

The Affecting Factors Of Career Start in Institutions of Higher Education: Application with Turkish Aviation Students

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Abstract: Career is defined as "path of the individual in order to achieve a successful provider advancement at work, or work that the process". External and internal dimensions of the career is determined based on organizational behavior theory. Career consists stages of discovery, building, career medium, career break and reduction (pension) in individual sense. Career planning is an important step for stages of his career. Career planning is defined as taking into account the individual and his environment in which both the activities to deliver these targets by setting targets related to pre-arranged business life. One important step in a career and vocational the preferred stage in Turkey is higher education. Research carried out to determine the factors influencing the beginning of his career choice of higher education students. Research is limited to higher education students studying in the field of civil aviation in Turkey. Research to determine the factors that play a role in the context of higher education in the field of aviation choice was made in 2015 and 2016 with 10803 students in higher education. At the scope survey the data of sample group's demographic characteristics and factors which affecting career planning was collected. In this context, the effect of family members, social environment, legal challenges, personal characteristics, economic factors and training to the profession's career plans were analyzed. The most important factors that influence the career orientation of the families of students in the field of aviation, has been found to have high expectations of earnings and reputation. It was found that most important factors affecting aviation students' career are family orientation, expectations to find a job and aviation is a valid profession.

Keyword: Aviation Career Planning, Higher Education Institutions

1. Introduction

The boost witnessed in Turkish aviation sector for the last 10 years exceeds the growth measured in average global ratio. In parallel with the sectoral increment a corresponding rise has been observed in enhanced demand for human resources. In 2003 the number of employed personnel in Turkish Aviation Sector equated to 65.000 while in 2013 this figure jumped to 180.570 people. In a period of 10 years the number of employed aviation personnel increased by 200% that equaled to an annual rise of 20% roughly (DHMI, 2015). (DHMI: General Directorate of State Airports Authority). The increased demand for human resources was met through a range of sources. In Turkish civil aviation sector demands for human resources are filled by the graduates of aviation departments in higher education institutes; graduates of Turkish National Education (MEB)-affiliated high schools and their equivalents; military aviation school graduates having chosen to pursue career in civil aviation sector; graduates of non-aviation departments having received in-service trainings to qualify for employment in aviation sector.

In Turkey, as of year 2016, higher education in aviation is offered in 91 departments under different department and program codes within a

sum of 43 Higher Education institutes. Despite the differences in department/program codes aviation education in Turkey is commonly offered in 6 departments on a broad scale. Below are these departments (Ateş & Lik, 2016);

- Technical Departments (Aircraft or Aviation Electrics and Electronics, Aircraft Airframe Motor, Aircraft Technology),
- Pilotage (navigation),
- Air Traffic Control ,
- Cabin Services,
- Aviation Management (Civil Air Transport Management or Aviation Management).

The total figure of students in aviation departments of higher education programs equates to 15.700. 5.393 students study in undergraduate departments; 10.307 students study in associate degree departments. It is projected that in 2015 academic year there were over 16.000 students in higher education institutes (Ateş & Lik, 2016). Departments offering diploma in higher education level were first launched in 1986. After 2012 there was a rapid rise in the number of newly-opened departments. (Ateş & Lik, 2016). Another prediction is that of the total

number of 15.700 students in aviation departments of higher education institutions, 8.262 students will opt for aviation career in 2015-2016 academic year (Ateş & Lik, 2016).

Career is defined as “the path an individual tracks in his/her worklife, employed domain, the job or position that the individual begins and continues till the final term of his/her worklife” (Cevher, 2015). Career is also related to an individual's continuous development in a specific work domain while actively employed in any given sector and acquisition of relevant experiences and skills (Taşlıyan, Arı, & Duzman, 2011). External dimension of career is delineated as objective enhancement steps geared at a specified task in the organization and such steps are stipulated by the organization itself. Internal dimension of career, however, refers to the inner motivation of an individual to set goals for the aim of honing his/her position in the organization and the efforts exerted to achieve preset goals (Şimşek, Çelik, & Akatay, 2007). A number of factors such as physical traits, sociological environment, gender or education play role in the development of personal career (Çalık & Ereş, 2006). On a personal level career steps comprise of exploration-search, building, mid-career, end of career and diminishing (retirement) stages. Exploration relates to the initial (early) stage of career and constitutes the first step in career-management process. In exploration stage the individual is in search of career opportunities that best suit to his/her qualifications and personal traits. Building stage relates to the processes of finding a job, acquiring relevant skills and learning the job. During mid-career stage the individual bears higher number of responsibilities and leads the followers. During this stage the individual orients to guard his/her professional acquisitions and strives to develop his/her performance. In the next stage the individual approaches his/her end of career. S/he becomes disinterested to profession and displays lower performance development (Aydın, 2007).

In this study “Findings on the Factors Affecting Career Planning of the Youth” scale developed by Adıgüzel (2008) has been utilized. The factors affecting department choices of aviation students

in higher education institutions, as they initially enter to their career, have been analyzed.

2. Objective, Scope and Method

Within the scope of this study a survey has been conducted among 10.803 aviation students during 2015 - 2016 academic year in order to determine the factors affecting department choices of aviation students in higher education institutions.

The scale developed by Adıgüzel (2008) is based on personal career planning. In “Findings on the Factors Affecting Career Planning of the Youth” scale the factors that affect personal career planning have been listed as below (Adıgüzel, 2008, s. 69):

- Single factors
 - Age
 - Gender
 - Personal traits
- Group factors
 - Family
 - Friends
 - School environment
- General factors
 - State laws and policies
 - Financial factors
 - Cultural and social change factors

Within the scope of this survey demographic features of sampling group and factors affecting career planning have been combined. Accordingly effects of family members, social environment, legal challenges, personal traits, financial factors, compulsory education for the profession have been examined to analyze their effects on career planning. In parallel with the findings of analysis, suggestions have been provided.

4. Findings and Analysis

4.1. Demographic structure

10.800 students participated in the survey and 68,1% of respondents were male; 30,7% were female (Table 1).

Table 1. Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	3319	30,7	31,0	31,0
	Male	7382	68,4	69,0	100,0
	Total	10701	99,1	100,0	
Missing	System	99	,9		
Total		10800	100,0		

As exhibited in Table 2, 34% of aviation department students are from maintenance services (Aircraft or Aviation Electrics and Electronics, Aircraft Airframe Motor, Aircraft Technology etc.), 22% are in Cabin Services Department, 43% are in Ground Operations Services (Civil Air Transport Management or Aviation Management).

4.2. Effect of Family Members on Career Planning

Histogram graphics have been used to evaluate the effect of family members on career planning. In career choices parents are the most effective

family members. The effect of family on career planning also relies upon factors such as socio-economic status of the family and level of education. It has been detected mother play 3,54 mean role in career choices, fathers play 3,47 mean role, sibling/s play 3,13 mean role, and relatives play 2,47 mean role.

Obtained responses of participants unveiled that the primary family member directing the career planning of aviation-department students was mothers ensued by fathers. 34,2% of participant students responded that their mothers strongly affected them to choose aviation as a career (Figure 1 and Table 5).

Table 2. Department

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Maintenance Services	3771	34,9	34,9	34,9
	Cabin Services	2378	22,0	22,0	56,9
	Ground Operations Services	4651	43,1	43,1	100,0
	Total	10800	100,0	100,0	

Of the participants 53,4% are students from foundation universities and 46,6% are students from state universities (Table 3).

Table 3. School Types

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Foundation University	5770	53,4	53,4	53,4
	State University	5030	46,6	46,6	100,0
	Total	10800	100,0	100,0	

Table 4. Effect of Family Members on Career Planning

		Mother	Father	Sibling/s	Relatives
N	Valid	10800	10800	10800	10800
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean		3,54	3,47	3,13	2,67
Std. Deviation		1,320	1,356	1,439	1,456
Skewness		-,438	-,404	-,129	,299
Std. Error of Skewness		,024	,024	,024	,024
Kurtosis		-,904	-,985	-1,238	-1,229
Std. Error of Kurtosis		,047	,047	,047	,047

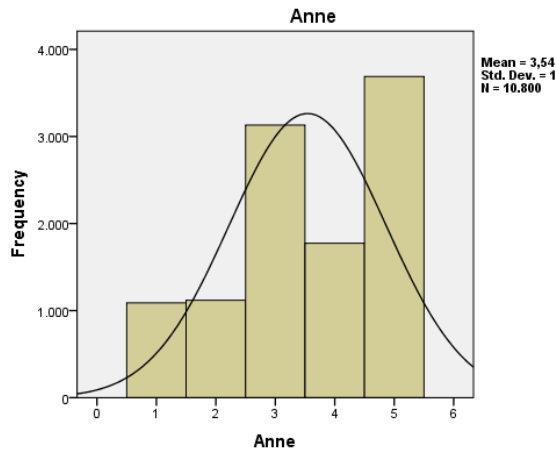


Figure 1. Mother's Effect

Table 5. Mother's Effect

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	1088	10,1	10,1	10,1
Disagree	1119	10,4	10,4	20,4
Undecided	3131	29,0	29,0	49,4
Agree	1773	16,4	16,4	65,8
Strongly agree	3689	34,2	34,2	100,0
Total	10800	100,0	100,0	

4.3. Effect of Immediate Surroundings on Career Planning

Considering the age factor among students in higher education it is observed that the majority of students are composed of young people. Students making career choices in high school years are exposed to the social interaction with their friends, teachers, and family friends. In the immediate surroundings of students the most salient factor that plays role in aviation career choices of students is teachers by 3,28. Next comes friends in

the immediate surroundings as the second most salient factor with a mean ratio of 3,1 and family members rank last by 2,86 (Table 6).

Psychological Counseling and Guidance (PDR) service offered by high school and course teachers is recognized as the most crucial factor in the earliest stage of career planning. 23,2% of students noted that their teachers played major role in their career choices (Table 7 and Figure 2). On the other hand the ratio of students denying teachers' effect on their career choices is indicated as 12,7%.

Table 6. Effect of Immediate Surroundings on Career Planning

	Teachers	Friends	Family friends
N	10800	10800	10800
Valid	10800	10800	10800
Missing	0	0	0
Mean	3,28	3,10	2,86
Std. Deviation	1,296	1,284	1,365
Skewness	-,247	-,095	,111
Std. Error of Skewness	,024	,024	,024
Kurtosis	-,919	-,944	-1,116
Std. Error of Kurtosis	,047	,047	,047

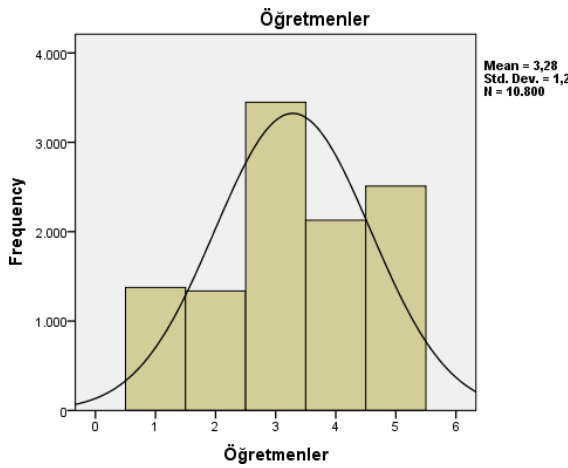


Figure 2. Teachers' Effect

Table 7. Teachers' Effect

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	1376	12,7	12,7	12,7
Disagree	1337	12,4	12,4	25,1
Undecided	3448	31,9	31,9	57,0
Agree	2129	19,7	19,7	76,8
Strongly Agree	2510	23,2	23,2	100,0
Total	10800	100,0	100,0	

4.4. Effect of Legal Factors on Career Planning

One of the factors affecting early career stage comprises of legal factors that can be defined as factors regulated by effective laws and primarily influential in career building process of individuals. For instance military service requirement is one of the most effective players designating male

individuals' 4 -year higher education choices. Circa 3,17 of male students in aviation department admitted military service requirement being one of the most effective player in their choice.

The cumulative ratio of male students having admitted military service requirement being one of the most effective players in their choice is 26,5%. (Figure 3 and Table 9)

Table 9. Effect of Legal Factors on Career Planning

		Military service	Compulsory service	Inability to continue a second job
N	Valid	7382	10800	10800
	Missing	3418	0	0
Mean		3,17	2,95	2,91
Std. Deviation		1,316	1,368	1,381
Skewness		-,177	-,024	,036
Std. Error of Skewness		,029	,024	,024
Kurtosis		-,952	-1,096	-1,127
Std. Error of Kurtosis		,057	,047	,047

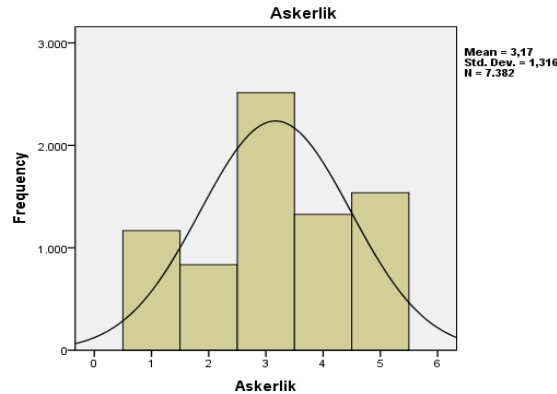


Figure 3. Military Service's Effect

4.5. Effect of Personal Traits on Career Planning

It is of utmost importance that individuals choose to follow and plan a career path suited best to their personal traits. Since employees spend the greater portion of day in work place it is of critical importance to ensure self fulfillment during the early stage and consecutive stages of their career that match with their personal traits, qualifications, level of knowledge and capacity. A high ratio equating to circa 3,96 of aviation department students responded that they chose aviation because it matched their personal qualifications (Table 10).

Roughly 3,92 of survey respondents noted that aviation sector matched their personal traits and 3,89 of survey respondents noted that aviation sector matched their knowledge level and capacity. 46,4% of respondents deeming aviation to match their qualifications selected Strongly Agree choice (Figure 4 and Table 11).

4.6. Effect of Financial and Social Expectations on Career Planning

Financial advantage of this profession is one of the most salient career expectations. As statistical ratios indicate tax-excluded average income level is below 822 Dollars in Turkey. Nonagricultural unemployment ratio points to 13%, and the ratio of unemployed youth between 15-24 age group indicates 19,2% (TÜİK, 2016). Approximately 3,94 of students having selected aviation department in higher education institutions reported to have chosen this career by virtue of its widespread job opportunities. This factor is ensued by social opportunities offered by the profession (3,78) and high salary expectations (3,75). Once the high ratio of unemployed Turkish youth is evaluated in tandem with widespread career choices for aviation graduates, it becomes evident that the majority of students selected this career for its higher employment opportunities (Table 12).

Table 10. Effect of Personal Traits on Career Planning

		Matching the Personal traits	Qualifications and	Matching the knowledge level and capacity
N	Valid	10800	10800	10800
	Missing	0	0	0
Mean		3,92	3,96	3,89
Std. Deviation		1,192	1,181	1,159
Skewness		-,855	-,906	-,799
Std. Error of Skewness		,024	,024	,024
Kurtosis		-,205	-,116	-,197
Std. Error of Kurtosis		,047	,047	,047

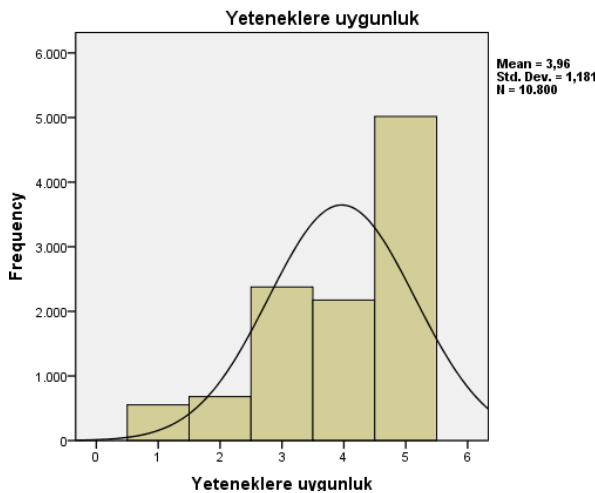


Figure 4. Matching the Individual's Qualifications

Table 11. Matching the Individual's Qualifications

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	553	5,1	5,1	5,1
Disagree	679	6,3	6,3	11,4
Undecided	2378	22,0	22,0	33,4
Agree	2174	20,1	20,1	53,6
Strongly Agree	5016	46,4	46,4	100,0
Total	10800	100,0	100,0	

Table 12. Effect of Financial and Social Expectations on Career Planning

		High salary	Social opportunities	Higher opportunities for employment
N	Valid	10800	10800	10800
	Missing	0	0	0
Mean		3,75	3,78	3,94
Std. Deviation		1,131	1,184	1,165
Skewness		-,591	-,637	-,850
Std. Error of Skewness		,024	,024	,024
Kurtosis		-,367	-,460	-,160
Std. Error of Kurtosis		,047	,047	,047

4.7. Effect of Professional Features on Career Planning

Being a transportation, aviation is a profession necessitating heavy schedule during holiday periods and summer months when travel frequency is higher. Social perception toward aviation profession is one factor that orients career choices. Roughly 4,04 of aviation undergraduates reported to have chosen this profession by virtue of its validity, 4,03 reported to have chosen this profession by virtue of its career opportunities and 3,93 reported to have chosen this profession by virtue of this reputation (Table 13).

4.8. Effects of Financial and Political Environment on Career Planning

Financial and political conditions pervading in a society are also likely to determine individuals' career choices. Of all the undergraduate students in aviation departments around 3,81 students reported to have chosen this career due to the future status of Turkey; around 3,77 students reported the effects of current financial changes; 3,73 students reported the effects of current status of Turkey; and 3,52 students reported the effects of current political agenda on their career choice (Table 14).

Table 13. Effects of Professional Features on Career Planning

		Heavy schedule	Travel	Reputation	Career opportunities	Valid profession
N	Valid	10800	10800	10800	10800	10800
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3,37	3,57	3,93	4,03	4,04
Std. Deviation		1,140	1,196	1,171	1,172	1,174
Skewness		-,240	-,469	-,848	-1,011	-1,019
Std. Error of Skewness		,024	,024	,024	,024	,024
Kurtosis		-,499	-,555	-,156	,120	,109
Std. Error of Kurtosis		,047	,047	,047	,047	,047

Table 14. Effect of Financial and Political Environment on Career Planning

		Current status of Turkey	Future status of Turkey	Current financial changes	Current political agenda
N	Valid	10800	10800	10800	10800
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean		3,73	3,81	3,77	3,52
Std. Deviation		1,165	1,173	1,134	1,203
Skewness		-,583	-,683	-,618	-,407
Std. Error of Skewness		,024	,024	,024	,024
Kurtosis		-,446	-,358	-,327	-,629
Std. Error of Kurtosis		,047	,047	,047	,047

5. Conclusion

Career choice is one of the most salient stages of career planning. Individuals with clearly identified career choices can take confident steps in their career path. Within the scope of this research the factors affecting early career choices of undergraduate students in civil aviation departments within Turkey have been analyzed. In line with the scope average score effects of family members, immediate surroundings, legal factors, personal traits, financial and social expectations, professional features, financial and political environment on career planning have been delved into.

It was concluded that mothers are the most influential family members on the career choice of higher education civil aviation departments in Turkey. As the effect of immediate surroundings was analyzed it was identified that teachers played the utmost role in the early stage of career planning. As for legal factors military service was the most critical factor affecting undergraduates' career choices for male students. As regards personal traits the most potent factor on career choices is matching one's qualifications. As the effects of financial and social expectations on career choices were examined it surfaced that high opportunities for employment outrun the salary factor. A considerable portion of students deemed aviation profession to be suitable for their knowledge level and capacity.

As for professional features the most effective factor on career choice is the validity of profession. This finding highlights the fact that due to the high ratio of unemployed youngsters in Turkey new generation now pursue valid professions bearing a higher employment potential. Further to that the

respondents reported that future status of Turkey also played remarkable role in their early career choice.

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