

## **Impact of Career Adaptability on Employee Performance**

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**ABSTRACT:** *In the world of business where competition is intense and the importance of human resources is increasing day by day. The level of performance that individuals exhibit is one of the factors determining competitive power of businesses. Career adaptability is the whole of the abilities that give individuals the power to combat change that they will face, as well as reduce compliance problems that they will experience in both career and professional life. The purpose of this study is to determine whether career adaptability is an effect on task and contextual performance from job performance dimensions. In this direction, a survey was conducted on working in the accounting, banking and insurance professions within the provincial borders of Istanbul. The data obtained from 450 questionnaires were analyzed by SPSS program. According to the analysis results; there was a positive relationship between work performance and career adaptability dimension.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Career, career adaptability, work performance.*

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

The currently introduced concept of globalization in business life and technologic developments increases competition between companies. Enterprises that are willing to keep up in such a competitive environment should efficiently benefit from human resources. It is necessary to ensure human resources that are innovative and have high performance. On the other hand, individuals should prepare for the professional competence required by this highly competitive and globalizing business life. Rapid industrialization causes significant changes in requirements of professions. Workers should acquire and improve skills that will ensure career adaptability. Thus, they will be productive in business life and have the power to struggle with rapid changes in working conditions.

Career is a set of experiences of individuals that are gained during their life in one or more professional field. On the other hand, career is a dynamic process involving an individual's life before having an occupation, his/her social life, family and spare-time activities. When viewed from this aspect, it can be seen that the concept of career isn't limited with professional life. Every individual shows interest to one or more field of profession during his/her career.

But technological developments, globalization and changes in information sharing processes bring along significant changes in today's job definitions, requirements of jobs and employment conditions. As a result of all these conditions, individuals have more difficulties in planning and making career transitions. The main way to overcome these difficulties is to acquire adaptation skills. Career adaptation skill (career adaptability) is accepted as a basic structure involving attitudes, abilities and behaviors of young individuals that are necessary for adapting to changing occupational life (Yousefi, Abedi, Baghban, Eatemadi & Abedi, 2011: 264). It is believed that individuals who can easily adapt to occupational transitions and unexpected changes have positive attitudes in terms of organizational commitment, work satisfaction and similar organizational behavior fields.

### **II. THE CONCEPT of CAREER**

The word 'career' is derived from the Latin word Carrus (horse-drawn vehicle) (Geçikli, 2002: 339). The concept is used for continuous progression of an individual in a job and for having occupational satisfaction (Aytaç, 2005: 5). Individuals who have professional career are knowledgeable and educated at the same time. Activities besides occupational ones and professional experiences also contribute to career. Thus, an individual becomes more responsible, have more salary, better statue and bigger respect. Career is a lifelong process. Occupation is chosen while career is created and formed in a long time.

## **2.1 Stages of Career**

The concept of 'stages of a career' is used for the processes starting from the beginning of an occupation until the end of it. This is why; the age of an individual at the start of an occupational life is highly significant. Besides this, after having an occupation for a time, when an individual changes his/her job and starts a new one, he/she will have to push the button of 'restart' and experience the stages of a new career and start from scratch. Each career stage involves different motivations, duties and necessities. These necessities and expectations vary from one individual to another (Çalık&Ereş, 2006: 52-23). Although retirement is seen as the end of a career, it can be start of a new one. On the other hand, individuals may have to delay or take a break from occupational position during a career. For instance, women may have to take a break from their careers because of having a baby. In such cases, there is not a connection between career stages or life stages (Aytaç, 1997; Koca, 2009). An individual evaluates career choices that he/she hears from a teacher, friend, family member, from television or social media. After making a choice, he/she starts his/her career and experiences career stages mentioned below (Aytaç, 2005: 64):

- 1) Stage of exploring: The stage until the age of 20, during which an occupation is chosen.
- 2) Stage of establishing a career: Looking for a job, finding and starting processes.
- 3) Stage of career environment: Process of gaining experience and becoming professional in a job.
- 4) Stage of the end of a career: Beginning of a recession and regression.
- 5) Stage of retirement: Individual completes his/her career. He /she starts a hobby for which he/she had no time during his/her career.

## **2.2 Career Adaptability**

Career adaptability is an individual's power to compete with the problems at the beginning of a new job or negativities during changing an occupation (Kalafat, 2012: 170; Hamtiaux, Houssemand & Vrignaud, 2013: 130). This skill enables individual plan his/her attitudes, observe environment and make correct decisions and preferences. Being aware of personal features and skills enables an individual become open and flexible in occupational life, follow and adapt to changes. New information and abilities he/she obtains in professional life increases self-respect and trust. He/she can be prepared for possible problems in future. He/she evaluates and benefits from individual and professional opportunities. When he/she has impossible targets, he/she is able to change and rearrange them. Career adaptability is a psychological structure which stands for acquiring skills and readiness that are necessary for one's present and future occupational responsibilities, changes in working conditions or for overcoming personal stress (Yousefiet al., 2011: 264).

Savickas and Porfelli (2012), state the dimensions of anxiety, control, curiosity and trust as the resources of career adaptability. Features of these dimensions are presented below:

- Anxiety; individuals are aware of personal skills and they are able to make plans based on this knowledge.
- Control; individuals are able to make decisions about their future. They are the real and basic decision-makers of their future.
- Curiosity; individuals research and make analysis about their environment. They research the coherence between personal skills, abilities and tendencies and his/her environment; they find the options that are proper for them. Curiosity dimension is the process of acquiring skills and reaching information at the end of the research they carry out while determining a career path.
- Trust; Individuals trust in themselves, they are aware of the fact that they are able to struggle with problems, difficulties and find solutions to possible future problems (Savickas & Porfelli, 2012: 663; Kalafat, 2012: 170).

These dimensions are the resources and strategies of individuals which will be used in order to overcome and adapt to changes and difficulties, critical moments, processes or events that they will face during a career path (Owen & Niles, 2014: 290). The basic component of the process of preparation for a successful career is developing the skill of adaptability. Career preparation that is adapted according to individual and environmental opportunities and limitation create and form the central dimension of adaptability of the young (Hirschi & Vondracek, 2009: 120). Career adaptability is also accepted as a dynamic process in which goals can change when it is believed that it is impossible to reach them (Lerner, Freund, Stefanis & Habermas, 2001).

## **2.3 Work Performance**

Performance, a significant concept about management, is a result of individual actions. Performance can be defined as 'accomplishment'. One of the significant elements of organizational success is the performance level of workers. Work performance is determining the level of 'attaining goals' by comparing actions with goals and evaluating a process (Schermerhon, Hunt & Osborn, 1985: 432). Obtained output amount shows work performance. Shortly, work performance means accomplishing a target. It is the contribution of an individual to the goals of an organization. There are duties of individuals in organizations: Written and verbal

communication, giving effort for a specific target, personal discipline, and contribution to team performance, helping co-workers, management and leadership. Individuals carry out these issues with the help of work performance. He/she finds solutions to problems in his/her organization, ensures motivation for reaching goals, takes initiatives and work hard; he/she presents work performance when he/she uses his technical knowledge, skills and abilities. Managers bear the responsibility of increasing organizational performance besides making contribution to increasing individual performance(Tercan, 2017: 39).

### III. RESEARCH METHOD

Survey questions, hypotheses, analyses about the effects of career adaptability on work performance of employees and obtained results are presented and explained in this section.

#### 3.1 Sampling and Data Collection

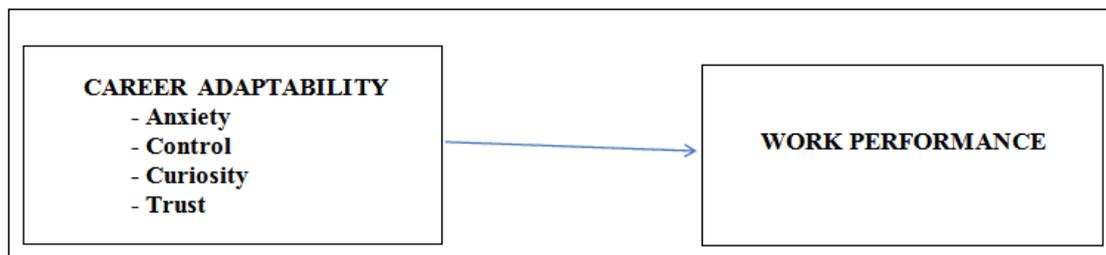
The sampling is made of a total of 450 people working in banks and insurance companies and professional accountants in İstanbul. While 235 participators (52,2%) are male, 215 are female (47,8%). 80 participators are between the ages of 18-24 (17,8%), 270 are between the ages of 25-35 (60%), 81 participators are between the ages of 36-49 (18%) and 19 participators are over the age 50 (4,2%). It is observed that employees work in three different occupational groups and they are equally distributed (n=150and 33,3%).It is determined that KaiserMeyerOlkin (KMO) test value, showing the sampling size is 0,80. This result shows that sampling size is sufficient.

#### 3.2 Preparation of Survey Questions

Career Adapt-Abilities Scale is adapted from the study by SavickasandPorfelli in 2012. The scale is made of a total of 24 questions. Each one of anxiety, control, curiosity and trust sub-dimensions of career adaptability involves 6 questions.Work Performance Scale prepared by Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison&Sowa(1986) is adapted and used for evaluating work performance of participators.

#### 3.3Research Model and Hypotheses

These models and hypotheses are formed on the basis of the assumption that career adaptability has impact on work performance.



**Figure 1. Research Model**

- H1.**Career adaptability’s sub-dimension of anxiety has positive effect on work performance.
- H2.**Career adaptability’s sub-dimension of control has positive effect on work performance.
- H3.**Career adaptability’s sub-dimension of curiosity has positive effect on work performance.
- H4.**Career adaptability’s sub-dimension of trust has positive effect on work performance.

#### 3.4 Regression Analysis

Multi linear regression analysis is practiced in order to understand the impact of career adaptability dimensions (anxiety, control, curiosity and trust) on work performance of participators. According to the results of the analysis, R<sup>2</sup> value, whichshows the level of change in dependent variable explained by independent variables in a study, is found to be 0,78. Namely, all of the career adaptability sub-dimensions (anxiety, control, curiosity, trust) included in the model explains 78% of the change in independent variable (work performance). On the other hand, in order to understand if regression model is significant as a whole, ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) test is carried out. According to the results of the test, sig. is,000. As this value is below 0,05 (sig.<0,05), it can be said that the model is significant as a whole. It is determined that career adaptability has positive impact on work performance.

Independent variables	Non-Standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Standard Error	Beta		
(Fixed)	,223	,202		1,103	,271
Trust	,394	,046	,354	8,569	,000
Curiosity	,326	,045	,289	7,248	,000
Anxiety	,156	,022	,249	7,050	,000
Control	,103	,032	,116	3,198	,001

Dependent variable: Work Performance

**Table 1. Career Adaptability Dimensions (Anxiety, Control, Curiosity, Trust) and Work Performance Regression Analysis Results**

As seen in Table 1, when significance tests of coefficients obtained from regression analysis are taken into consideration, independent variable trust dimension sig. is ( $,000 < 0.05$ ), curiosity dimension sig. is ( $,000 < 0.05$ ), anxiety dimension sig. is ( $,000 < 0.05$ ) and control dimension sig. is ( $,001 < 0.05$ ). According to these findings, H1, H2, H3 and H4 hypotheses are accepted. Namely, it can be said that career adaptability dimensions of trust, curiosity, anxiety and control have positively significant effect on work performance.

#### IV. RESULT

Continuous development of technology brings fast changes in business life with it. These changes in business life change current work definitions, ease imitation of basic abilities and drag organizations into a denser competition environment. In such environments, human resources of enterprises are the basic most important power that ensure competitive advantage and survival. This is why, it is highly important for enterprises to have workers who are aware of current changes and have the ability to adapt them, to determine factors that affect performance of workers and to increase performance by giving proper education and support. This study, carried out in order to determine career adaptability on worker performance involves a total of 450 individuals who work in the branches of accounting, bank and insurance in İstanbul. Survey method is used in order to obtain data which are carefully analyzed.

According to analysis results that evaluated career adaptability on work performance, four dimensions of career adaptability (anxiety, control, curiosity and trust) have positive effect on workers' work performance. Individuals who are aware of their personal abilities are more efficient in terms of carrying out basic duties required by a work. At the end of the analyses, it is determined that curiosity and anxiety increase work performance level of individuals. Individuals will be more competent in giving positive suggestions to colleagues in line with the increase in knowledge they obtain in business life. On the other hand, individuals who are anxious about possible changes in future and develop abilities for this reason will inform and cooperate with their colleagues and make positive contributions to enterprise performance.

Enterprises who target success should especially give importance to career adaptability of individuals during recruitment, which is highly important in reaching target performance level. Moreover, they need to increase career adaptability level of human resources. Educations on the issue shall be prioritized. It is observed that, individuals who are aware of personal abilities are more efficient in terms of carrying out responsibilities. Workers should continuously follow changes and increase their abilities in line with these changes in business life. Thus, they can motivate colleagues, ease functioning and contribute to productivity. On the other hand, enterprises should take workers' career adaptability level into consideration and make analysis in this respect.

It is necessary to determine the impact of the concept on other organizational behavior fields in order to guide future studies. This is why, studies and researches can be carried out with different business fields and sampling groups and impact of the concept on different organizational behavior fields can be analyzed. Factors that may contribute to developing individual career adaptability can be another significant research topic.

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<b>SURVEY QUESTIONS ABOUT CAREER ADAPTABILITY</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>ANXIETY</b>					
KU1. I often think about my future					
KU2. I am aware of the fact that my decisions at this stage of life will shape my future					
KU3. I make preparations for my future					
KU4. I am aware of the fact that I have to make choice about my career					
KU5. I am planning how to reach my goals					
KU6. I am interested in activities that will contribute to my career					
<b>CONTROL</b>					
KU7. I am positive about my future					
KU8. I make my own decisions					
KU9. I have the responsibility of my own decisions					
KU10. I defend the values which I believe					
KU11. I trust myself					
KU12. I do what is right for me					
<b>CURIOSITY</b>					
KU13. I research everything about my career (sector, enterprise, works, required abilities, etc.)					
KU14. I research opportunities that will contribute to my personal development (internship, courses, congresses, educations, etc.)					
KU15. I make researches about options before making a decision					
KU16. I analyze different methods of doing one thing					
KU17. I make in-depth analyses about the questions in my mind					
KU18. I am curious about opportunities that I will find in the future					
<b>TRUST</b>					
KU19. I completely carry out my duties					
KU20. I am careful for doing the best					
KU21. I can acquire new skills					
KU22. I can increase my abilities					
KU23. I can overcome obstacles					
KU24. I can solve my problems					
<b>QUESTIONS ABOUT WORK PERFORMANCE</b>					
İG1. I carry out the duties required from me without any delay					
İG2. I give importance to returning to my work on time after breaks					
İG3. I sufficiently bear responsibilities required by my job					
İG4. I talk about issues aside from work while carrying out my duties at work					
İG5. I eminently complete the duties I am responsible for					
İG6. I believe that I definitely meet the requirements of my organization					
İG7. I take more responsibility than what is assigned to me					
İG8. I meet required performance standards of my job					
İG9. I complete my duties on time					
İB10. I completely reach defined standards in terms of the quality of service I provide					
İB11. I help new workers even though it is not my responsibility					
İB12. I encourage other workers for trying more efficient ways while doing their jobs					
İB13. I make positive/constructive suggestions in order to improve general functionality of my work group					
İB14. I have the responsibility of protecting my organization from potential problems					
İB15. I willingly carry out works which aren't obligatory for me					
İB16. I have opinions and ideas that are good for my organization					
İB17. I continuously improve myself about the issues in my job					

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