

# Predicting Career Adaptability and Optimism among University Students in Turkey: The Role of Personal Growth Initiative and Socio-Demographic Variables

Yagmur Soylu, Emir Ozeren, Erol Esen, Digidem M. Siyez, Ozlem Belkis, Ezgi Burc, Gülce Demirgurz

**Abstract**—The aim of the study is to determine the predictive power of personal growth initiative, socio-demographic variables (such as sex, grade, and working condition) on career adaptability and optimism of bachelor students in Dokuz Eylul University in Turkey.

According to career construction theory career adaptability is viewed as a psychosocial construct, which refers to an individual's resources for dealing with current and expected tasks, transitions and traumas in their occupational roles. Career optimism is defined as positive results for future career development of individuals in the expectation that it will achieve or to put the emphasis on the positive aspects of the event and feel comfortable about the career planning process. Personal growth initiative (PGI) is defined as being proactive about one's personal development. Additionally, personal growth is defined as the active and intentional engagement in the process of personal.

A study conducted on college students revealed that individuals with high self-development orientation make more effort to discover the requirements of the profession and workspaces than individuals with low levels of personal development orientation. University life is a period that social relations and the importance of academic activities are increased, the students make efforts to progress through their career paths and it is also an environment that offers opportunities to students for their self-realization. For these reasons, personal growth initiative is potentially an important variable which has a key role for an individual during the transition phase from university to the working life. Based on the review of the literature, it is expected that individual's personal growth initiative, sex, grade, and working condition would significantly predict one's career adaptability.

In the relevant literature, it can be seen that there are relatively few studies available on the career adaptability and optimism of university students. Most of the existing studies have been carried out with limited respondents. In this study, the authors aim to conduct a comprehensive research with a large representative sample of bachelor students in Dokuz Eylul University, Izmir, Turkey. By now, personal growth initiative and career development constructs have been predominantly discussed in western contexts where

individualistic tendencies are likely to be seen. Thus, the examination of the same relationship within the context of Turkey where collectivistic cultural characteristics can be more observed is expected to offer valuable insights and provide an important contribution to the literature.

The participants in this study were comprised of 1500 undergraduate students being included from thirteen faculties in Dokuz Eylul University. Stratified and random sampling methods were adopted for the selection of the participants. The Personal Growth Initiative Scale-II and Career Futures Inventory were used as the major measurement tools. In data analysis stage, several statistical analysis concerning the regression analysis, one-way ANOVA and t-test will be conducted to reveal the relationships of the constructs under investigation.

At the end of this project, we will be able to determine the level of career adaptability and optimism of university students at varying degrees so that a fertile ground is likely to be created to carry out several intervention techniques to make a contribution to an emergence of a healthier and more productive youth generation in psycho-social sense.

**Keywords**—Career adaptability, career optimism, personal growth initiative, university students.

Özlem Belkis, Dokuz Eylul University, Izmir, TURKEY (e-mail: ozlem.belkis@deu.edu.tr).

Yagmur Soylu is with Guidance and Counseling Programme, Ege University, Izmir, TURKEY. (e-mail: yagmur-haci@hotmail.com).

Emir Ozeren, Dokuz Eylul University, Izmir, TURKEY (e-mail: emirozeren@yahoo.com).

Ezgi Burc, (e-mail: ezgiburc@gmail.com).

Gulce Demirgurz (e-mail: gulce\_43@hotmail.com).

Erol Esen (e-mail: midfielder\_1912@hotmail.com).

Digidem M. Siyez is with Guidance and Counseling Programme, Dokuz Eylul University, Izmir, TURKEY. (e-mail: didem.siyez@gmail.com).