

University Students' Perceptions of Unplanned Events as a Factor in the Process of Career Choice

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Abstract

The unplanned events that individuals encounter throughout their lives may either positively or negatively impact their careers. Hence, the authors aimed to reveal what is perceived as chance in university students' career development stories and how these students view the effects of the events perceived by them as chance. The theoretical framework for this study is Happenstance Learning Theory developed by Krumboltz. Participants in this study consisted of a total of 102 senior students, with 68 women (66.7%) and 34 men (33.3%), attending a medium-size public university in southeastern Turkey. The participants were randomly selected. Conventional content analysis among qualitative analysis methods was used in this study. A form including personal information and chance situations in career choice was used to collect data. Findings obtained in the study indicated that chance events in university students' career choices were found in three themes: social factors, individual factors, and political/legal factors. Results of the study were discussed in the light of relevant literature and suggestions for researchers were included.

Keywords: career choice, unplanned events, Happenstance Learning Theory, university students.

An individual puts effort towards their career targets. The career choice process involves situations of designing and making those targets

relatively clearer. In the 21st century with fast access to information, continuous technology development and renewal, and increasing competition, career choice becomes a more complex and challenging process (Edwards & Quinter, 2011). According to Brown (2002), the most ideal career choice happens when an individual's wishes and needs match well. Navin (2009), on the other hand, stated that an individual's discovery of career choices increased their potential career success and satisfaction. Conversely, an inappropriate career choice, may negatively impact both an individual's personal-social and career life. Relevant literature indicates that many factors impact the career choice process that is so important in an individual's life. These factors are variables such as family structure, family members' roles and relationships with one another, family values and attitudes (e.g., Paloş & Drobot, 2010), parents' influence (e.g., Njeri, 2013), family's expectations (e.g., Vurucu, 2010), family's level of income (e.g., Clutter, 2010), parenting styles (Roe & Lunneborg, 1990), siblings and socialization processes in the family (Njeri, 2013), and family background (e.g., Muraguri, 2011). Also, gender differences (e.g., Edwards & Quinter, 2011), social expectations of gender role (e.g., Njeri, 2013), social class expectations of the individual (Friesen, 1981), career expectations (e.g., Njeri, 2013), cultural factors (e.g., Njeri, 2013) may impact the career choice as well. In addition, an individual's expectations (Soyer & Can, 2007), self-realization instinct (Şimşek & Öge, 2007), person-

ality (e.g., Bayraktar, 2009), interest areas (e.g., Mikkonen, Heikkila, Ruohoniemi, & Lindblom-Ylänne, 2009), competencies (e.g., Genç, Kaya, & Genç, 2007), values (e.g., Genç, Kaya, & Genç, 2007), self-concept (Kerka, 2002), sources of social support (Kerka, 2002), peer influence (Fisher & Griggs 1995), ethnicity (McQuaid & Bond, 2004); academic success level (e.g., Ayık, Özdemir, & Yavuz, 2007), environment and opportunities (Borchert, 2002), and role models (e.g., Bandura, 2000) are also among factors that are influential in career choices. As can be seen, the factors influencing the career choice can be internal, external, or interpersonal (Carpenter & Foster, 1977).

Researchers examined the factors impacting the career choice and explain how these factors effect career choice. Some of these theories may include Parsons' Trait-Factor Theory (1909) emphasizing the harmony between an individual and a profession, developmental approaches emphasizing that career choice is a dynamic process (Ginzberg, Ginsburg, Axelrad, and Herma, 1951). Super's (1980) Theory of Life Roles/Lifelong Development emphasizing self-concept and lifespan-life space in career choice, Holland's Career Typology (1959) emphasizing the interaction among an individual's personality and environment, and Lent, Brown, and Hackett's (1994; 2002) Social Cognitive Career Theory emphasizing the influence of individual beliefs on career choice. These theories point to various factors in an individual's career choice and

state that this process continues in a systematic fashion. Career choice as a systematic process has brought along the possible control of leading factors that could impact this process. However, recent studies have examined how uncontrollable chance events can also impact career choices.

Krumboltz (1998) defines chance as an unplanned events and indicated that the situations in which individuals find themselves are partly a function of factors over which they have no control and partly a function of actions that the individuals have initiated themselves. According to Krumboltz (2009) these unplanned events are a normal and necessary component of every career. Chance events refer to 'unplanned, accidental, or otherwise situational, unpredictable, or unintentional events or encounters (Rojewski, 1999). Thus, both the independence and the individual part of the concept of chance are emphasized. However, the concept of chance in Turkish culture mostly refers to the situations obtained outside of knowledge and effort and it is defined in various forms in the socio-cultural context in Turkey. For instance, statements such as *being on a lucky streak*, *being in luck*, *I would not be in this condition if I were lucky*, and *I was born lucky* are often used. The individual may feel the need to use these words to express situations in which she/he cannot give meaning or control to a certain extent. So, the chance factor, used as a source of reference for an individual to evaluate a situation, can occasionally be considered protective and, at other times, a risk factor. That is to say, when the individual is able to consider the situation positively and turns it into an opportunity, the chance factor could be protective and supportive. Otherwise, the chance factor becomes a risk factor for an individual, particularly during the career choice process. An

individual occasionally may view the chance factor from the destiny perspective (Turkish Language Association, 2019), with belief that everything is pre-destined and individuals are not able to change this predestination, and leave the responsibilities unfulfilled. In Turkey, the predestination perspective of people, particularly with low SES (Oge, 2014) is considered to potentially impact an individual's career life. Hence, examining how the chance factor is viewed, how it impacts an individual's life, and the aspects through which it impacts it are important. Also, the concept of chance was cited in various names such as unplanned chance, unplanned events, serendipity events, etc. in the relevant literature. As it is viewed within the Happenstance Learning Theory (Krumboltz, 2009), the chance factor is considered to be about "unplanned events" in the current study.

Recent studies on career counselling have been observed to include various dimensions of the chance concept (Hirshi & Valero, 2017; Schlosser, McPhee, & Forsyth, 2017; Urbanaviciute, Kairys, Paradnikė, & Pociute, 2019) and theories explaining the chance factor have emerged (See: Borg et al., 2006; Bright & Pryor, 2005; Krumboltz, Levin, & Levin, 2010; Mitchell, Levin, & Krumboltz, 1999; Pryor, 2016; Schlesinger & Daley, 2016). Among those theories, Krumboltz' theory of Happenstance Learning Theory is often mentioned and supported by research. The theory of happenstance learning has evolved from Krumboltz's (2009) learning theory of career counseling and is foremost form of Mitchell, Levin and Krumboltz's (1999) Planned Happenstance Theory. Similar to the importance that Mitchell et al. (1999) attributes on the chance factor in career development, one of the proposition of Happenstance Learning Theory is that

clients can learn to engage in exploratory actions as a way of generating beneficial unplanned events (Krumboltz 2009). Similar to the importance that theories attribute on the chance factor in career development, Brights and Pryor (2005) and Pryor (2016) examined unplanned events in career process through their Chaos Theory of Careers. With this theory, they emphasized that clients might experience negative emotions and attitudes when facing events that cannot be controlled by them and career advisors needed to show them how to control chance events.

In addition to explanations by all those theorists, studies on unplanned events; in other words, studies testing statements about chance and examining the relationships between chance and career development are also available. For instance, in a study on skills recommended by Mitchell et al. (1999) and later works of Krumboltz (2009) to be used to manage chance (Ahn, Jung, Jang, et al., 2015), high level professional identity statuses of high school students in South Korea were found to be associated with curiosity, persistence, flexibility, optimism, and risk taking. In other words, adolescents with skills like curiosity, persistence, flexibility, optimism, and risk taking tend to more positively perceive their own professional identities. In another study, with planned happenstance career education used, this type of education was found to increase university students' career competencies (Chien, Fischer & Biller, 2006). In another research with Swedish adolescents (Hirschi, 2010), the majority of participants were found to be influenced by chance events on their transition from compulsory school to vocational education or high school. Results of another study revealed that when college students have enough planned happenstance skills to dis-

cover unexpected career opportunities, their career engagement level affects their career decision certainty through career decision self-efficacy (Kim, Jang, Jung, et al., 2014). As can be seen in those studies, unplanned events may have a functional role in an individual's career choice process.

Bright, Pryor, Chan, and Rijanto (2009), who wanted to consider the effect of chance events on university students' career development and the students' ability to control those, stated in their study that high-impact and low-controlled chance events had the highest-level influence on students' career development. However, the research revealed that negative chance events were more influential on university students' career development. Similarly, in another study (Bright, Pryor, & Harpham, 2005) on the relationship between locus of control and perception of influence the chance events, students with external locus of control, among high school and university students, were found to emphasize the chance events in their career development more than the students with internal locus of control. In addition to that, approximately 70% of the participants in the study stated that their career choice was influenced by chance events. Krumboltz (2011) reported numerous stories of people whose actions enabled them to create and benefit from unplanned events. Also, in a study on university students' reasons for choosing majors, the chance factor accounted for 6% of the influence on selecting specific university majors (Korkut-Owen, Kepir, Özdemir et al., 2012). In those studies with university students, chance could be considered to impact the career choice process.

In relevant literature, studies on the significance of chance on the career choice processes of various samples are also available. In Bets-

worth and Hansen's (1996) study, senior individuals' career stories were examined and careers of two thirds were found to be impacted by serendipitous events. Scott and Hatalla (1990) found that the career development of a majority of female university graduates was found to be impacted by chance. In Williams, Soeprapto, Like, Touradji, Hess, and Hill's study (1998), female scholars' career process and development were found to be impacted by chance and unexpected events. However, the study results indicated that internal characteristics (e.g., ability to take risks and self-confidence) and external characteristics (e.g., strong support system and external barriers) enabled women to convert unexpected events into advantages. As can be seen, some studies show that chance factors could be influential based on gender.

In sum, the chance factor could be considered to play a defining role in individuals' career choice processes. Hence, it is important for individuals to be aware of the chance events and to be able to manage and convert them into advantage in their career development, in terms of a healthy career development process. Although various studies emphasizing the importance of chance are available abroad, it can be said that no study examining the concept of chance and its effects has been found in Turkey as it is a new topic. Particularly in developing countries such as Turkey, factors such as renewed legal processes and policies in employment and testing or the education system may lead to unexpected changes in individuals' career choices. Also, the chance factor is a method of explanation for many individuals to use in events encountered in their lives in Turkey. Thus, how individuals perceive those unexpected events must be determined and preventive studies must be provided in order for them

to effectively cope with those events. Particularly determining the events that individuals perceive as chance events is considered to be important in effectively providing career and employment services as chance is a new concept related to career development in Turkey. Later, finding out about those perceptions is considered fundamental for training for skills to cope with chance events. Thus, we aimed to determine what events are considered chance events by university students in career development. The current study seeks answers for the following research question for this purpose:

1. What are the events that university students perceive as unplanned events in their career development stories?

Method

Research Design

In the current study examining what the chance factors are in university students' career development stories and how those unplanned events are perceived, conventional content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005), a commonly-used qualitative data analysis method with coding categories directly driven from the text data, was used.

Participants

Participants consisted of 102 senior students attending a medium-size public university in southeastern Turkey. 68 (66.7%) were females and 34 (33.3%) were males. Thirteen (12.75%) majored in psychological counselling and guidance, 43 (42.15%) in sociology, and 46 (45.10%) in primary school teaching. Data for the study were collected during spring

2016 and 2017 academic terms. The participants were randomly selected.

Tools

The form used with the participants in this study consisted of two sections. The first section in the form included some demographic information (e.g., gender, years in academic studies, and major). The second section in the form in order to examine participants' experiences associated with the chance factor, the question "What type of unplanned experiences, with positive and negative effects, did you have in your career choice? Please elaborate on them" was asked. Open-ended questions explored learners' thinking processes and as such were difficult to analyze. However, they can best be analyzed by qualitative methods, especially by summarizing the responses to the questions (Mosothwane, 2002).

Procedure

Participants of the study were informed through informed consent form about the purpose of the study. After data collection, conventional content analysis method was used for analysis. Four researchers, three of whom were researchers of this research and one of them were non-researchers, first examined the data. It was accepted that there was no power struggle due to the similarity of the educational levels of the researchers. Data were analyzed separately, then separate code lists were created. After a common coding list was decided, the researchers completed the coding process together. Sub themes were created by studying the codes. Apart from the study, codes, themes and sub-themes were examined by the researcher. Finally, the necessary mergers and

separations were made by the researchers and defined by the researchers.

Results

The results of the content analysis in this study showed that 33 participants did not have experiences associated with chance. Sixty nine of the participants stated that they had experiences considered unplanned events and the analysis indicated that those experiences fell under three themes such as social factors, individual factors, and political/legal factors. Themes and associated sub-themes were summarized in Figure 1.

As can be seen in Figure 1, based on the explanations by the participants on the concept of unplanned events, three themes (i.e., individual, social, and political and legal factors) and 11 sub-themes were obtained. These themes, associated sub-themes, and codes are explained below.

Subthemes and Codes Associated with the Social Factors Theme

Frequencies associated with the participants' considerations of unplanned events with sub-themes and

codes of social factors are included in Table 1. An overview of social factors theme indicated that this theme was mentioned by the participants 43 times.

A review of Table 1 shows that social factors themes included four sub-themes. The first sub-theme is one of the codes associated with the effect of a colleague; having a colleague around was stated three times. A review of the impact of colleagues shows that having a colleague around was mentioned three times and coming across a colleague during the career choice phase was mentioned once.

A review of the immediate environment sub-theme shows that family impact was mentioned 14 times. The impact of relatives was stated four times. The impact of teachers and friends was stated four times each. In another sub-theme, the impact of the school counselor was stated three times. Finally, codes for the expectation of those around and the negative view of the profession by those around were stated once each.

A review of demographics and family characteristics indicated that social-economic status was mentioned

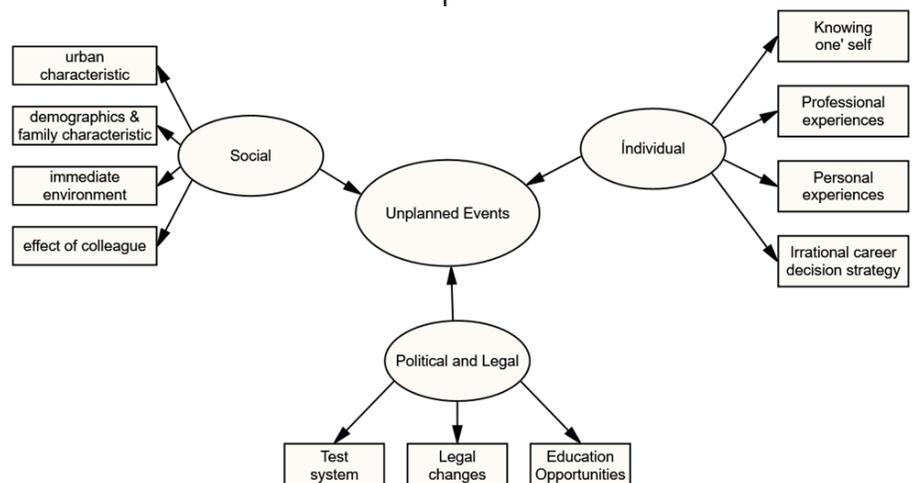


Figure 1. Participants' responses associated with unplanned events

Table 1

Participants' Responses Associated with Social Factors Theme

| Themes | Sub-themes | Code | f |
|----------------|---|--|-----------|
| Social Factors | The effect of a colleague | Having a colleague around | 3 |
| | | Coming across a colleague during career choice | 1 |
| | Immediate environment | Family impact | 14 |
| | | Relative impact | 4 |
| | | Teacher impact | 4 |
| | | Friend impact | 4 |
| | | School counselor impact | 3 |
| | | Expectation of those around | 1 |
| | Demographics and family characteristics | Negative view of the profession | 1 |
| | | Social-economic status | 2 |
| | | Family with no educated member | 1 |
| | Urban characteristics | Loss of a family member | 1 |
| | | Father's sickness | 1 |
| | | The location of the town | 2 |
| | | The urban culture | 1 |
| Total | | | 43 |

Table 2

Participants' Responses Associated with Individual Factors Theme

| Themes | Sub-themes | Code | f |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| Individual Factors | Knowing one's self | Personal development | 5 |
| | | Personal characteristics | 3 |
| | | Value | 2 |
| | | Interest | 2 |
| | | Ability | 1 |
| | Professional experiences | Past work experiences | 1 |
| | | Voluntary work | 1 |
| | | Personal experiences | 3 |
| | Irrational career decision strategy | Test anxiety | 3 |
| | | Sickness | 1 |
| | | Receiving psychological help | 1 |
| | | Being caught when cheating | 1 |
| | | Being uninformed about one's major | 2 |
| | Choosing a major unwished for | 1 | |
| | Total | | |

two times. Family with no educated member, loss of a family member, and father's sickness were each found to be mentioned once. Finally, the urban characteristics sub-theme was included under the theme of social factors. A review of the urban characteristics sub-theme shows that participants mentioned the urban characteristics of

the town where they attend school two times and the urban culture once.

Subthemes and Codes Associated with the Individual Factors Theme

Frequencies associated with the participants' considerations of unplanned events with sub-themes and

codes of individual factors are included in Table 2. An overview of the individual factors theme indicated that this theme was mentioned by participants 25 times.

Personal development under knowing one's self as a sub-theme of individual factors was mentioned five times and personal characteristics were mentioned three times. Also, the values and interest were mentioned two times each and ability was mentioned once. In addition, past work experiences and voluntary work under the sub-theme of professional experience were mentioned once each.

Test anxiety among the codes under the sub-theme of personal experiences was mentioned three times by the participants. Sickness, receiving psychological help, and being caught when cheating were mentioned once each. Being uninformed about one's major under the sub-theme of irrational career decision strategy was mentioned two times by the participants. Choosing a major unwished for was mentioned once.

Subthemes and Codes Associated with the Political and Legal Factors Theme

Frequencies associated with the participants' considerations of unplanned events with sub-themes and codes of political and legal factors are included in Table 3. An overview of the political and legal factors theme indicated that this theme was mentioned by the participants 31 times.

University entrance examination score under the current test system sub-theme was mentioned 22 times. The code of change in appointment criteria under the legal changes sub-theme was mentioned three times. Similarly, system change was mentioned for three times. The right to be appointed beyond one's area and

Table 3

Participants' Responses Associated with Political and Legal Factors Theme

| Themes | Sub-themes | Code | f |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|--|-----------|
| Political and Legal Factors | Test system | University entrance examination score | 22 |
| | | The right to be appointed beyond area | 1 |
| | Legal changes | Change in appointment criteria | 3 |
| | | System change | 3 |
| | Education opportunities | Revoking the right to pedagogy formation education | 1 |
| | | The Farabi scholarship | 1 |
| Total | | | 31 |

revoking the right to pedagogy formation education were mentioned once each. The Farabi scholarship under education opportunities sub-theme was mentioned once.

Discussion and Conclusions

A review of unplanned events, thought to play a role in career stories by university students, showed that they fall under three categories: individual, social, and political/legal. Similar to the current study, Betsworth and Hansen (1996) also found in their research that the most frequently mentioned themes in students' career stories included the effects of professional or personal connections, unexpected developments, marriage and family, encouragement by others, and previous (voluntary) work. From this point of view, many areas related to individuals are effective in career choice.

A review of participants' responses under social factors theme shows that a great majority of them falls under the sub-theme of influence in the immediate surrounding. It is not unexpected that participants who are affected in their immediate environment during the career choice process would interpret that as chance. That is because social structure in Turkey is mostly collectivist tendency (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2013) and dependent behavior, based on the influence by

this structure, is considered normal (Türküm, 2005; Yıldırım & Ergene, 2003). When making a career decision, an individual may be influenced, based on the understanding of *being us* by the lives of the people that s/he observes and adopts as models. Also, receiving or providing advice may be considered among the behaviors frequently encountered in Turkey. Hence, even in a process such as career choice, elderly people are consulted about their experiences and their guidance is taken seriously. For instance, a female participant attending in the sociology department stated the following about the influence of a teacher in career choice:

...In the first year, my score was enough to let me enroll in the philosophy department; however, one of my teachers was a graduate of philosophy and s/he advised me to prepare for one more year to enroll in sociology, a larger major. I was convinced and consequently I enjoyed studying in that department; I had the greatest luck...

A male participant in the sociology department stated the following about the influence in the immediate environment: "... I received the most influence from my uncle. When I first passed the university entrance test, he told my father about his disapproval of my education and this made

me study even more. That was the most important moment in my life." This male participant re-structured the negative influence into positive impact. Another male participant stated the following about his uncle's positive influence on his career choice:

I did not have the slightest idea of sociology until the day of choosing a major. My father was sick. I met my uncle whom I saw maybe once a week or a month and had a chat. That conversation is the one making me to fill in this form today...

As can be seen in these examples, experiences of those in the immediate environment may be considered effective in the lives of individuals' career decision.

A female participant, considering the presence of a professional in the immediate environment as chance, stated the following about her uncle's positive impact on her career choice: "I thought I am lucky because my uncle had the same profession. I could learn about every bit of this profession through him." In this example, an individual received a direct or indirect support from someone in their immediate environment during career development process and the career process was mostly shaped based on this. Another female participant had the following to say:

When I first took the university entrance test, I scored 415. Compared to my friends, that was a very successful score. However, my older sister was attending school and my father said that he did not have enough financial means to support both of us. Therefore, I preferred Turkish Language and Literature at Open Education Faculty and took classes for a year. Due to anxiety later

because there could be something wrong again, I did not do well in the test; I scored 310 on the re-take. With guidance from my teachers, I applied to sociology department. I had a different preference but life conditions made me choose this major. Later, when I began to attend, I thought luckily I was there and fortunately, all those negative things happened. I feel lucky.

As can be seen in the example, the participant considered the inability to attend university due to her father's financial constraints in the first year as a negative life experience; however, because she was pleased with her major then, she had positive consequences through a negative experience.

Some studies on the impact of family members' and relatives' qualities in an individual's immediate environment on his/her career choice, as in experiences similar to those in the examples, are available (Fisher & Griggs 1995; Levine & Hoffner, 2006; Mau & Bikos, 2000; Njeri, 2013). Kerka's (2002) study showed that support received from parents and close relations was influential on individuals' career choice. In addition, variables such as family expectations that could be included among an individual's social factors (Kıyak, 2006; Vurucu, 2010), family SES (Arslan, 2002; Clutter, 2010; Kuzulu & Koçak, 1997; Vurucu, 2010), parenting styles (Roe & Lunneborg, 1990), siblings and family socializations processes (Njeri, 2013), and family background (Agarwala, 2008; Muraguri, 2011) have been found to influence individuals in career choice process. Particularly, a review of studies conducted in Turkey (Sürücü, 2008; Ulaş & Yıldırım, 2015) shows that family and close relationships factors are among the variables most influential

on individuals' important decision such as career decisions. In the current study, individuals were asked about the unplanned events that they could not control. In the situation, particular to Turkey, participants were found to describe the impact of their social circles on their career path as uncontrollable events. As Turkish culture is more focused on external control, it is an expectable conclusion that they thought to have no control on external career directions (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2013). In other words, external consideration is accepted and supported more or interpreted in a faster manner.

Some of the participant responses fall under the *individual factors* theme. A male participant stated the following about uncontrollable events in his life:

While attending a previous university, I began to participate in voluntary activities. We would go to rural areas to help children prepare for social life. We would also tutor them. Then, I knew that I was attending the wrong department and left that university; I transferred to classroom teaching. If things did not develop this way, I would have a job earning more money but I would have an unhappy life.

A review of the participant's statement shows that past voluntary activities enabled him to notice his own individual characteristics and he transferred to a different major leading the way to a more matching job for himself. A female participant stated the following about the negative impact of test anxiety on her: "*particularly before the Higher Education Entrance Test (HEET), I was sick due to stress following studying much; I had never been so sick. I took the test in*

that condition. Books nauseated me. I still cannot say I like them much." Also, individual characteristics such as sickness are considered uncontrollable events for individuals.

A review of the relevant literature shows that variables such as individuals' personality (Aytekin, 2005; Bayraktar, 2009; Kerka, 2002), interest areas (Erdemir, 2010; Genç, Kaya & Genç, 2007; Kerka, 2002; Malakçioğlu, 2009; Mikkonen, Heikkilä, Ruohoniemi et al., 2009), abilities (Genç, Kaya, & Genç, 2007; Malakçioğlu, 2009; Kerka, 2002), values (Bayraktar, 2009; Genç, Kaya, & Genç, 2007), self-concept (Kerka, 2002), and achievement level (Ayık, Özdemir, & Yavuz, 2007; McQuaid & Bond, 2004) are examined and influential on career choice. In the current study, participants stated that they were not able to control some individual factors and those factors impacted their career choice. It can be said that this finding in the study is parallel to some study results in the relevant literature. In other words, the individual factors in participants impact their career developments and they also perceive that they cannot control this impact. Also, Bright, Pryor, & Harpham (2005) stated that an individual factor such as the locus of control was a variable associated with reporting chance events in career choice. This could be based on, as indicated previously, cultural orientation as well as lack of knowledge about individual factors that could impact individuals' careers. A review of efforts associated with career counselling, particularly in Turkey, shows that mostly services focusing on test application and sharing test results are provided (Korkut, 2007). In other words, rather than assisting individuals to successfully complete their career development tasks, experts in this area provide both individuals and families with limited services during

the career choice phase. Hence, participants may not have an adequate number of opportunities to notice and control their individual factors.

The last theme included in the current study is about political/legal factors. Individuals considered the changing system or rights obtained in Turkey as *chance*. A male participant stated the following about the impact of the system of preferences changing during high school years on him:

I was a numerical learner in high school...When I took the Higher Education Entrance test, I had timing issues due to anxiety based on taking the test for the second time. Therefore, I failed the Science section...what I consider chance is about the provided opportunity to choose a major beyond area preferences. Hence, I enrolled in psychological counseling-guidance. I aimed at law in the beginning; however, now I think I fortunately did not get it.

Occasionally changing educational policies in Turkey may pose a vague situation for students. In the above example, the individual could not previously imagine choosing a major beyond his area; however, he was able to re-structure it as chance. For instance, in a study conducted by Ozsari (2008), it was found that students' anxieties increased more due to unclear test content in the Public Personnel Selection Examination (PPSE), a test given to select teachers among candidates to be employed in public schools, no correspondence between test content and school curriculum, and vague numbers of appointment. Similarly, Çelikten, Şanal, and Yeni (2005) stated that students experience anxiety about success in PPSE as well as whether or not they will be appointed to a position.

A male participant in the current study stated the following about the impact of the changing scoring system on his career: *"As I was a graduate of teacher training high school, I had some bonus points on my preference for teaching and I picked that major. Without those bonus points, I cannot know where I would end up."* For students at teacher training high schools when choosing the teaching profession, receiving some bonus points, in Turkey, could be considered a special right. This right allows students' university preferences to be directed towards a different and higher position. For students in those schools, this is a positive experience; in other words, graduating from such schools increases students' options. On the other hand, a female participant emphasizing the favorableness in university entrance tests stated the following about picking a major based on scores and not ending up in a department as she wished: *"What was negative about career choice was inadequate score to attend the department I wished for."* A male participant emphasizing the impact of scores in university entrance tests stated the following about picking a major based on his score: *"My career choice was not difficult. I took the university test; the results were announced and I picked whatever was available based on my score..."* Another male participant emphasizing the scores stated the following: *"I was lucky in my career choice. This job required high scores when I included my preferences. However, later, out of luck, the required scores were reduced and I got this major."* In Turkey, although the occasional changes that cannot be estimated and can be fast developing in testing system in education impact the students negatively, these changes can occasionally increase students' opportunities and the unfavorable situation may medi-

ate into favorableness. Studies (Korkut-Owen, 2008; Korkut-Owen, Kecipir, Özdemir et al., 2011) conducted in Turkey found that often changing education and legal processes impacted individuals' career development. Individuals are expected to perceive those conditions and events as uncontrollable events because individuals cannot be influential on changing education and legal processes.

Finally, while most of the participants noticed chance events in their career development ($n = 69$), it was observed that some of them did not ($n=33$). As the legal and educational process has changed frequently in developing countries such as Turkey was observed, it was surprising that the 33 of the participants did not indicate that chance events affect their career development. Krumboltz (2009) indicated that unplanned events are a constant in life. Instead of letting these events go by, career counselors can help students learn to experience unplanned events and sensitize them to recognize the potential opportunities available to them (Krumboltz, Foley, & Cotter, 2013). From this result of study, it can be said that some participants were less conscious about unplanned events and they may need help to be more conscious one becomes of unplanned events, the more one can be attentive to potential opportunities.

In conclusion, a review of those conditions and events perceived by the participants as unplanned events shows that those conditions in fact can be controlled. Krumboltz (2011) indicated three steps in controlling unplanned events: (1) Before the unplanned event, you take actions that position you to experience it, (2) During the event, you remain alert and sensitive to recognize potential opportunities and, (3) After the event, you initiate actions that enable you to benefit from it. Since happenstance is

not passive in this theory, but instead something that is achieved through actions and thoughtful reflection (Krumboltz, 2009). However, considering that participants attended a university in eastern Turkey and mostly lived in the same area, they can be considered to have more collectivist tendency and not to have improved those competencies adequately. Thus, participants are found to consider themselves passive during the career development process by perceiving some actually controllable social and individual factors as uncontrollable. Based on this, planning some preventive and rehabilitative interventions can be recommended during childhood in order to develop competencies required to transform unplanned events into opportunities in Turkey.

Limitations

Despite the important contributions of the present study noted above, it has a few limitations. In qualitative research, research quality influencing by the researcher's personal biases is one of the limitations (Anderson, 2010). Even though independent researchers coded the data, one should consider the biases of the researchers in interpreting the results. Also, it should be noted that the participants of the study composed of university students who receive education at a mid-size university. Therefore, this limitation should be considered when interpreting the findings, as the findings cannot be representative of other people such as young adolescents, adults or individuals that have not received a university education.

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