



## Research Article

### CAREER DECISION-MAKING DIFFICULTIES IN TURKEY AND THE USA

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#### ABSTRACT

This study aims to compare high-school students in Turkey and the U.S., in terms of career-decision making difficulties. The research group consists of a total of 576 students, including 296 high-school students in the U.S. and 280 high-school students in Turkey. The data of the research were collected by the "Career Decision-Making Difficulties Questionnaire" (CDDQ). The career decision-making difficulties are composed of three sub-scales, including lack of readiness, lack of information and inconsistent information. Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was used to evaluate whether the sub-scale scores for career decision-making difficulties experienced by high-school students in the U.S. and Turkey differ depending on an individual's gender and class. It was found that there are significant differences in gender and class variables in the career decision-making difficulties experienced by high-school students in Turkey and the U.S. The findings of the research were compared using the data collected.

## INTRODUCTION

People have to make decisions throughout different stages of their lives. They try to make the most appropriate decision, selecting from all of the available options. Some decisions, particularly those made in puberty, can affect the rest of an individual's life. One such decision concerns the choice of career. According to Yeşilyaprak (2011, 2012), a career is a composition of activities required by all roles in life that one plays at any time of his/her life, and such roles encompass the ones played as an employee, too. In addition, the concept of a career includes pre- and post-professional roles. Individuals make various decisions and adopt professional roles over the course of their career development. Professions may be appealing or uninviting to people at certain times of their career in terms of the qualifications required and the benefits provided. A preferred profession is one that offers the best positive features and appeal to an individual at a specific moment in time. The choice of profession involves selecting a role from any number of professions and making a decision to pursue that particular field (Kuzgun, 2000). If one is able to make effective decisions, this can lead to an increase in satisfaction with life and help an individual feel good whereas ineffective decisions may give rise to difficulties in life and make an individual feel bad (Çolakkadıoğlu and Güçray, 2007).

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According to Bacanlı (2008), one's attitude for development roles, coupled with a lack of knowledge of and skills in one's choice of profession make it difficult to make a career decision. There are also a number of studies that argue that the socio-economic and educational levels of parents play a role in individuals' career decision-making processes (Creed and Yin, 2006; Çınar, 2011). In addition, some studies suggest that the wishes and attitudes of parents define a student's choice of profession (Bacanlı, 2008; Doğan, 2010; Hamamcı and Hamurlu, 2005). Other factors that influence an individual's choice of profession include gender, interests, skills, values, culture, politics and economic benefits (Korkut, 2008).

The decisions made by adolescents concerning their education and career are some of the most important decisions they will ever make in their lives. Studies indicate that adolescents in Turkey and other countries struggle to make a decision concerning their education and career (Akkoc, 2012; Amir and Gati, 2006; Bacanlı, 2008; Bacanlı, 2012; Bal, 1998; Çakır, 2003; Doğan, 2010; Gati and Saka 2001; Hamamcı and Hamurlu, 2005; Hamamcı, Bacanlı and Doğan, 2013; Kuijpers and Meijers, 2011; Wierik, Beishuizen and Os, 2014). Gati, Krausz and Osipow (1996) define the difficulties keeping one from making the most appropriate career decision as career decision-making difficulties. Gati, Krausz and Osipow (1996) classify career decision-making difficulties as consisting of three main categories: lack of readiness, lack of information and inconsistent information. Lack of readiness consists of

sub-categories such as lack of motivation, personal indecision and non-functional beliefs whilst lack of information is composed of sub-categories such as lack of information concerning the process of career decision-making, lack of information in self, lack of information about different career options and lack of information concerning methods of gaining additional information. The category of inconsistent information consists of sub-categories such as unreliable information and internal and external conflicts. Based on Gati's and others' classification, Gati and Saka (2001) have developed a scale for career decision-making difficulties. Studies suggest that career decision-making difficulties are related to unreasonable beliefs (Kleiman, Gati, Peterson, Reardon and Lenz, 2004), self-efficacy, vocational optimism, coping mechanisms (Coon, 2007), personality (Saka, Gati and Kelly, 2008), culture-value conflicts, family expectations (Leung, Hou, Gati and Li, 2011), self-competence and focus of control (Öztemel, 2012).

Using the classifications, Gati and Saka (2001) identified the career decision-making difficulties experienced by Israeli high-school students. This classification for career decision-making difficulties can be applied to students in various cultures and countries, such as: the U.S. (Gaffner and Hazler, 2002; Lease, 2004); Canada (Julien, 1999; Morgan and Ness, 2003); Australia (Albion and Fogarty, 2005); China (Creed and Yin, 2006; Tien, 2005); Palestine (Hijazi, Tatar and Gati, 2004); Greece (Koumoundourou, Tsaousis and Kounenou, 2011); Italy (Di Fabio and Kenny, 2011), and; Turkey (Bacanlı, 2008). There are also other studies comparing career decision-making difficulties in various cultures (Hijazi, Tatar and Gati, 2004; Mau, 2001; Mau, 2004; Zhou and Santos, 2007). The process of choosing a career is complex and dynamic. There are a spate of factors that have influence over adolescents to make a career decision. Gender differences in the values affect students' career choices (Behrend, Thompson, Meade, Greyson and Newton, 2007). For example Chinese professionals providing advice and careers interventions for Chinese adolescents need to be aware that career aspirations and expectations for their students may differ from adolescents in the West, and they should be alert also to gender differences in aspirations, which tend to parallel differences identified outside of China (Patton and McMahon, 1997).

According to this, gender and cultural imperatives are very important while selecting a profession. According to Mau (2004), cultural factors are extremely influential in one's career development and decision-making processes. In a study comparing the career decision-making difficulties and levels of career indecision of American and Taiwanese college students, Mau (2001) argues that the levels of career decision-making difficulties and indecision experienced by Taiwanese students were higher than those of American students. Zhou and Santos (2007) compare the career decision-making difficulties of British and Chinese undergraduates in terms of culture and gender. Their findings indicate that the levels of career decision-making difficulties of Chinese students in terms of lack of readiness were higher than those experienced by British students but there was no significant difference between the two groups of students in other categories. As required by the pass-fail grading system applicable to secondary education in Turkey, students passing the ninth grade are required to decide on a major they will specialize in in higher education and also

a profession they would like to pursue in the future. Common or vocational high-school senior students pursue a career after graduation or continue their vocational training in higher education schools (Doğan, 2010; Hamamcı, Bacanlı and Doğan, 2013). California is the most populous state of the U.S. and has the most school students. Californian high school education takes four years and completed end of the 12<sup>th</sup> grade as in Turkey. California's secondary classrooms are more overcrowded than classrooms in any other state. California's secondary (grades 9-12) student-teacher ratio is 23.4 to 1. California schools serving 90% or more Latino, African American, and American Indian students are the most likely to be designated as critically overcrowded. Studies show that, many California students are not successfully completing their K-12 education and moving on to college (Johnson, 2010). As it is evident from studies, the decisions of adolescents on education and career are one of the most important decisions they ever take in their lives.

The purpose of this study is to compare high school students in Turkey and the U.S. in terms of career-decision making difficulties. There are several foreign studies that compare intercultural differences in career decision-making difficulties but there is no study making such a comparison with Turkey. This study is thought to be important, as it will highlight cultural differences in career decision-making difficulties. Career decision-making is one of the most important tasks of adolescence and adulthood. People in adolescence are expected to build a foundation for their career and to make a choice of profession that they feel is the best fit (Kılıççı, 1992). High-school students in particular try to collect information about professions and thus, make a decision about their future, discovering what classes would be the best fit and what major they would like to pursue in higher education (Yeşilyaprak, 2013). Foreign and domestic studies point out that a majority of high-school students have difficulties in making a career decision. That high-school students make a proper and favourable career decision is of importance for their psychology, physical health and also the country's economic status. The conclusions of this study are expected to contribute to the field of career counselling and the role of psychological counsellors in schools.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Participants

The research group consists of a total of 576 students, including 296 high-school students in California and 280 high-school students in Burdur. The study includes a total of 296 students, including 151 females and 147 males studying in high schools in California. Of these students, 46 students are in the ninth grade (15.4%), 117 are in the tenth grade (39.3%), 91 are in the eleventh grade (30.5%) and 44 are in the twelfth grade (14.8%). Of the students, 163 (54.6%) are of Chinese, Korean, Philippine or Japanese heritage, 48 students (16.1%) are of Latin heritage, 46 (15.5%) are white and 41 students (13.8%) are of Indian-Pakistani heritage. The research group of high-school students in Burdur consists of 287 students in total, including 159 females and 128 males. Of the students, 91 are in the ninth grade (31.7%), 78 are in the tenth grade (27.2%), 71 are in the eleventh grade (24.7%) and 47 are in the twelfth grade (16.4%).

**Measurements**

**Career Decision-Making Difficulties Questionnaire (CDDQ)**

The career decision-making difficulties experienced by high-school students taking part in the research were identified by the Career Decision-Making Difficulties Questionnaire (CDDQ) developed by Gati and Saka (2001) and adapted by Bacanlı (2008). Developed by Gati and Saka (2001) with a view to measuring the level of career decision-making difficulties experienced by high-school students, the scale is a Likert-type scale including two control sub-scales and ten other sub-scales consisting of 34 items. Gati and Saka (2001) found, as a result of their study of scale development in which 259 high-school students participated, that although the CDDQ is divided into three main categories consisting of lack of readiness, lack of information and inconsistent information, the main categories could also be divided into sub-categories within themselves. Gati and Saka (2001) calculated the Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficients as .60 in the category of lack of readiness, .92 in the category of lack of information, .83 in the category of inconsistent information and .92 in the total Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient. Bacanlı (2008) adapted the Turkish version of the original scale for 2,500 high school students via five-point grading. An ADDTREE analysis was conducted just as in the original version in order to identify the construct validity of the scale.

**Data Analysis**

A permit was obtained via e-mail by the developers of the scale in an effort to make use of the data collection tool for the study. The scale was applied to high-school students in Berkeley, California during the 2011-2012 school year and to high school students in Burdur, Turkey during the 2012-2013 school year. MANOVA was conducted in an effort to discover whether sub-scale scores for career decision-making difficulties experienced by high-school students in the U.S. and Turkey differ depending on gender and class. A multiple variance analysis was conducted in order to decide whether groups differ from each other in terms of multiple dependent variables. MANOVA was used to test the differences of the groups in terms of multiple dependent variables. MANOVA offered a score obtained from two or more dependent variables for each test subject (Bacanlı, 2009). In line with the findings, an ANOVA and a Tukey Test were conducted in order to identify the reasons behind the differences amongst groups (Tabachnick and Feidell, 2007). The interpretation of the findings was based on a  $p < 0.5$  level of significance. The data were analysed by SPSS 15.

**RESULTS**

Missing values in the data set were identified and left out of the data set prior to data analysis. Researchers then checked whether there was any extreme value and significant Z-table scores were controlled in increasing and decreasing order at the level of 0.01 for univariate extreme values of dependent and independent variables. Thirteen data exceeding 3.29 were left out of the data set. The Mahalanobis distance was measured for multivariate extreme values and no value was above 1.

The descriptive statistics regarding the score of high-school students and their career decision-making difficulties, along with the subscales, are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1. The descriptive statistics are regarding the score of high school students for Career Decision-Making Difficulties**

Scale	Alpha	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
CDDQ	.94	576	87,60	26,20
Lack of Readiness	.52	576	30,06	5,49
Lack of Information	.92	576	29,43	10,91
Inconsistent Information	.93	576	33,44	13,83

According to Table 1, the alpha's reliability total score of career decision-making difficulties was found to be .94. The subscale of readiness reliability was found to be .52. The subscale of lack of information reliability was found to be .92 and the subscale of inconsistent information reliability was found to be .93. The remaining 576 data were put on the Box's M-Test with a view to identifying the homogeneity of the variance-covariance matrices that are the premises of MANOVA. The findings illustrate that variance and covariance factors amongst dependent variables were the same for each level and there was no significant difference amongst them [Box's M:4,137,  $F(,682)=,665$ ,  $p > .05$ ]. One of the main assumptions of the MANOVA is that there is a linear relation amongst dependent variables (Büyüköztürk, 2008). In an attempt to test this assumption, the relation amongst dependent variables of the research was tested by the Pearson Correlation Coefficient and a moderately positive and significant correlation ( $r = ,525$ ;  $r = ,411$  and  $r = ,763$   $p < .001$ ) was obtained. The results are presented in Table 2. The analysis of the results allowed the authors to ascertain that the data were favourable enough to put MANOVA into practice.

**Table 2. Correlation coefficients among dependent variables**

	1	2	3
1.Lack of Readiness	-		
2.Lack of Information	,525**	-	
3.Inconsistent Information	,411**	,763**	-

\*\* $P < .01$

**Results of scores of career decision-making difficulties according to gender for high-school students in the U.S. and Turkey**

MANOVA was conducted in an effort to discover whether the scores of career decision-making difficulties vary according to gender for high-school students in the U.S. and Turkey. The results are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3. Unilateral MANOVA Results on Career Decision-Making Difficulties by Gender for High School Students in the USA and Turkey**

Effect	$\lambda$	F	df	p	$\eta^2$
Gender	,031	22,53	3-572	0.00	,105

Table 3 shows that career decision-making difficulties according to gender for high-school students in the U.S. and Turkey differ significantly from each other ( $\lambda = ,031$ ;  $F = 22,53$ ;  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = ,249$ ). This finding proves that the career decision-making difficulties experienced by high-school females and

males in the U.S. differ from the career decision-making difficulties experienced by high-school females and males in Turkey. The influence level of the gender of high-school students in the U.S. and Turkey over dependent variables was analysed by eta-square and found to be  $\eta^2 = .249$ . The influence level points to how many standard deviations the compared group averages differ from each other (Köklü, Büyüköztürk and Bökeoğlu, 2007). The influence level is considered small when it is 01, moderate if it is 06 and substantial if it is 14 and above (Cohen, 1988). For this reason, it is safe to say that the gender of high-school students in the U.S. and Turkey is moderately influential in career decision-making difficulties.

Table 5 shows that career decision-making difficulties by grade for high-school students in the U.S. and Turkey differ significantly from each other ( $\lambda = .034$ ;  $F=9,54$ ;  $p<.001$ ,  $\eta^2 =.105$ ). This finding illustrates that the career decision-making difficulties experienced by ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth grade high-school females and males in the U.S. differ from the career decision-making difficulties experienced by the ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth grade high-school females and males in Turkey. The influence level for the grade of high-school students in the U.S. and Turkey over dependent variables was analysed by eta-square and found to be  $\eta^2 =.105$ .

**Table 4. Average, Standard Deviation and MANOVA Results on Scores of Career Decision-Making Difficulties by Gender for High School Students in the USA and Turkey**

Source	Dependent Variable	n	$\bar{x}$	Sd	df	F	p	$\eta^2$					
Gender	Lack of Readiness	USA Female	150	31,43	4,75	3-572	9,87	,000*	,049				
		USA Male	146	31,02	6,02								
	Turkey Female	155	28,65	5,52									
	Turkey Male	125	29,04	5,05									
	Lack of Information	USA Female	150	37,08	10,04					3-572	33,62	,000*	,150
		USA Male	146	35,69	10,83								
Turkey Female		155	25,97	11,74									
Turkey Male		125	26,62	11,31									
Inconsistent Information	USA Female	150	33,32	10,36	3-572	5,31	,001*	,027					
	USA Male	146	31,54	11,25									
	Turkey Female	155	28,91	13,04									
	Turkey Male	125	33,96	12,50									

Table 4 shows that there is a significant difference between the scores of high-school students in the U.S. and Turkey according to gender in terms of lack of readiness, measured by the CDDQ [ $F(3,572)=9,87$   $p<.01$ ,  $\eta^2 =.049$ ]. According to the results of the Tukey Test conducted to discover the reason behind the difference, the average score of high-school females and males in the U.S. concerning lack of readiness is significantly higher than that of high-school females and males in Turkey. Table 2 also shows that there is a significant difference between the average scores of high-school students in the U.S. and Turkey concerning lack of information, measured by the Scale of Career Decision-Making Difficulties [ $F(3,574)=33,62$   $p<.01$ ,  $\eta^2 =.150$ ]. According to the results of the Tukey Test conducted to discover the reason behind the difference, the average score of high-school females in Turkey concerning lack of information is significantly lower than that of high-school males in Turkey and of high-school females and males in the U.S. In addition, Table 3 shows that there is a significant difference between the scores of high-school students in the U.S. and Turkey concerning inconsistent information, measured by the CDDQ [ $F(3,574)=5,31$   $p<.01$ ,  $\eta^2 =.027$ ]. According to the results of the Tukey Test conducted to discover the reason behind the difference, the average score of high-school females in Turkey concerning inconsistent information is significantly lower than that of high-school males in Turkey and of high-school females and males in the U.S.

**Results of scores of career decision-making difficulties by grade for high-school students in the U.S. and Turkey**

MANOVA was conducted in order to discover whether the scores of career decision-making difficulties by grade for high-school students in the U.S. and Turkey vary or not. The results are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5. Unilateral MANOVA Results on Career Decision-Making Difficulties by Grade for High School Students in the USA and Turkey**

Effect	$\lambda$	F	df	p	$\eta^2$
Grade	.034	9,54	7-566	0.00	.105

For this reason, it is safe to say that the grade level of high-school students in the U.S. and Turkey is moderately influential in career decision-making difficulties. Table 6 shows that there is a significant difference between the average scores of high-school students in the U.S. and Turkey according to grade in terms of lack of readiness, measured by the CDDQ [ $F(7,568)=4,99$   $p<.01$ ,  $\eta^2 =.058$ ]. According to the results of the Tukey Test conducted to discover the reason behind the difference, the average score of eleventh grade high-school students in Turkey concerning lack of readiness is significantly lower than that of ninth, tenth and twelfth grade high-school students in Turkey and ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth grade high-school students in the U.S. Table 5 shows that there is a significant difference between the average scores of high-school students in the U.S. and Turkey according to grade in terms of lack of information, measured by the Scale of Career Decision-Making Difficulties [ $F(7,568)=14,10$   $p<.01$ ,  $\eta^2 =.148$ ]. According to the results of the Tukey Test conducted to discover the reason behind the difference, the average score of ninth, tenth and eleventh grade high-school students in Turkey concerning lack of information is significantly lower than that of twelfth grade high-school students in Turkey and ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth grade high-school students in the U.S. According to the final finding of the table, there is no significant difference between the average score of ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth grade high-school students in the U.S. concerning inconsistent information and of ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth grade high-school students in Turkey.

**Table 6. Average, Standard Deviation and MANOVA Results on Scores of Career Decision-Making Difficulties by Grade for High School Students in the USA and Turkey**

Source		Dependent Variable	<i>n</i>	$\bar{x}$	<i>Sd</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	$\eta^2$					
Grade	USA	9 <sup>th</sup> grade	45	31,20	5,67	7-568	4,99	,000*	,058					
		10 <sup>th</sup> grade	116	31,41	5,12									
		11 <sup>th</sup> grade	91	31,09	5,67									
		12 <sup>th</sup> grade	44	31,06	5,48									
	Turkey	9 <sup>th</sup> grade	90	29,25	4,96									
		10 <sup>th</sup> grade	77	28,64	5,51									
		11 <sup>th</sup> grade	69	27,71	5,22									
		12 <sup>th</sup> grade	44	30,02	5,61									
	Lack of Information	USA	9 <sup>th</sup> grade	45	9,21					9,21	7-568	14,10	,000*	,148
			10 <sup>th</sup> grade	116	10,28					10,28				
			11 <sup>th</sup> grade	91	10,35					10,35				
			12 <sup>th</sup> grade	44	12,35					12,35				
Turkey		9 <sup>th</sup> grade	90	11,86	11,86									
		10 <sup>th</sup> grade	77	12,01	12,01									
		11 <sup>th</sup> grade	69	10,24	10,24									
		12 <sup>th</sup> grade	44	12,38	12,38									
Inconsistent Information		USA	9 <sup>th</sup> grade	45	10,49	10,49	7-568	,964	,457	,012				
			10 <sup>th</sup> grade	116	10,31	10,31								
			11 <sup>th</sup> grade	91	10,93	10,93								
			12 <sup>th</sup> grade	44	12,50	12,50								
	Turkey	9 <sup>th</sup> grade	90	12,73	12,73									
		10 <sup>th</sup> grade	77	12,76	12,76									
		11 <sup>th</sup> grade	69	12,80	12,80									
		12 <sup>th</sup> grade	44	14,24	14,24									

\*  $p < .05$ 

## DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

According to the findings of the research, the average score of high-school females and males in the U.S. for lack of readiness is significantly higher than that of high-school females and males in Turkey. Career decision-making is momentous in career development. Gati, Krausz and Osipow (1996) suggest in their classification for career decision-making difficulties that lack of readiness occurs at the preparation phase prior to the career decision-making process. For this reason, lack of readiness consists of a lack of motivation, indecision and unreasonable beliefs. According to Mau (2004), cultural factors are extremely influential in one's career development and decision-making. In a study comparing career decision-making difficulties and levels of career indecision for American and Taiwanese college students, Mau (2001) reveals that the levels of career decision-making difficulties and indecision experienced by Taiwanese students were higher than those of American students. Zhou and Santos (2007) compare career decision-making difficulties of British and Chinese undergraduates in terms of culture and gender.

The findings of the research indicate that the only career decision-making difficulty Chinese students scored higher in than British students was in the category of lack of readiness but there was no significant difference between these two groups of students in other categories. As is evident from the literature, the levels of career decision-making difficulties of students in Western countries are lower than those in Eastern countries. However, it is quite the opposite in this study. The assessment of this study's results requires consideration of the fact that the students of the research group in the U.S. are in a heterogeneous structure. In other words, the majority of American high-school students in the research group are of Chinese, Mexican, Indian, Pakistani and Latin heritage. Mau (2004) found that career decision-making difficulties of Asian-American students were higher than those of White American students.

Therefore, the reason why career decision-making difficulties of American students are higher than those of Turkish students may result from the fact that American students are in a heterogeneous structure. Additionally, cultural differences may have been influential in this result. According to Mocan-Aydın (2000), Turkish people still seem to adhere to collectivism whilst, at the same time, they strive for individualism. According to Voltan-Acar (2012), in collectivist societies such as Turkey, individuals find it hard to make decisions on their own behalf. Family ties are strong and consequently others people's influence on the decisions made by an individual is high. According to the results concerning lack of information and inconsistent information—sub-categories of career decision-making difficulties—the average score of high-school females in Turkey is significantly lower than that of high-school males in Turkey and of high-school females and males in the U.S. One can align these results with various conclusions of other research. Zhou and Santos (2007) compared career decision-making difficulties of British and Chinese undergraduates in terms of culture and gender.

According to the findings of the research, the level of career decision-making difficulties for male students was lower than the level for female students. Wilson (2000) carried out an analysis of the relationships between career indecision and gender, race, competence in career decision-making and dependency on family. In a study conducted with freshmen, there was no statistically significant difference amongst career indecision, level of self-competence for decision-making and dependency on family for females and males in terms of race and gender variables. Some related research points to different conclusions. Gati and Ahser (2001) point out that in their research adapted for Israeli students, males experienced more career decision-making difficulties than females in all grades, as a result of external conflicts and unreasonable beliefs. In addition, it was found that ninth and tenth grade male students experienced more career decision-making difficulties than females, resulting from methods of obtaining information for

career alternatives and internal conflicts. In a similar vein, Gati and Saka (2001) found in their study on Israeli students that levels of career decision-making difficulties for male students were higher than those for female students. A study carried out in Turkey by Akbalık (1991), Ürün (2010), Mutlu (2011) and Kutlu (2012) on the professional maturity of high-school students indicates that female students were professionally more mature than male students. Bacanlı (2012) suggests in his study that levels of career decision-making difficulties of female students were lower than those of male students. In addition, another study carried out by Eşici and Özünlü (2013) indicates that levels of career decision-making difficulties for female students in the sub-categories of lack of readiness, lack of information and inconsistent information were lower than those of male students. Career decision-making difficulties resulting from inconsistent information originate from unreliable information about oneself and his/her circle, internal conflicts and parents, teachers, friends or other family members. It is difficult to discuss a change in roles women are expected to play, even though growing numbers of women have recently begun to take part in business life in Turkey.

For this reason, women are expected to choose professions with more favorable working conditions whereas men are expected to opt for the careers with a higher status. This may have given rise to females experiencing fewer career decision-making difficulties. According to the other findings of the research, there is no significant difference between the average score of ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth grade high-school students in the U.S. in terms of inconsistent information and ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth grade high-school students in Turkey. In addition, the average score of eleventh grade high-school students in Turkey concerning lack of readiness is significantly lower than that of ninth, tenth and twelfth grade high-school students in Turkey and ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth grade high-school students in the U.S. The research also indicates that the average score of ninth, tenth and eleventh grade high-school students in Turkey concerning lack of information is significantly lower than that of twelfth grade high-school students in Turkey and ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth grade high-school students in the U.S. Age is the leading factor in influencing the career decision-making process.

The studies and literature highlight that people are expected to make more reasonable and well-thought through decisions as they age (Albion and Fogarty, 2002; Bacanlı, Eşici and Özünlü, 2013; Demirbaş, 1992; Gati and Asher, 2001; Gati and Saka, 2001; Tien, 2005). This study indicates that the score concerning lack of readiness for eleventh grade students in Turkey is lower than lack of information and lack of readiness. The anxiety levels of twelfth grade students may rise since they study for the university entrance exam and this may have an impact on their decision-making difficulties. In addition, the sub-category of lack of information is lower for ninth, tenth and eleventh grade students than for twelfth grade students. This may result from the fact that those students were about to take a university entrance exam. Career decision-making difficulties of American students in terms of lack of readiness and lack of information are higher than those of Turkish students. This may result from the heterogeneous structure of the research group in the U.S. Furthermore, career decisions are made on different timelines in Western countries, such as

the U.S., since the education system differs from Eastern Countries (Öztemel, 2012). This may have an impact on the conclusions of the research. The general review of the conclusions of the research indicates that high-school students in Turkey experience fewer career decision-making difficulties than American high-school students in terms of gender and grade. As specified above, this may result from the heterogeneous structure of the research group in the U.S. In addition, the career decision-making difficulties of female and eleventh grade students in Turkey are lower. This study aims to compare high-school students in Turkey and the U.S. in terms of career-decision making difficulties. It is safe to say that this study contributes to the literature and the field of career counselling despite several limitations. The American students of the research group consist of those studying in Berkeley. The students studying in Berkeley are of various cultural origins. This should be taken into consideration in studies on various cultures. In addition, individuals can benefit from variables such as socio-economic level, family expectations and factors that affect decision-making.

The conclusions of this research may also contribute to practices. As is already known, the years of high-school education are of major importance to students when they come to make a career decision and choose what they would like to pursue as a profession. Psychological counselors in schools have major roles to play throughout the years of high school. Psychological counselors in schools are required to provide students with information concerning their readiness for decision-making, as well as provide sufficient and consistent information. For this reason, they can construct programs that apply to each category of difficulty in an effort to relieve career decision-making difficulties. In addition, psychological or career counselors in schools should be trained for this process, as they are the practitioners of the programs.

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