

Views on Career Awareness: The Example of Primary School Parents

Aleyna KARAAĞAÇ

ORCID: 0000-0001-9410-4713

Necmettin Erbakan Üniversitesi, Ahmet Keleşoğlu Eğitim Fakültesi, Rehberlik ve Psikolojik Danışmanlık ABD, Konya, Türkiye, aleynakaraagac0@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

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The aim of this study is to describe the views of parents of primary school students about career awareness. For this purpose, phenomenological approach, one of the qualitative research methods, was used. Data were collected from a total of 15 parents, 10 female and 5 male, by interview method. 5 interview questions were created as a result of the literature review on the subject in order to summarize the views on career awareness. Content analysis method was used in the process of analyzing the data collected through the interview form filled in face-to-face interviews. The answers received as a result of the analyzes were categorized under the themes of "Career Development", "Positive Contributions to Career Development", "Interests", "Decision Making Skills", "Career Decision" in the results section. As a result, although the parents who constitute the sample are sensitive about their children's interests and abilities, it was observed that their awareness level about the career, which is one of the basic assumptions of the developmental career theory, is a lifelong process. The results of the research were discussed within the framework of the literature and suggestions were presented regarding the results.



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INTRODUCTION

The environment in which individuals spend most of their time during the day, their social areas and the way they make sense of life are largely associated with their profession and business life. It is possible to come across many definitions of the concept of career. According to the TDK Contemporary Turkish dictionary, career is defined as “The stage, success and expertise achieved in a profession with time and work” (Turkish Language Institution Dictionaries, 2022). The concept of career generally emphasizes advancement in the profession and moving upwards in the management hierarchy (Sümer, 2008). On the other hand, instead of limiting the definition of career to the concept of work/study, it would be more beneficial to see career as a lifestyle concept (Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2013).

In addition to meeting physiological needs by earning money, the basis of acquiring a profession is the satisfaction of social and psychological needs (Yeşilyaprak, 2012). Career has been defined by the developmental career theorist Donald Super as the combination and sequencing of the roles an individual plays in the business world throughout his or her life (Super D. E., 1980). Career; is the combination of activities required by all life roles that a person has at any given moment in his life (Büyükbayraktar et al., 2018).

In another definition, the concept of career; The sequence of events occurring throughout a lifetime is explained as a process that includes progress, pauses and regressions in the general pattern and developmental line of the individual, especially in the roles of work and profession, formed by the influence and follow-up of his professional and other life roles (Zunker, 2016). Parallel to this definition, another definition emphasizing that career continues throughout life is as follows: The concept of career, which is a life-long dynamic process, can not only be defined by choosing a profession or starting the profession, but also its development in all tasks including before, after and during the career choice. (Kuzgun, 2000).

Taking steps with a high level of awareness and awareness about these concepts, which have such a critical place in people's lives, emphasizes the importance of the concept of career awareness. Interest, talent, personality traits and professional value, which are the psychological factors that determine career development; family, socioeconomic level, which are sociological factors; Besides gender and political factors (Pişkin, 2012), career awareness is also an important determinant. It is possible for individuals to have knowledge in a certain field related to their careers alone. In addition to a certain level of interest and knowledge, awareness is also important for the career development process. Career awareness is especially important in the early stages of career development (Nasir & Lin, 2012).

Career awareness was stated by Eliason and Patrick (2008) as expressing an individual's awareness of current career opportunities and opportunities they have. This awareness; education requirements, skills, occupations available, the work environment, and the regulations and expectations of a particular field or industry. Career awareness should be developed in children from an early age. Career awareness is not only a job choice, but more than that, the child's need for lifelong continuity in choosing and determining a career (Keumala, Nurihsan, & Budiamin, 2018).

Today, when the literature and practices related to the concept of career are examined, it is seen that the steps related to the transition to university and the stages after starting university come to the fore. Career development is largely ignored in primary schools. Students need to be aware of their career development strategies and to be better prepared for the future. Given the ever-changing needs and skills of the twenty-first century that require individuals to be flexible thinkers, effective problem

solvers, and lifelong learners, it is crucial to better understand the career development process in childhood to better prepare them for their future (Johnson, 2000).

The cooperation of education stakeholders is very important for the effective implementation of career counseling practices at the primary school level, which is the basic step of education. Career development and planning responsibility should be shared by school, student, family, psychological counselor and business circles. Particularly, the participation of family and business circles in the process enriches educational and career planning efforts (Yaylacı, 2007).

The views of families on the concept of career and other family-related variables are closely related to the career development status of primary school students. Families with high career awareness will make positive contributions to their children's career development. The attitudes of parents on this issue are very important for primary school students to show positive career development. In this study, it was aimed to determine the views of the parents of students attending primary school about career awareness. In this regard, the following questions were asked to parents:

1. What do you understand by the term career development?
2. What steps have you taken/plan to take to contribute positively to your child's career development?
3. What do you do to notice your child's interests?
4. What would you like to say about the importance of developing your child's decision-making skills?
5. What do you expect your child to pay attention to when making career decisions in the future?

METHOD

In this research, phenomenological (phenomenological) design among qualitative research methods was used. In qualitative research, there are stages in the research process, including the purpose of the study, research questions, data creation, data analysis, report writing, validity and evaluation standards (Tekindal & Arsu, 2020). Phenomenology research design focuses on the phenomena that we are aware of but do not have in-depth knowledge of (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). With this approach, information was collected about the opinions, perceptions and meanings that individuals have about the subject we are talking about.

Working group

The study group consists of the parents of the students who continue their education life between the 1st and 4th grades, which are the primary school level. While ten of the fifteen parents constituting the study group are female, five are male.

Data Collection

While collecting data, interviews, one of the qualitative research methods, were used. Aiming to have information about the career awareness levels of individuals and their views on this issue, interview questions were formed in the light of the researches in the literature on career awareness. The questions were revised by interviewing six academicians who have studies in the field of career psychological counseling, and they were finalized to be used in the interviews.

Data were collected on a voluntary basis through a form consisting of interview questions. In the interview form, 5 open-ended questions were included in order to have information about the career awareness of the parents. Data were collected through face-to-face interviews with each parent for about 5-6 minutes.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Content analysis method was used while analyzing the data collected with the interview form. Content analysis is to interpret similar data by integrating them around the determined concepts and themes, arranging them in an understandable way to convey them to the readers (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). By examining the interview form of each parent, themes and categories were created in line with the answers given. Examples of parents' opinions regarding the categories are included in the findings section.

RESULTS

In this section, the findings obtained as a result of the content analysis of the data are presented by giving frequency values and opinion examples in the tables. The real names of the participants were not used. Instead, numbers representing them have been assigned, such as "Participant 1, Participant 2... Participant 15". With the coding "P1, P2, P3...P15" used by abbreviating these names, his views on career awareness were conveyed with direct quotations.

Career Development Theme

In order to collect the opinions of the participants about career development, we first asked them "What do you understand by the word career development?" The question was asked and the answers were received. In line with the answers given, the theme of career development consisted of 5 categories.

Responses from 4 of the participants were "Work-Vocation", responses from 2 were "Role of Educational Life", 3 responses were "A Multidimensional Process", 3 responses were "Reaching Goals", 3 responses were Created the "Talent" categories. The opinions of the parents regarding these categories are given in Table 1.

Table 1: What Do You Understand When You Say Career Development?

Theme	Categories	<i>f</i>	Sample Reviews
Career Development Theme	Job-Profession	4	P3: "It is the child's growth day by day in his professional life." P12: "I think that people should improve themselves about their work and make an effort in this field."
	The Role of Education Life	2	P7: "Career development is the way the trainings we receive shape our lives."
	A Multidimensional Process	3	P2: "I think this is a very broad concept. It can be evaluated for both social and educational life. A process where all these are carried out together is career development." P8: "Career development is the whole of adaptation, competence, competence and personality development actions."
	To reach the aims	3	P5: "When career development is mentioned, I understand things like directing my professional skills to the right areas, seeking opportunities and reaching goals by following innovations."
	Talent	3	P4: "The individual's progress in line with his/her ability to which he/she is connected and related within the scope of his/her personal and motor characteristics, and making all these characteristics a profession and developing himself/herself individually."

When Table 1 is examined, it is seen that approximately 26% of the participants perceive the concept of career development as related to their work/professional life. However, it will not be the

right approach to consider the business life of individuals as career development. Herr et al. (2004) defined all the roles that individuals have throughout life as career. It is seen that the participants, who consider career from a multidimensional perspective, have a closer view to this developmental career understanding.

Positive Contributions to Career Development Theme

In order to gather the opinions of the participants within the framework of the theme of positive contributions to career development, they asked the question “What steps have you taken/plan to take in order to make positive contributions to your child's career development?” question was posed. In line with the answers given, the theme of positive contributions to career development consisted of 5 categories.

Responses from 2 of the participants were “Regular Study”, responses from 3 were “Support Trainings”, responses from 2 of them were “Belief that No Benefit Can Be Provided at Early Ages”, 3 responses were “Pre-School Education”, 5 responses were and “Discovery of Talent and Interests” categories.

Table 2. What steps have you taken or are you planning to take to make positive contributions to your child's career development?

Theme	Categories	f	Sample Views
Positive Contributions to Career Development Theme	Regular Work	2	P13: “I tell him that my child needs to work regularly to contribute to his career development. I tell him he needs to make plans and set goals.”
	Support Trainings	3	P12: “Since my child is young, we present many areas as activities and create an environment to solve his interests. I take him to environments where he can receive training in areas of interest. I also support him to love and develop with games in order to establish a solid foundation for his English language development.”
	Belief that benefits cannot be achieved at an early age	2	P1: “I think primary school is too early for this, but I'm taking steps to socialize and increase self-confidence. For example, I enrolled in taekwondo, I keep chatting while picking up and dropping off at school, I spend time with your child.”
	Preschool Education	3	P10: “I don't believe in early career planning.” P7: “I started my child at school at the age of 3. I cannot say that I have been able to achieve what I want to do about Career Development due to my intense work pace. He continues with the trainings he received in the schools he went to.” P6: “Since I am a working mother, I started my child in pre-school education at the age of 3 and a half. When he was 5 years old, I sent him to a football course because it was a field he wanted. In cooperation with the school administration and teachers, so that my child can grow up as an individual who loves life and enjoys his profession in the future and returns home happily; I will continue to direct my child to the areas he wants to observe without boring him.”
	Discovery of Talents and Interests	5	P5: “I tried to discover his talents by directing him to as many different areas as possible. I try not to ignore my child's wishes and stay in constant contact with their teacher.” P4: “As a parent, I follow performance development as a psychological support as well as encouragement to work on visual and practical development in the field of interest.”

When Table 2 is examined, what is striking is the responses of the participants stating that they do not believe in career development at primary school age. Super (1990), from a developmental career perspective, defines career as the sum of all the events related to the career that an individual encounters throughout his life. It emphasizes that career development is lifelong. The category with the highest response rate was discovery of interests and abilities. Talent generally means the capacity to perform in various fields. (Pişkin, 2020) Interest is the desire to gravitate towards certain activities, to prefer these activities to other activities even under restrictive conditions, and to feel rested instead of tiredness while doing these activities, and to continue instead of boredom (Kuzgun, 2006). It is a factor that directly affects job satisfaction.

Interests Theme

In order to gather the opinions of the participants within the framework of the theme of interests, they asked the question “What do you do to realize your child's interests?” question was posed. In line with the answers given, the theme of interests consisted of 4 categories.

Responses from 7 of the participants were “Observing”, 3 were “Effective Communication”, 3 were “Teacher Collaboration”, 3 were “Pre-School Education”, 2 were “Freedom for the Child”. Creating the Area” categories.

Table 3. What Do You Do to Recognize Your Child's Interests?

Theme	Categories	f	Sample Views
Interests Theme	Observation	7	P5: “I observe him while he is playing, doing anything. I take his words into consideration and try to listen to him as well as possible. I give importance to our communication, I always chat with him every day.” P11: “I observe their behavior in daily life and the success rate in their lessons.”
	Effective communication	3	P4: “Always in dialogue with my child, carefully analyzing the personality structure, following the person's attitudes and behaviors visually, and noting the arguments that arouse him as a parent.” P15: “I try to observe myself and talk to him. But I expect the teachers to be the most distinctive in this regard.”
	Teacher Collaboration	3	P6: “We do parent days with my child to realize their interests. We're chatting. We are meeting with the guidance counselor and the classroom teacher.”
	Creating a Freedom Space for the Child	2	P10: “I let him discover himself.” P13: “I'm setting him free.”

When Table 3 is examined, it is understood from the responses of approximately 46% of the participants that they observe their child in order to notice their interests. Participants try to recognize their interests by allocating time to activities where they will spend productive time with their children. In the Self-Assessment Inventory (KSI) developed by Kuzgun (1988), 11 areas of interest were identified. These are: 1) Basic Sciences, 2) Social Sciences, 3) Living Being, 4) Mechanics, 5) Persuasion, 6) Commerce, 7) Business Details, 8) Music. 9) Fine Arts, 10) Literature and 11) Social

Aid Interest. (Kuzgun, 1988). Interest, which directly affects job satisfaction, is one of the most important concepts in career development, as it will indirectly bring success.

Decision Making Skills Theme

“What would you like to say about the importance of developing your child's decision-making skills?” question was posed. In line with the answers given, the theme of decision making skills consisted of 5 categories. Responses from 6 of the participants were “Important”, responses from 2 were “Encouragement to Make Your Own Decisions”, 2 were “Supporting Environment at Home”, 4 were “Responsibility Awareness”, 1 was “Encouragement to Make Your Own Decisions”. Everyday Issues” categories.

Table 4. What would you like to say about the importance of developing your child's decision making skills?

Theme	Categories	f	Sample Views
Decision Making Skills Theme	Important	6	P4: <i>“I attach great importance to the skill development on this issue, as the mechanism of decision making and immediate implementation will be very important in all phases of my child's life.”</i> P14: <i>“I care a lot. I sometimes think that I would be happier if I worked in a different job because what my family said was more effective in my choice of profession; That's why I'm trying to help my child learn to make decisions by explaining that making a decision is an important process and that he should make his own decisions by knowing himself.”</i>
	Encouragement to Make Your Own Decisions	2	P2: <i>“It is very important to me that he can make his own decisions as he wishes. Just as I support him in his right decisions, I also react to his wrong decisions to ensure that he finds the truth without being too critical.”</i>
	Supportive Environment at Home	2	P7: <i>“I try to get his opinion on the decisions we make at home. I try to explain the positive and negative aspects of his own decisions.”</i>
	Responsibility Consciousness	4	P10: <i>“I teach by making it law that he is fully responsible for the decisions he will make.”</i> P13: <i>“I'm setting him free.”</i>
	Everyday Issues	1	P9: <i>“I didn't grow up in a family where children's decisions were respected. Therefore, as much as the legacy I brought from my childhood allows, I make room for my child to make decisions on daily issues, I make important decisions myself.”</i>

When Table 4 is examined, it is seen that it is important for all parents participating in the study that their child has decision-making skills. Almost all of the participating parents have developed and implemented some strategies for their child to be able to make decisions. In general, decision-making can be understood as determining the goals to be achieved in order to meet the need in case of a need, collecting the necessary information, creating options by evaluating this information, and choosing the most appropriate one from the obtained options (Güçray, 2001). Individuals' having decision-making skills plays an important role at every stage of their career life.

Career Decision Theme

In order to gather the opinions of the participants within the framework of the career decision theme, they were asked, “What do you expect your child to pay attention to when making career

decisions in the future?” question was posed. In line with the answers given, the theme of career decision consisted of 5 categories.

Response from 1 of the participants is “Halal Earning ”, responses from 7 are “Decisions That Will Make You Happy”, 4 responses are “Self-Awareness”, 2 responses are “Proper Job”, 1 response is and “Quality” categories.

Table 5. What Do You Expect Your Child to Consider When Making Career Decisions in the Future?

Theme	Categories	f	Sample Views
Career Decision Theme	Halal Earnings	1	P1: <i>“I will do my best to make the earnings halal. I'm trying to bring him the halal and haram balance.”</i>
	Decisions That Will Be Happy	7	P11: <i>“I am very happy when they choose a profession that they will love to do and will be happy when they do.”</i> P15: <i>“I care about helping him make his own decision to move towards the area where he will be happy and to support him on this path.”</i> P2: <i>“Will her decisions make her happy? Will it satisfy? I pay attention to these. I stress that if he made the wrong decision, he wouldn't let that discourage him.”</i>
	Self-Awareness	4	P8: <i>“I pay attention to things like building self-awareness, trying to build the ability to recognize opportunities.”</i> P5: <i>“First of all, I want him to make choices that suit his own wishes and abilities, and that these choices do not make him unhappy, but contribute to his development.”</i>
	Suitable Profession	2	P15: <i>“I want him to decide whether the profession he will choose is suitable for him or not.”</i>
	Qualification	1	P9: <i>“I expect him to pay attention to whether there are plans to make him happy, his rationality, whether it is a quality job.”</i>

When Table 5 is examined, it has emerged that the expectations of most of the participants for career decisions for their children are decisions that will make them happy. According to Ulaş and Yıldırım (2016), the choices individuals make during the career development process are one of the most important decisions they make in their lives; because these decisions will be effective in determining the lifestyles of individuals (Ulaş & Yıldırım, 2016).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this study, the views of parents of primary school students about career awareness were examined. In the light of the analysis of the data obtained as a result of the interviews, it was seen that the parents generally had limited knowledge about the concept of career development. It has been observed that the parents are willing to get help and open to learning. Within the scope of psychological counseling and guidance services offered in schools, some activities can be included in

order to improve career awareness within the services for parents. Because the attitudes and behaviors of parents or other people related to the child towards students significantly affect the school life of the child (Ercan & Şahin, 2016). Child's school life also plays an important role in career development.

Career decision, not only starting or ending at the moment of choosing a profession, lasts from the time the individual is born until his/her death. There are many factors that affect this process. Some of these factors are abilities, interests, values, psychological needs, gender, socio-economic level, competence expectations, achievement motivation, and family relationships. Among these factors, the family factor, which has important effects as in many areas, can also shape the career development process in the individual's life. At this point, families should know what positive and negative things can change in their children's lives; The attitude they display in order to positively affect their children and make the right career decisions and being a suitable role model for them will enrich their children's career development. Therefore, families awareness of appropriate attitudes and behaviors for their children's career development will positively affect their children's career development (Koçakoğlu & Yalçın, 2020).

It has been observed that parents benefit from many different methods to make positive contributions to their children's career development. Prominent among these methods was the orientation of children to different social activities. A child born into a social environment creates his/her reactions, behavioral characteristics, physical and mental development, and the shaping of his personality structure according to the attitude of the social environment towards him and the way he meets his needs (Altinköprü, 2003).

Among the strategies used by parents to recognize their children's interests, the most commonly used one is to observe the child. It has been observed that parents engage in activities such as spending time and chatting with their children in order to get to know their children and be aware of their interests. According to most approaches and developmental theories, the quality of the parent-child relationship is critically important to the child's life. These quality time spent with their families for primary school children will be beneficial for career development and personality development at the same time.

The founder of psychoanalysis, neurologist, psychiatrist Sigmund Freud defines a healthy person as a person who can love and work (Yeşilyaprak, 2012). In order to be able to work and be satisfied with business life, there is a need to demonstrate positive career development. At this point, we see that the right career choices gain importance for the lives of individuals. Making the right career choice is possible with a high career awareness.

Decision making is defined as the process, skill or method used for this purpose (Budak, 2000) of making a choice among two or more options by considering the probabilities of the events. Gati et al. (1996) developed a taxonomy of decision making difficulties. This taxonomy consists of 3 main categories: a) Lack of Preparation, b) Lack of Information, c) Inconsistent Information (Gati et al., 1996). The healthy development of decision-making skills is very important so that individuals do not fall into these traps when making decisions. The vast majority of parents use many different strategies to develop their children's decision-making skills. At the beginning of these are encouraging their children to make their own decisions and creating a supportive environment for children in this regard at home.

Career counseling is a field of counseling that touches our lives in terms of individuals who know themselves in terms of interests, abilities and personality traits, and develop strategies to cope with the obstacles they may encounter in their journey towards the person they want to be. According

to the humanistic psychology school, the most important motive that governs human behavior is the "Self-Realization" motive (Kuzgun, 1972). We need career counseling to "realize ourselves". Parents with high career awareness are needed to support the career development of children aged 6-10, covering primary school years. In this study, it was seen that the parents made an effort in this regard.

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