

## University Students' Future Career Opportunities: Career Maturity, Career Decision Making Self Efficacy & Socioeconomic Status

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### Abstract

*Science is expressed as a requirement to improve the life quality in general definition. As a 21st century industrial revolution rapidly developing career maturity and career paths has the potential to affect every aspect of university students. The most important subject in this context should be engaging in a democratic and knowledge-based society. It needs university students to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and in other fields. Therefore, a shift to innovative and effective methods is necessary, so as to raise the attractiveness of science education and scientific careers and boost the interest of university students in STEM and other fields.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Social entrepreneurship, cross sectional interaction, career maturity, youth*

## Üniversite Öğrencilerinin Gelecek Kariyer Fırsatları: Kariyer Olgunluğu, Kariyer Karar Verme Yetkinliği & Sosyoekonomik Statü

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### Öz

*Bilim, genel tanımlamada yaşam kalitesini yükseltmek için bir gereklilik olarak dile getirilmektedir. 21. yüzyılın sanayi devrimi olarak hızla gelişen kariyer olgunluğu ve kariyer yolları üniversite öğrencilerinin her alanını etkileme potansiyeline sahiptir. Bu bağlamda en önemli konu, demokratik ve bilgi temelli bir topluluktur. Üniversite öğrencilerine fen, teknoloji, mühendislik ve matematik (STEM) ve diğer alanlarda kariyer yapmaları gerekmektedir. Bu nedenle, fen eğitiminin ve bilimsel kariyerlerinin çekiciliğini artırmak ve STEM ve diğer alanlardaki üniversite öğrencilerinin ilgisini artırmak için, yenilikçi ve etkili yöntemlere geçiş gereklidir.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler :** *Sosyal girişimcilik, kesitsel etkileşim, kariyer olgunluğu, gençlik*

## Introduction

Career development is a lifelong process which includes physical, cognitive and emotional development (Seligman, 1980). There are many factors that influence the lifelong professional development process. These are usually classified as psychological and social factors. These factors are; employment options and attitudes, science studies and social issues, cross-sectoral perspectives and social entrepreneurship. The mentioned factors interact with each other. The most important feature that affects professional development is the ability of the individual to possess it. However, the development of these skills is only possible with environmental support. If only one variable was allowed without predicting the occupational status of a person, that individual would have the socioeconomic status (SES) of his / her referral family. As a measurement structure, the SES includes individual or several features: parental education level and occupational status, family income. All these factors, as well as corresponding variables such as values, abbreviations and parental incentives, increase or limit the potential professional status of a person (Schlenberg et al, 1984).

SES affects many dimensions of an individual's life (Liu, 2002; Maher & Kroska, 2002); (Brown, 2000; Fouad & Brown, 2000; Turner & Lapan, 2003), including the education and occupation that is provided to this person and achievements. It was reported that background SES was positively associated with individual's occupational status aspirations and expectations (Bigler et al, 2003; Armstrong & Crombie, 2000) educational aspirations and expectations (Bachmann & Dalton, 2002; Trusty, 1998), occupational status attainment (Korupp et al., 2002) and career decision making self-efficacy (Ali et al, 2005). The post-career maturity plan protected the proposal for SES (Creed & Patton, 2003). These studies have shown that SES affects the way individuals perceive their characteristics and influences access to education and professional development.

In this article it is intended to make clear information that would serve as milestones for tailoring interventions on building educational capacities of the young people at universities. By investigating this issue in the specific context of the youngsters we will try to discover and understand

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the ways that university students correlate in terms of cultural and educational dimension. The path of this article will be shaped by two key concepts; namely, career maturity and career decision making self-efficacy.

The focus of this article will be on young people as we believe that they represent one of the most important resources for driving social change in the society.

The main *objectives* of this article are:

1. To explore the nature and structure of social relations between young people and society.
2. To assess the education needs (every need in terms of education such as; communication in education, parental behaviours, personal needs in education either parents or children, briefing about household violence, development of self-confidence of children, success and achievements in tasks, protecting from struggle, healthy marriage, coping with stress, individual features, preparation to school, habits of nutrition, behaviour management in children, etc.) of youth.
3. Through tailor made intervention to improve the prospects of these target groups in better future for themselves, families and community in general.

This article is intended to make clear information that would serve as milestones for tailoring interventions on building educational capacities of the young people at universities. By investigating this issue in the specific context of the youngsters we will try to discover and understand the ways that university students correlate in terms of cultural and educational dimension.

### **Career Maturity**

It was known as "career maturity" and was proposed by Superman 53 years ago (Super, 1955). Features of CM career development. CM is ready to commit to making informed, age-appropriate career decisions and career development tasks (Savickas, 1999). CM's first practical measure was published by John Crites, who later became a colleague. The CM model of Crites (1971), which contains both cognitive and emotional components, has received great interest in the literature of career development. Repre-

senting the CM with the choice of career competencies such as career decision making (CDM) problem solving abilities and skills. The emotional area of CM, the attitudes of the CDM. Patton and Lokan (2001) provided a complete report on the nature of CM and the research on qualities such as age, gender, SES, culture, attention to pull, self-directed commitment, career and career.

The research findings investigating the effect of gender on CM are also doubtful (Alvin and Han, 1983; Lokan, 1984; Luzzo, 1995; Rojewski et al., 1995). In other studies (Fouad, 1988), women were higher only in some of the subscales. However, some studies have reported that men have higher scores in women than women, including Achebe (1982) in Nigeria and Gupta (1987) in India. Other studies did not find a gender difference in CM (Kelly & Colangelo, 1990; Thompson & Lindeman, 1984; Watson et al., 1995).

Even though SES is theoretically considered as an important determinant of professional behavior, most studies have found only a small or no relationship between CM and SES in adolescents at school age (Super & Nevill, 1984), even if they are mostly driven by moderator variables. If a significant relationship is found, it is usually between the SES and the cognitive CT scales (Super & Forrest, 1972). However, some research has determined that the economic background and the differences in participating schools play a much greater role in CM than in racial past (Ansell & Hansen, 1971; Neely & Johnson, 1981).

### **Career Decision Making Self Efficacy**

Hackett and Betz (1981) first made a seminal study on women's professional development to apply Bandura's (1977) proposal on self-efficacy to career behaviours. It showed that career decisions, acquisitions and correction behaviours were subject to the influence of self-efficacy beliefs in both men and women. Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) (Lent et al., 1994, 2000) was introduced to explain the career development of adolescents and young adults in a socio-cognitive behavioural context. Lent et al. (1994) developed the SCCT based on the socio-cognitive theory of Bandura (1982, 1986, 1989) and Hackett cognitive factors influenced the development of career interests, the selection of career goals and professional

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behaviour. Beliefs of self-efficacy are defined as the ability of an individual to "combat the ability to regulate and conduct movements in order to achieve specified performance" (Bandura, 1986). The authors have provided strong support for the effects of self-sufficiency on the individual's career decision-making process since the original study by Betz and Hackett (1981) and Multon et.al, (1991), which attempted to explain the self-efficacy concept for the career.

The criticism of this topic reveals that relational designs exist with the students enrolled in the introductory courses to the universities. (Mathieu et al., 1993; Bergeron & Romano, 1994) found that attitudes toward non-traditional occupations in institutional frameworks of prepared university students (Mathieu et al., 1993), as well as correlations of CDMSE, mathematics self- efficacy, general self-efficacy and global self-esteem, occupational choice models (Giannakos, 1999), occupational barriers (Luzon, 1996), and career maturity (Luzon, 1994), career development (Bozgeyikli, Bacanlı & Dođan, 2009). Typically, these studies show significant relationships between variables related to CDMSE, and when investigating group differences, ethnic minorities and unstable participants report that the level of CDMSE is low.

According to the SCCT, SES is considered to be one of the personal variables of individual factors, including gender, race and SES. SCCT outlines the personal factors such as SES, the development of career interests, the selection of career goals, and how they interact with contextual factors (eg, social support) to influence professional behaviour. Personal and contextual variables do not determine a person's career interests and target activities; but creates a stage for experiences that affect the career development process. For example, a younger person with a lower SES background is more likely to provide less financial support for lower quality education, less professional role model, and post-secondary options than higher SES adolescents (Brown et al., 1999) specific self-sacrificing beliefs and expectation of outcomes for some careers. While this evidence for young adults is influential, very few studies have been done using adolescents.

## Discussion and Conclusion

The socialization process which starts with the birth of the individual includes the periods of childhood, adolescence, youth, adulthood and old age and effects of these periods. The features of one period and the experiences that have been gained in the particular period articulate to the following one and they shape the personality and social development of the individual. In this context, the individual's periodic transitions do not constitute only a physical change process but also a life chain which transforms/changes according to social, psychological and cultural factors. Youth, which is the one of these periods, is an important social category that should be studied because of its being a process in which individual gains the skills of analysing communities socio-cultural structure and projection skills about future. For that reason youth is the research subject of lots of sciences such as; history, ethnography, sociology and psychology. Another reason for studying youth is its feature of being dynamic part of the population. All these features make youth to be one of the most important periods in individual's life.

Population is growing, young people are trying to construct healthy life styles, and they need community based projects in order to make it real. There are also problems related to education and related to find job after education. Corruption is another main challenge because meritocracy is ignored while recruiting young people. There is a lack of citizen engagement and this leads youth to stay unemployed. As a result poverty comes to stage. Youth does not have a sufficient vocational education and they cannot be experts in their careers. Nowadays there is still a political and social uncertainty in the world in globalization pattern. Education and unemployment are main challenges for youth and illiteracy rates are high. The presence of high rates of illiteracy proliferates the unemployment and professional training. Educational system has to change.

Not only especially in social sciences field but also in other fields the concept of social change and transition gained much importance. Human beings who try to control the nature now want to establish dominance over society by analysing it with scientific way. Especially the countries face with underdevelopment is trying to focus on social change and transition intensively because of the fact that economic development depends

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on social change and transition. However this situation is not for only the underdeveloped countries. And while countries are experiencing a particular social change, transition process comes right after this process. Besides every unique part of the society is influenced by social change. Youth is one the most important part of the society because of its dynamic nature. change is messy, confrontational, inevitable and sustainable. We can make this description clear with saying of Heracleitos: "You cannot wash yourself in the same river twice". This shows change has a dynamic nature so that the thing that never changes change itself. Social change lets youth face with some problems for that reason youth finds ways to express themselves: intercultural dialogue is one of the ways that they use.

It should be mentioned that another way of youth express themselves is technology and related to technology, internet Youth can be alienated in internet. Young people want to feel social belonging emotion and trust to others in internet. Understanding has changed because of virtual communities in social media. All individuals want to set an identity in order to belong a social community. Internet and technology help especially youth to construct this identity. However construction of this identity is not an easy issue. These issues are common for transitional societies as well as others. In order to come over these problems the participants offer some solutions: entrepreneurship, knowing well what you want, being coherent, etc.

As a result future research should focus on investigating the subjective experiences of social class and its role in the development of career-related self-efficacy beliefs and areer maturity. One way to understand these experiences in rich detail would be to conduct qualitative investigations that would allow youth to express how they believe that their social class background has influenced their task-specific self-efficacy beliefs and career maturity.

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