals are examined in terms of whether they work or not, there is no difference in terms of career optimism. However, it is seen that the levels of career adaptability of individuals with previous work experience are higher than those who do not work. This situation can be explained by the fact that the individuals working in the past have an opinion about the business world, that they test their work skills and trust them. This is because most individuals with previous experience in working are open to experience and active in their careers. In the studies, personality traits such as responsibility and openness to new experiences were found to be positively related to job and career satisfaction (Judge, Heller, & Mount, 2002; Lounsbury et al.; 2003; Lounsbury et al., 2004; Lounsbury et al., 2007; Lounsbury, Steel, Gibson and Drost, 2008).

When the factors affecting career adaptability and career optimism are examined, psychological resilience, self-liking and self-competence behavior are defined as factors affecting career adaptability. However, only self-competence is seen to be effective on career optimism. In this case, personality traits are more important on career adaptability than career optimism. This may be because the optimism of the career is more related to the economic conditions in the environment. For example, Kracke (2002) stated that the students who try to meet their developmental needs with an active and constructivist approach are engaged in more intensive professional discovery. Hamer and Bruch (1997) 's research revealed that the levels of professional maturity of shy university students, including career planning and discovery behaviors, were lower than those of non - shy, and did not have much awareness about their positions in the business environment. Bandura (1997) says that the self-efficacy belief that individuals have in overcoming obstacles or problems is a major contributor to their career success. The same can be assumed in career barriers. Researchers claims that people with strong self-efficacy beliefs in coping with career-related barriers and challenges can achieve a high level of success, even if they expect to encounter barriers and difficulties such as racism and discrimination (Hackett & Byars, 1996). Specially, optimistic people interested in his/her career future, enthusiastically engages in learning that is directly related to that imagined future, and feels comfortable that he/she is on the appropriate path for career success (McIlveen, Becceria, & Burton, 2013). When the studies and obtained results are examined, positive personality traits of individuals have positive effects on career adaptability and career optimism levels of individuals (Tolentino et al., 2014).

5. Conclusion

The study shows that both genders have similar responsibilities in daily life and working life. Therefore, it is necessary to develop appropriate career interventions for both genders in career studies because both gender face difficulties in changing economic conditions. When the results are examined, it is seen that the career adaptability behavior of the individuals with previous work experience is more positive. Therefore, it should be ensured that individuals get to know the labor market and gain experience with early internship programs. At the same time, the results show that positive personality traits have a positive effect on career adaptation and career optimism. Therefore, individuals' being psychologically healthy also explains how to support their career development.

In this sense, school counselors should organize activities to increase the self-confidence of individuals from the pre-school period. These activities should be game-based activities, especially where individuals can use their problem-solving power. At the same time, individuals should be sent to controlled internship activities especially from high school and should have direct knowledge about the business world. Through these activities, individuals will be more confident in the business world and will be more resistant to the difficulties in the career development process.

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