Career Choices, Job Selection Criteria, and Leadership Preferences in a Transitional Nation: The Case of Turkey

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This study explored the factors that influenced Turkish university students' career choices, job selection criteria, and leadership preferences. Participated in this study were 1,213 senior and junior management students from 17 universities across 6 regions of Turkey. Data collection was accomplished through a self-administered four-part questionnaire. Findings revealed that for the entire sample, having power and authority, peaceful work environment, opportunity for career advancement, and pay were the most motivating factors in job selection, whereas close supervision and guidance, praise from supervisor, feedback on performance, and sense of belonging were the least motivating ones. Charismatic leadership was found to be the most preferred style followed by participative, paternalistic, and bureaucratic styles. Finally, career choices were mostly affected by intrinsic factors (i.e., self aspirations), whereas interpersonal factors (i.e., significant others' expectations) were least influential. Findings were discussed in light of dynamic and changing cultural characteristics of the Turkish society.

KEY WORDS: culture; career choices; leadership ideals; motivators; Turkey.

For the last two decades, researchers and practitioners have focused on cultural differences in career development due to increasing multiculturalism in the society and its organizations (cf. Yang, Wong,

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Hwang, & Heppner, 2002). Among various cultural and ethnic groups that constitute the North American mosaic, research mostly investigated the career choices and development of African-Americans (e.g., Bobo, Hildreth, et al., 1998), Mexican-Americans (e.g., Bullington & Arbona, 2001), and Asian-Americans (e.g., Beyon, Toohey, Kishor, 1998). Less represented in the North American academic literature were studies conducted in different countries or socio-cultural contexts, such as Nigeria (Erinosho, 1997), China (Bai, 1998), Ghana (Baryeh, Lamptey, & Baryeh, 2000), and Taiwan (Peng & Herr, 1999). Although these studies provided evidence for cross-cultural variations in career choices, there still is a void in the literature in theoretical explanations of why and to what extent cultural context plays a role in career development. The purposes of this research are two-folded. First, the study examined the ways in which cultural characteristics influence the criteria employed in career choices and job selection of university students in Turkey. Second, the relationship between career choice criteria and leadership preferences were investigated.

In social science research, culture is conceptualized as a set of values, assumptions, belief systems, norms, and behavioral patterns that differentiate one human group from another (cf. Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961). In his forty-country comparative research, Hofstede (1980) identified four major cultural dimensions. The first dimension is called 'individualism-collectivism.' In individualistic cultures, individual is perceived as an 'independent entity,' whereas in collectivistic cultures s/he is perceived as an 'interdependent entity'. Consequently, decision-making in individualistic cultures are based on individuals' own wishes and desires, whereas in collectivistic cultures decisions are made jointly with the 'in-group' (e.g., family, relatives, friends), and the primary objective is to optimize the group's benefit. The second dimension is power distance. In high power distant cultures, power inequality in society and its organizations exist and is accepted. Uncertainty avoidance, the third dimension, denotes the extent to which uncertainty and ambiguity is tolerated in society; in high uncertainty avoidant cultures it is less tolerated, whereas in low uncertainty avoidant cultures it is more tolerated. Lastly, masculinity and femininity dimension deals with the prevailing values and priorities. In masculine cultures, achievement and accumulation of wealth is valued and strongly encouraged; in feminine cultures, maintaining good interpersonal relationships is the priority.

Carpenter and Foster (1977) and Beyon, Kelleen, and Kishor (1998) proposed a three-dimensional model of career choices. Accordingly, ca-

reer choices are based on 'intrinsic' (e.g., interest in the job, work that is personally satisfying, etc.), 'extrinsic' (e.g., availability of jobs, well-paying or prestigious occupations), or 'interpersonal' (i.e., influence of parents and significant others). Culture seems to influence especially the endorsement of interpersonal factors. For example, Beyon et al. (1998) found that Chinese-Canadian students' concern in choosing a career was to bring honor to the family.

The cross-cultural variations in leadership preferences are well-documented (cf. Bass, 1997; den Hartog, House, Hanges, et al., 1999). Four leadership ideals were investigated in this study. Participative leadership (Lawler, 1986) encourages joint decision-making and involvement of employees in key decisions. Bureaucratic/transactional leadership (Bass & Avolio, 1994) is based on an exchange relationship between the superior and the subordinate (e.g., obedience in exchange of rewards). Transformational leadership brings change in status-quo and promotes development of individual followers through individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, charisma, and inspirational motivation (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Paternalism is a salient leadership style in South-East Asian, Latin American, Middle Eastern, and Asian countries (Aycan, Kanungo, Mendonca, Yu, Deller, Stahl, Khursid, 2000). The paternalistic leader takes care of his/her employees like a parent. S/he is involved in every aspect of employees' lives and provides guidance and counseling in professional as well as personal matters.

The Cultural Context and Hypotheses

Turkey was selected as the cultural context in this study. Other than being a culture that is familiar to both authors, the choice also reflects the desire to capture the process of cultural change and how it effects career development of the young workforce. In the early years of the Turkish Republic (1923s), economy relied heavily on agricultural output (43% of Turkey's GNP). Almost 80 % of the business organizations in Turkey were established after 1980 which marks the liberalization movement and the beginning of the era of globalization for Turkey. However, as in many other developing countries (cf., Kanungo & Jaeger, 1990), Turkey experiences uncertainties and lack of and/or improper use of resources. Adoption of liberal economy and increasing industrialization on the one hand, limited resources and developmental opportunities on the other, increased competition and

achievement-orientation especially among younger generations of Turkey. Research supports that socio-cultural, economic, and political changes affect the career choices of young people. For example, Bai (1998) found that market economy changed the values of university students who put self-interest before the societal interests, and rated money and power as the primary motivators in finding a job. Similarly, in Turkish youth we observe a transition in values in such a way that 'traditional values' such as humility, sharing and equality, respect to authority and family are replaced by competition, achievement, and promotion of self-interest.

Hypothesis 1. Turkish university students will base their career decisions on intrinsic and extrinsic factors more than interpersonal ones.

Hypothesis 2. In choosing a job or an employment setting, Turkish university students will prefer organizations led by transformational and participative, rather than paternalistic and bureaucratic leaders.

Hypothesis 3. In choosing a job or an employment setting, Turkish university students will be motivated primarily by opportunities for career advancement.

We are also interested in examining the relationship between criteria employed in career choices and preferred leadership styles. It is likely that those individuals who make career decisions on the basis of intrinsic and personal factors (e.g., self-interests, personal values, and preferences) would prefer leaders who promote their career advancement through intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration. On the other hand, those who are guided by interpersonal factors in career decisions (e.g., influenced by family) are likely to have a tendency to be submissive to people in authority. Also, they seem to value establishing and maintaining good interpersonal relationships at work. As such, they are more likely to prefer paternalistic and bureaucratic leadership.

Hypothesis 4. Reliance on intrinsic factors in career choices will correlate positively with preference for participative and transformational leadership.

Hypothesis 5. Reliance on interpersonal factors in career choices will correlate positively with preference for paternalistic and bureaucratic leadership.

Method

Participants

Participated in this study were 1,213 Turkish university students majoring in business administration and economics. The sample was purposefully narrowed down to this group of students, because they have some work experience (through internships, etc.) and knowledge about the business life, and they will join the workforce soon. We contacted the 49 universities awarding degrees in business administration and economics, and 17 agreed to participate in the study. The participating universities represent 6 (out of 7) different regions of Turkey. This was also a heterogenous set of universities with respect to their nation-wide ranking. The sample was comprised of 752 male (62%) and 461 (38%) female students with the mean age of 22.08 years (SD = 0.81). Slightly more than half of the sample was studying business administration (55%), and the rest were studying economics. Half of the sample were senior students, 35% were junior and 15% were sophomore in standing.

Measurement

There were four parts in the questionnaire. The first part was comprised of 25 motivators assessing the extent to which participants considered each as important in selecting a job or an employment setting. The items (see Table 2 for the full list) were generated using Kanungo and Hartwick's (1987) study of work motivators. The Q-sort technique (Block, 1978) was used to assess the relative importance of items to one another. We converted the pile-sorting task into a paper-and-pencil response format. First, we numbered each item. On the same page, we drew boxes on nine separate rows. On the first and the ninth rows there was one box each; on the second and eighth rows there were two boxes each, on the third and seventh rows there were three boxes each, on the forth and sixth rows there were four boxes each, and on the fifth row there were five boxes. The 1-2-3-4-5-4-3-2-1 distribution of boxes resembled the shape of the normal curve. Students were asked to write the number of items in each box according to their importance. The number of the most motivating item had to be written in the first box on the first row (assigned a score of 9), the second most motivating two items had to be written in the two boxes in the following row (assigned a score of 8), and so on; the number of the

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least motivating item had to be written in the box at the ninth row (assigned a score of 1). For each item, therefore, the minimum score was 1 and the maximum score was 9.

The second part was comprised of 21 items (see Table 1 for items) measuring the importance of intrinsic, extrinsic, and interpersonal factors in choosing a career. The items were generated on the basis of the three-dimensional framework proposed by Carpenter and Foster (1977), Beyon, Kelleen, and Kishor (1998), and Biggerstaff (2000): intrinsic factors (e.g., 'My personal values in life'), extrinsic factors (e.g., 'availability of jobs'), and interpersonal factors (e.g., 'My father's expectations of me'). The importance of each factor in making a career choice was evaluated on a 5-point Likert scale (5 = 'of utmost importance'; 1 = 'of least importance').

The third part had 45 questions assessing four leadership ideals. Sinha's (1995) Participative Leadership (e.g., 'The ideal leader frequently consults subordinates') and Bureaucratic Leadership (e.g., 'The ideal leader goes by laid down rules only') scales were used, each containing 10 items (α = .72 and .73, respectively). Transformational Leadership scale (Bass & Avolio, 1994) was comprised of 12 items (α = .78; e.g., 'The ideal leader encourages others to rethink ideas that they had never questioned before'). Paternalistic Leadership scale was developed by Aycan, et al. (2000), and contained 13 items (α = .85). Sample items included 'The ideal leader is like a father/mother,' 'The ideal leader creates a family atmosphere at work.' Respondents were asked to rate the extent to which they agreed with the stated characteristics of ideal leadership on a 5-point Likert scale (5 = 'strongly agree'; 1 = 'strongly disagree').

The last part was comprised of 60 questions assessing four cultural dimensions. Ensuring the validity of the scales measuring cultural dimensions is particularly important in cultural and cross-cultural research. The validity of scales was tested and ensured through the following process. First, the items were developed on the basis of Hofstede's (1980) conceptualization and operationalization of value orientations. The scales were based also on previously developed items by Hofstede (1980), Aycan et al. (2000), Fikret-Pasa et al. (2001), and Goregenli (1997). Second, the validity was tested through a sorting task by a panel of ten subject-matter-experts (3 professors in the area of cross-cultural psychology and 7 graduate students). The panel members separately sorted the originally developed 72 items into four piles (i.e., four cultural dimensions). A rigorous criterion of 90% agreement in correct sorting among ratees was set, and twelve items that did not meet this criterion were eliminated. Finally, a pilot test of

remaining items on 125 university students concurred that the magnitude and direction of correlations among the four scales matched findings of Hofstede (1980).

The reliability of scales was tested and items that have low item-total correlations were eliminated in the main study. The scale scores were computed on the basis of 14 items of Individualism-collectivism (α = .72, 'People do not hesitate to make sacrifices for the benefit of the in-group—e.g., family'), 12 items of masculinity-femininity (α = .69, 'Accumulation of wealth, materials, and possessions is the most important goal in life'), 12 items of power distance (α = .70, 'In our society, there is status inequality among individuals/groups'), and 11 items of uncertainty avoidance (α = .71 'Deviant persons and different ideas are considered to be dangerous'). In this section, the participants were asked to follow the instruction: "This section contains a number of statements describing how *people* in Turkey think about different situations. Please indicate *how descriptive you think each statement is about the opinion or characteristics of people in Turkey* by circling the appropriate response ranging from 1 ('not at all descriptive of opinions/characteristics of people in Turkey') to 5 ('highly descriptive of opinions/characteristics of people in Turkey')." This method of treating respondents as 'observants' or 'informants' is recommended in cross-cultural research (cf. Aycan, Kanungo, Sinha, 1999) to increase representativeness of the findings, to capture the *shared* values, norms and belief systems in society, and to minimize social desirability. High scores indicated collectivism, femininity, high uncertainty avoidance, and high power distance.

Procedure

The questionnaires were self-administered, distributed and collected in class. Students were informed that participation was voluntary, and asked to sign a consent form explaining the purposes of the study and the nature of participation. It took approximately 20 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Respondents were asked not to write their names or identification numbers anywhere on the questionnaire to ensure anonymity.

Results

S __ We first investigated the cultural characteristics of Turkey from the __ S
N __ university students' point of view. On four cultural dimensions, Tur- __ N
L __ key scored slightly above the scale mid-point (i.e., 3) on individualism- __ L

collectivism ($M = 3.34$, $SD = 0.54$) and power distance ($M = 3.45$, $SD = 0.51$), but close to the mid-point on uncertainty avoidance ($M = 3.18$, $SD = 0.49$) and masculinity-femininity ($M = 3.12$, $SD = 0.49$).

To examine the factors that influence career decisions, the 21-item career choices inventory was factor analyzed. Principle components factor analysis with a varimax rotation yielded six factors, which explained 54.64% of total variance (Table 1). The first factor had four items and explained 14.07% of variance. It is labeled as 'Financial and Professional Contribution of the Job.' The second factor, which explained 11.03% of variance, was labeled as 'Family's Expectations.' The third factor was called 'Personal Values and Wishes,' and explained 9.33% of variance with five items. 'Expectations of Significant Others' was the fourth factor with four items and 8.94% of variance. The fifth factor was labeled as 'Market Conditions' and had two items explaining 5.98% of variance. Finally, the last factor was labeled as 'Person-job Fit,' and explained 5.29% of variance with three items.

The items in the first and the fifth dimensions seemed to represent the 'extrinsic' factors, those in the third and sixth represented the 'intrinsic' factors, and the second and the fourth factors represented the 'interpersonal' factors. This new structure is tested through the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) using the LISREL 8 program (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1996). Results revealed that the 3-factor model provided a better fit to data compared to the 6-factor model (for the 3-factor model: $RMR = .07$, $GFI = .95$, $AGFI = .93$, $NFI = .96$, $NNFI = .97$). For the 'Extrinsic Factors' (6 items) it was $\alpha = .75$, for the 'Interpersonal Factors' (7 items) it was $\alpha = .76$, and for the 'Intrinsic Factors' (8 items) it was $\alpha = .74$.

To test the first Hypothesis, mean of intrinsic, extrinsic, and interpersonal factors was computed. Rendering support to the first hypothesis, students scored the highest on intrinsic factors ($M = 3.95$, $SD = .45$), followed by extrinsic ($M = 3.73$, $SD = .66$), and interpersonal factors ($M = 2.33$, $SD = .66$). In order to conduct a within-subject mean comparison, we first had to achieve a comparable metric structure for the three scales that were used to assess intrinsic, extrinsic, and interpersonal factors. We created a new set of three variables to represent the *rank order of preferences* for intrinsic, extrinsic and interpersonal factors, so that comparisons could be made across the same metric structure. The paired-sample t-test results confirmed that intrinsic factors were more important than both extrinsic ($t = 17.74$, $p < .001$) and interpersonal factors ($t = 98.33$, $p < .001$), and also that the extrinsic factors were more important than the interpersonal ones ($t = 73.05$, $p < .001$).

Table 1
The Principal Components Factor Analysis of the Career
Choices Inventory with Varimax Rotation

	Factor Loadings					
Item	*Factor 1*	*Factor 2*	*Factor 3*	*Factor 4*	*Factor 5*	*Factor 6*
Factor 1: Financial and Professional Contribution of the Job (External)						
Opportunity to achieve a good standard of living	.78					
Opportunity to earn a good salary	.76					
Status in society	.71					
Ease in career advancement	.68					
Factor 2: Family's Expectations (Interpersonal)						
My father's expectations of me		.86				
My mother's expectations of me		.86				
My relatives' expectations of me		.64				
Factor 3: Personal Values and Wishes (Internal)						
My personal values			.74			
Opportunity to contribute to society			.53			
Opportunity for learning and development			.52			
My personal wishes			.49			
Fit to the image that I have for myself			.47			
Factor 4: Expectations of the Significant Others (Interpersonal)						
My teachers' expectations of me				.69		
The role models				.63		
My friends' career choices				.54		
My best friends' expectations of me				.48		
Factor 5: Market Conditions (External)						
Market gaps and opportunities					.76	
Availability of jobs					.49	
Factor 6: Person-Job Fit (Internal)						
Challenging nature of the job						.71
The life style that comes with the job						.50
My skills and abilities						.44
Eigenvalue	2.95	2.32	1.96	1.88	1.25	1.11
Explained Variance	14.0	11.03	9.33	8.94	5.98	5.29

A similar method was employed to test Hypothesis 2. As was expected, transformational leadership ($M = 4.02$, $SD = .44$) was the first choice, followed by participative ($M = 3.59$, $SD = .52$), paternalistic ($M = 3.20$, $SD = .52$) and bureaucratic ($M = 2.77$, $SD = .55$) leadership styles. To compare means among the four leadership preferences, the metric equivalence was established in the same way as described above. The paired-sample t-tests revealed that charismatic leadership was more preferred than participative ($t = 22.23$, $p < .001$), paternalistic ($t = 47.13$, $p < .001$), and bureaucratic ($t = 71.66$, $p < .001$) leadership styles. Next came participative leadership, which was endorsed more than both paternalistic ($t = -22.35$, $p < .001$) and bureaucratic ($t = -36.32$, $p < .001$) leadership. Finally, paternalism was more preferred than bureaucratic leadership ($t = -18.51$, $p < .001$).

To test the third Hypothesis, first a factor analysis was conducted to see whether or not a meaningful grouping of 25 motivators emerged. However, the analysis failed to find a robust structure, and we decided to conduct the analyses at the individual item level. Mean and standard deviations for each item was computed and presented in Table 2 in descending order. The findings showed that having power and authority, a good salary, opportunity for career advancement, and peaceful work environment were the top five criteria for job selection, whereas close supervision and guidance, praise from the supervisor, sense of belonging to the organization, feedback on performance, and job safety were the least motivating factors.

Finally, the last two Hypotheses were tested through Pearson's product moment correlations. Findings confirmed both hypotheses. There was a positive and significant correlation of intrinsic factors in career choices with preference for transformational ($r = .27$, $p < .001$) and participative leadership ($r = .22$, $p < .001$). Influence by interpersonal factors in career choices correlated positively with preference for paternalistic ($r = .28$, $p < .001$) and bureaucratic leadership ($r = .22$, $p < .001$).

Discussion

The main objective of this study was to investigate the ways in which culture and cultural change influenced career choices and job selection criteria of Turkish university students. The participating students in the present study were majoring in business administration and economics. Findings showed that this sample perceived Turk-

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Table 2
The Means and Standard Deviations of Motivating Items

Item	Mean	SD
Having power and authority	6.68	1.97
Pay	6.32	1.81
Opportunity for career advancement	6.26	1.64
Peaceful work environment	6.04	1.65
Participation in decision making	5.90	1.56
Autonomy in my job	5.81	1.97
Opportunity for personal growth and development	5.61	1.57
Sense of achievement	5.60	1.56
Opportunity for creativity	5.36	1.84
Good interpersonal relations	5.32	1.59
Interesting work	5.29	1.80
Work in a prestigous company	5.22	1.67
Job security (long-term employment in the company)	5.12	1.74
Sense of pride in work	5.01	1.78
Responsibility in my job	4.85	1.52
Awards for superior performance (e.g., medals of achievement)	4.84	1.69
Benefits (health insurance, pension fund, option of company shares etc)	4.73	1.88
Opportunity to use various skills	4.65	1.61
Sense of contribution to society	4.61	1.85
Existence of goals	4.48	1.67
Work safety	4.41	1.48
Feedback on my performance	3.98	1.58
Sense of belonging	3.64	1.53
Praise from supervisor	3.27	1.61
Close supervision/guidance	2.40	1.45

ish culture to be somewhat less collectivistic and more individualistic. This supports the findings of the recent literature on Turkish cultural values (e.g., Aycan et al., 2000; Goregenli, 1997; Fikret-Pasa, Kabasakal & Bodur, 2001). Fulfilling one's own desires and expectations has become as important as (if not more than) fulfilling other's wishes and expectations. Such cultural characteristics were reflected in career choices of the students: personal values, wishes and expectations were

the most important factors that influenced career decisions, followed by market forces and availability of jobs, whereas fulfilling family's and significant others' expectations was the least important.

The ranking of factors (i.e., 'intrinsic,' 'extrinsic' and 'interpersonal' in descending order of importance) was confirmed in previous studies on various ethnic and cultural groups that were also undergoing transition (e.g., Bai, 1998; Beyon et al. 1998). Parental influence on career choices has been studied extensively since Roe's theorizing (1957), and our findings do not necessarily deny the importance of parents and significant others. It is possible that the students internalize the parental values and wishes (cf. Zingaro, 1983), adopt these as theirs and claim the control of their lives. This way they enhance self-efficacy and feelings of agency (Nucci et al., 1993). On the other hand, 'self-determination' and 'autonomy' have become values in child-rearing practices in contemporary Turkish families (cf. Kagitcibasi, 1996). In either case, the 'centrality' of self in changing cultural values is reflected in career choices. It should be noted that present findings represent opinions of a particular group of students majoring in business administration and economics. It may be possible that students in other fields (e.g., nursing, art, education, theology, psychology) may have different perceptions and preferences. This should be kept in mind as a 'boundary condition' in interpreting other findings of the study.

Increasing individualism is also reflected in job selection criteria. The present sample prefers employment settings that promote their career advancement. As expected, 'autonomy,' 'opportunities for personal and professional development,' and 'sense of achievement' were found to be the most motivating factors. With respect to leadership ideals, transformational leadership was the most preferred, because it was perceived to contribute the most to individuals' professional development as well as societal change and advancement, and this is what is needed in a transitional nation like Turkey.

Power distance was the second cultural characteristic that was investigated. After adoption of liberal economy in 1980s, Turkey has become 'the land of opportunities.' The dominating idea was that everyone could be rich and powerful. People no longer had to accept their status in society; they sought and created opportunities to excel in their careers. The legacy of this era still continues, and this is well reflected in our findings. This sample seeks 'power and authority' and 'participation in decision-making' as their primary criteria in job selection. The traditional values that prescribe the young people to 'know

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their place' and 'respect the elders and people in authority' have certainly changed. However, young people realize that status inequalities will prevail for a long time, and they want their place to be high in this hierarchy. This is also evident in their leadership ideals. Participative leadership is the second most preferred leadership style, whereas paternalistic leadership, which indicates power inequality between the superior and the subordinate, is the third.

With respect to uncertainty avoidance, Turkey seems to tolerate differences and uncertainties better today compared to 30 years ago. Uncertainties have almost become the routine of life, and people got used to living with it. Decrease in uncertainty avoidance is evident in our findings that show that the young people in this sample are *not* motivated by close supervision, praise from the supervisor, feedback on performance, sense of belonging, and job safety (i.e., the least motivating factors—Table 2). In a high uncertainty avoiding and strongly risk aversive cultural context, these would have been the important motivators (e.g., Mathur, Zhang, & Neelankavil, 2001). Similarly, in such cultures bureaucratic leadership (i.e., strong adherence to rules and procedures) would have been the preference, which is to the contrary in the present case.

The final cultural dimension was masculinity-femininity. In this respect, too, Turkey is experiencing a transition in values in such a way that competition, assertiveness, achievement, and accumulation of wealth have become more important today compared to the past. The best indicator of this is the value attached to 'high salary' and 'sense of achievement' in our findings. However, 'peaceful work environment' and 'good interpersonal relations at work' are still important aspects of work environment, and this demonstrates the still existing feminine nature of the society.

The second objective of this research was to investigate the relationship between factors that influence career choices and leadership ideals. The findings confirmed the hypotheses. Those who were guided by intrinsic/personal factors in career choices preferred leaders who would contribute to their personal development (i.e., transformational and participative), whereas those whose career choices were influenced by parents, families, and significant others preferred paternalism and bureaucratic leadership. In the latter case, students, for whom family and friends were important, were attracted to organizations where a family metaphor is created. Those students may also have high tendency to please others and conform to rules, and as such they may prefer bureaucratic leadership.

This research is hoped to contribute to career development literature by demonstrating the impact of culture and cultural change on career development of young people. Gottfredson (1981) and Krumboltz et al. (1978) provided a basis for understanding the way in which systematic differences in environmental reinforcement can lead to group differences in vocational behavior. Following this argument, we proposed that career-related choices and preferences are reinforced (i.e., gain acceptance and approval by the society) if they are in congruence with the prevailing values and norms, which are at the core of culture.

There are a number of limitations in this research. First, because we do not have information regarding the career choices of young people thirty years ago, attributing the current pattern in career-related decisions to cultural change is intuitive, but nevertheless speculative. Second, the ideal way of testing the impact of culture on career development is to conduct a cross-cultural research; such efforts are underway by the present authors. Third, although the findings are based on a large-scale data set from 17 universities all over Turkey, they may not represent all the young people in the country.

The most important practical implication of this research is that it provides insights into successful career counseling in multicultural societal and organizational settings. Knowing values, preferences, and expectations of young people allows us to guide them into right employment settings, and this will ensure person-organizational fit (O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986). Moreover, tracing cultural changes and their implications on career development would enable us to provide a life career development plan to individuals who are 'always in the process of becoming' due to changing value structures (Gysbers & Henderson, 2001, p. 248).

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