

What Role Do Visions About Future and Vocational Outcome Expectations Have on Proactive Career Behaviors? Examining a Mediation Model on University Students

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Abstract

Adapting to the rapidly changing business and working world today is a behavior that every individual needs, no matter what stage of their career. One of the important variables that make it easier for individuals to adapt to these changes is proactive career behaviors. Addressing the roles of the variables that strengthen proactive career behaviors within a certain approach (i.e., Social Cognitive Career Theory) will produce results that will contribute to adapting to the change that the individual needs. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to investigate the mediating role of vocational outcome expectations in the relationship between the visions about future (hope, optimism, pessimism) and proactive career behaviors. 442 university students participated in the research. The ages of the participants vary between 18-27. The structural equation modeling method was used in the analysis of the data. Results indicated that visions about future and vocational outcome expectations were positively associated with proactive career behaviors. The results also indicated that vocational outcome expectations have been shown to have a partial mediating role in the relationship between the visions about future and proactive career behaviors.

Keywords: Visions About Future, Hope, Optimism, Pessimism, Proactive Career Behaviors, Vocational Outcome Expectations, Social Cognitive Career Theory

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Introduction

Due to the rapid technology developing in the 21st century, there is a rapid change in the business and working world. This change is transforming many business environments, required employee qualifications, and business structures. In such an environment, the world of work is unstable and volatile (Akkermans et al., 2013; Drenzo & Greenhaus, 2011). An unstable and volatile environment decreases job security for employees (Ginevra et al., 2020). It is considered important for individuals to be more active and self-directed in their careers in order to increase job security and reduce the disadvantages of an unstable and volatile work environment (Fay & Kamps, 2006; Ginevra et al., 2018).

One of the active and self-directed attributes in career development and transitions is proactive career behavior, an important career behavior. Proactive career behaviors have recently become one of the most important concepts needed in the uncertain world of work. Proactive career behavior is 'the degree to which somebody is proactively developing his/her career as expressed by diverse career behaviors.' (Hirschi et al., 2014). Descriptions of proactive career behaviors indicate that proactive career behaviors are comprised of diverse career behaviors (Korkmaz, 2023). It includes career behaviors such as career planning, career exploration, networking, career initiative, career consultation, and skill development (Hirschi & Freund, 2014). Proactive career behaviors are a concept that facilitates the individual to successfully cope with career problems (Jackson & Tomlinson, 2019) and is therefore considered an important key to a successful career (Herrmann et al., 2015).

Visions about Future: Relation to Proactive Career Behaviors

Another important basic structure that has an impact on the career development of individuals are visions about future. It reflects the individual's positive view of the future. This positive view consists of hope, optimism, and pessimism. In other words, visions about future consist of hope, optimism, and pessimism (Ginevra et al., 2017). It is suggested that positive psychology variables may play an important role in the career development of individuals (Vela et al., 2015a). Optimism reflects strong positive expectations for the future, hope includes the motivation to achieve future goals, and pessimism expresses negative expectations that bad things will happen in the future (Carver et al., 2010; Goleman, 20005; Snyder, 2002). High levels of optimism, and hope and low levels of pessimism reflect individuals' positive orientation toward the future (Korkmaz & Doganulku, 2022). Optimism is an important concept associated with positive career life (Akca et al., 2018). It can be said that optimistic individuals will be more likely to engage in proactive behaviors because they make more effort than pessimistic individuals (Ginevra et al., 2017). Having positive expectations for the future can contribute to the individual's planning for the future and motivation to act within the plan (Hirschi, 2014; Snyder, 2002). Hope is known as a promoter of proactive career behaviors

(Lopes & Cunha, 2008). Thus, it can be said that individuals with high hope levels will tend to act proactively. It has been stated that higher levels of visions about future are associated with the behavior of individuals (Ginevra et al., 2017). Considering the relevant literature, it can be said that increasing visions about future will increase the tendency of the individual to engage in proactive career behaviors. Accordingly, the following hypothesis has been developed.

H₁: Visions about future will positively predict proactive career behaviors.

Vocational Outcome Expectations: Mediating Role in the Relationship between Visions about Future and Proactive Career Behaviors

The Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) is an approach that emphasizes the capacity of individuals to direct their career behaviors. It was developed by Lent and colleagues (1994) based on Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory. In this approach, the individual's beliefs about herself/himself and their environment play a key role in her career (Lent et al., 2000; 2002). One of these beliefs is outcome expectations. Outcome expectations are 'beliefs in the consequences of performing given behaviors.' (Betz & Vuyten, 1997; Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2021) and cognitive motivator that enables the goal, action, and outcome process (Lent et al., 2017). It is one of the important blocks on which an individual builds their career and represents the key mechanism that provides individuals' personal control behaviors (Ozyurek, 2018). More specifically, the concept of vocational outcome expectation, reflecting outcome expectations, is defined as 'beliefs about the long-term consequences of success that can be achieved as a result of certain educational or career decision-making behaviors' (Betz & Vuyten, 1997; Fouad & Guillen, 2006). It is considered important for individuals to have positive vocational outcome expectations for a successful career in the future (Baglama & Uzunboylu, 2017; Yeh & Borrero, 2012).

Outcome expectations are directly related to individuals' personal perceptions of the results obtained from their past attempts (Brown & Lent, 1996). Considering that vocational outcome expectations are an individual's beliefs about positive and negative outcomes in their vocation in the future (Lent, 2005), it can be said that positive or negative tendencies toward the future (Ginevra et al., 2017) will be related to vocational outcome expectations. SCCT emphasizes that cognitions are effective in active behaviors in the career development of individuals. Individuals can spend more time on activities that they think will eventually produce positive and desired results (Bandura, 2001). Strong outcome expectations encourage an individual's goal-oriented behavior (Adachi, 2004; Betz & Vuyten, 1997). Vocational outcome expectations are considered as imagining career behaviors that can be beneficial for individuals' subsequent career (Betz & Vuyten, 2017). It is stated that vocational outcome expectations can push the individual to have high motivation in terms of career behaviors or to avoid career behaviors. Individuals with strong vocational outcome expectations show more

interest in vocational activities. Therefore, the role of vocational outcome expectations in realizing career behaviors is crucial (Baglama & Uzunboylu, 2017; Bozgeyikli, 2005; Ozyurek, 2018). Considering the role of professional outcome expectations in motivating behavior, it can be said that the expectations of university students from the outcomes of the programs they have chosen will have a directing effect on many career behaviors in their university life. Individuals who think that the program they have chosen will bring positive results can increase their vocational development behaviors. Conversely, individuals can reduce their behaviors that will increase their vocational development.

Outcome expectations can be obtained by observing situations and events in the individual's environment (Bandura, 1986). Individuals take actions that they perceive will produce positive results (Bandura, 2001). Individuals strengthen their response patterns in order to achieve positive results (Bandura, 1977). SCCT hypothesizes that personal factors influence the career behaviors (Lent et al., 2002). Outcome expectations, which are personal beliefs about the consequences or situations of performing certain behaviors, are a concept that is fed by the individual's own results (Ozyurek, 2018). For this reason, it can be said that the levels of visions about future such as hope, optimism, and pessimism that an individual obtains from some personal outcomes can predict vocational outcome expectations. On the other hand, individuals are more interested in activities that they believe will yield valuable results as a result (Bandura, 2001). Therefore, this situation shows that having a positive approach toward the future will strengthen the expectation that positive results will be obtained in the future, and this will lead the individual to the behavior that will achieve positive results. In other words, it can be said that having a positive approach towards the future (i.e., visions about future) will support thinking that positive results will be achieved in the future (i.e., vocational outcome expectations) and this will also support the individual to act for positive results (i. e., proactive career behaviors). Accordingly, the following hypothesis has been developed.

H₂: Vocational outcome expectations mediates the relationship between visions about future and proactive career behaviors.

The Present Study

In terms of academic, professional, social, and personal areas, the university period is an important developmental period for the career of the individual (Newman & Newman, 2017). University years are stated by career theorists as the years when individuals tend to focus more on their vocational plans (Kuzgun, 2009). It is an important turning point in terms of being the last stage before individuals enter the vocation and a period in which vocational competencies are acquired (Yilmaz et al., 2020). Considering the characteristics of the period, it is seen that university students collect information about their fields of study, establish a connection between themselves and their

fields of study, and make a series of decisions about their careers by conducting career research. In this respect, this period is a critical period that requires proactive career behaviors (Rogers et al., 2008). Therefore, in this period, some tasks that can be described as proactive career behaviors such as getting to know the business world and oneself, evaluating their own characteristics, and creating a career plan can be included in the career development needs of university students (Yerin-Guneri et al., 2016). For this reason, it can be said that examining proactive career behaviors and revealing important concepts related to these behaviors can make important contributions to understanding and meeting the career development needs of university students.

Vocational outcome expectations of university students can be considered as an important concept in terms of their lives. Studies emphasize that vocational outcome expectations are an important concept that predicts university students' life satisfaction (Yilmaz et al., 2020). Therefore, identifying the antecedents of vocational outcome expectations and the variables it predicts may be important in addressing the lives and careers of university students. It is emphasized that it is valuable to examine the role of outcome expectations in predicting career behaviors (Isik, 2013). In addition, it is stated that vocational outcome expectations have not been adequately researched and more research is needed on this (Sari et al., 2017). Lent et al. (2017) noted that very few studies have focused on the origins of vocational outcome expectations. Therefore, this study is important in terms of contributing to the revealing of the origins of vocational outcome expectations. When the relevant literature is examined, it is seen that the studies examining the concepts of vocational outcome expectations and positive psychology are very limited (i.e., Vela et al., 2019). At the same time, studies examining the relationship between vocational outcome expectations and career-important behaviors such as proactive career behaviors have not been found. For this reason, it can be said that both revealing the relationship of vocational outcome expectations with these behaviors and investigating its role in the relationship between these variables are important in terms of the results to be revealed. It is expected that the findings to be obtained will reveal important results in terms of SCCT, positive psychology and career development theories.

Korkmaz et al. (2020) emphasized the need to understand the relationship between proactive career behaviors and cognitive and emotional variables. In addition, Korkmaz (2023) suggested that mediator variables including career beliefs are needed for a deeper understanding of the relationships between visions about future and proactive career behaviors. On the other hand, it is stated that there is a need for research on potential predictors of vocational outcome expectation (Isik, 2013). In this study, besides revealing potential predictors of vocational outcome expectations, it is thought that examining the potential mediation of vocational outcome expectations in the relationship between visions about future and proactive career behavior will contribute to the validity of SCCT.

This study is structured in line with the theoretical basis of SCT proposed by Bandura (1997; 2001) and SCCT extended by Lent et al (1994; 2002) in the career field. The research model prepared in the current study was created in this direction. Consistent with the theoretical basis in the current study (Lent et al., 1994), visions about future represent the individual input variable as the predictor variable, vocational outcome expectations represent the mediator variable, and proactive career behaviors represent the predicted variable. Therefore, the aim of this study is to examine the mediating role of a cognitive variable, vocational outcome expectations, in the relationship between visions about future and proactive career behaviors. For this purpose, the research model presented below was tested in line with the relevant hypotheses (H_1 , H_2).

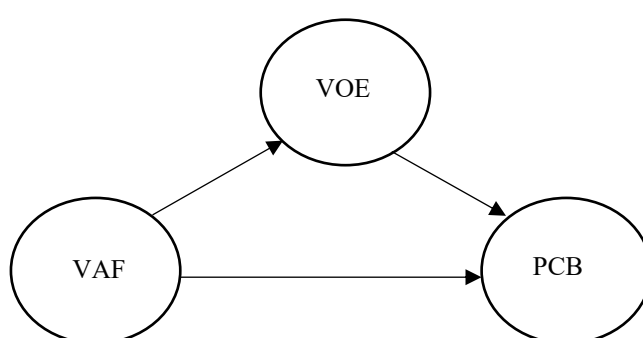


Figure 1. Research Model

Method

Participants

The study group of the research consists of 442 university students, 285 female (64.48%) and 158 male (35.52%). The ages of the university students ranged from 18 to 27 (Mean = 21.14, SD = 1.86). The grade levels of the university students are as follows: (n = 133, 19%) first grade, second grade, (n = 89, 13.2%), third grade (n = 130, 19.2%), and fourth grade (n = 90, 13.3%). Considering the perceived socioeconomic levels of the university students participating in the research, 12 (2.7%) were very low, 46 (10.4%) low, 109 (24.7%) moderate, 109 (24.7%) good and 166 (37.6%) very good.

Data Collection Tools

Vocational Outcome Expectation (VOE)

McWhirter et al. (2000) developed the VOE was adapted to Turkish by Isik (2010). The VOE assess individuals' expectations regarding their occupation, such as status, earnings, prestige, and productivity. The scale consists of 10 items and one dimension. The sample item is 'I will be successful in my chosen career/occupation'. The VOE is a five-point Likert type scale (1: Never agree

to 5: Totally agree). In the study of adapting the scale to Turkish, a positive and significant relationship was obtained between career self-efficacy and the VOE ($r = .59, p < .01$). The goodness-of-fit values for construct validity are as follows: $\chi^2 = 79.03, df = 54, p < .01, \chi^2/df = 1.46$; GFI = .92; CFI = .96; RMSEA = .054; and SRMR = .053. The internal consistency coefficient of the VOE calculated on the data collected in the current study is at a sufficient level (Cronbach Alpha = .92).

Career Engagement Scale (CES)

Hirschi et al. (2014) developed the CES was adapted to Turkish by Korkmaz et al. (2020). The CES was developed to evaluate the career proactive behaviors of individuals and consists of a single dimension and 9 items. The sample item is ‘...actively sought to design your professional future.’. The CES is a five-point Likert type scale (1: Almost never to 5: Very often). In the adapting study, the Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient is .88. The goodness-of-fit values for construct validity are as follows: $\chi^2 = 118.117, df = 24, p < .001$; CFI = .95; TLI = .93; RMSEA = .09 (%90 CI = 07. to .11); SRMR = .06. The correlation between total scale scores as a result of test-retesting is moderate and meaningful ($r = .67, p < .001$). The item-total correlations of the CES vary between .49 and .80. In addition, the CES has positive and moderate relations with career exploration, career planning, and career decision self-efficacy. The internal consistency coefficient of the CES calculated on the data collected in the current study is at a sufficient level (Cronbach Alpha = .91).

Visions About Future Scale (VAFS)

Ginevra et al. (2017) developed the VAFS adapted to Turkish by Akca et al. (2020). The VAFS was developed to evaluate the feelings and thoughts of individuals about their future. The scale consists of three dimensions as optimism, pessimism, and hope and a total of 18 items. The sample item is ‘In the future I will work with people that will appreciate me very much.’. In the adapting study, the Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient is .81. The goodness-of-fit values for construct validity are as follows: $\chi^2 = 278.20, df = 132, \chi^2/df = 2.11$; RMSEA = .06; CFI = .91; GFI = .92; TLI = .90. The item-total correlations of the CES vary between .39 and .67. The VAFS is a five-point Likert type scale (1: It does not describe me at all to 5: It describes me very well). The internal consistency coefficients of the VAFS calculated on the data collected in the current study were calculated as .88 for the total score, .89 for the optimism sub-dimension, .85 for the pessimism sub-dimension, and .91 for the hope sub-dimension.

Analysis of the Data

First, the descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, kurtosis, and skewness coefficients) were calculated in the study. In addition, the reliability of the data was examined with the Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient. On the other hand, Pearson Correlation Coefficient was calculated to examine the relationships between the variables to be included in the structural equation

model. The mediating role of vocational outcome expectations in the relationship between visions about future and proactive career behaviors was analyzed using the structural equation method. The results of the structural equation model were evaluated according to the model fit index (χ^2/df , RMSEA, CFI, IFI, TLI, NFI). While examining the structural equation model goodness of fit values, $\chi^2/df < 5$; GFI, NFI, TLI, CFI $> .90$; RMSEA $< .10$ values were taken as basis for good fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999). The bootstrap 5000 resampling method was used to determine whether the effect obtained in the mediation analysis was significant or not. For the indirect effect obtained as a result of the Bootstrap analysis to be significant, the criterion that the calculated confidence intervals do not cover zero was considered (Hayes, 2013). The data of the research were analyzed using related statistical programs.

Ethical Statement

Informed consent for participation was obtained before the completion of the survey. All procedures in the current study involving human participants were conducted in accordance with the ethical standards of the 1975 Helsinki Declaration. In addition, before the current research was conducted, the necessary ethical approval was obtained from the Social and Human Sciences Ethics Committee of Tokat Gaziosmapasa University (Date-Decision no: 07.12.2022-01-56).

Results

Descriptive Statistics Findings

The descriptive statistical findings of the variables included in the structural equation analysis are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Coefficient Findings

Variables	N	x	SD	Proactive Career Behaviors	Visions About Future	Skewness	Kurtosis
Proactive Career Behaviors	442	32.87	7.13			-.514	.203
Visions About Future	442	68.71	13.35	.51**		-.957	.877
Vocational Outcome Expectations	442	39.28	6.34	.60**	.71**	-.837	1.41

* $p < .01$

When Table 1 is examined, proactive career behaviors with visions about future ($r = .51$; $p < .01$), proactive career behaviors with vocational outcome expectations ($r = .60$; $p < .01$), visions about future with vocational outcome expectations ($r = .71$; $p < .01$) there is a significant positive correlation. In addition, the coefficients of kurtosis and skewness of the data are between the recommended limits (-1.5 and +1.5) for the normal distribution (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001).

Mediation Analysis Findings

The current study examined the mediating role of vocational outcome expectations in the relationship between visions about future and proactive career behaviors. Figure 1 demonstrates the path diagram of the structural equation modeling. The model fit indices obtained as a result of the analysis show that the tested model has good fit values [$\chi^2 = 695.316$, $df = 246$, $p < .001$, $\chi^2/df = 2.82$; $TLI = .92$; $IFI = .93$; $NFI = .90$; $CFI = .93$; $RMSEA = .064$ (90% CI = .059 - .070)].

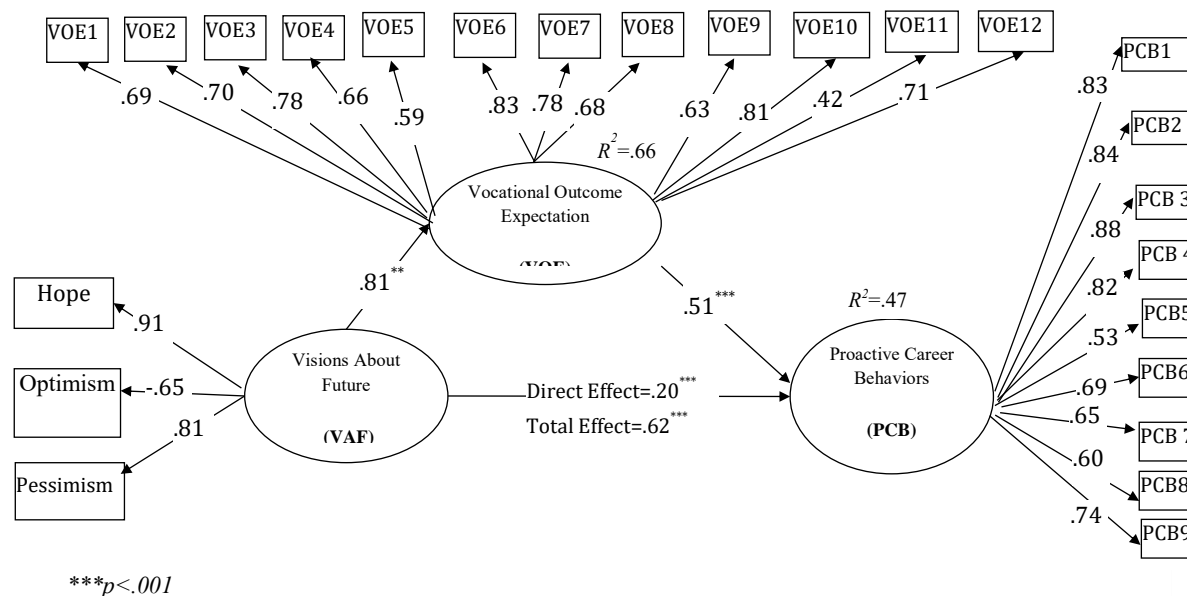


Figure 1. Path Diagram Regarding the Mediator Role of Vocational Outcome Expectations in the Relationship Between Visions about Future and Proactive Career Behavior

The structural equation modeling analysis showed that visions about future positively predicted the vocational outcome expectations ($\beta = .81$, $p < .001$). In addition, vocational outcome expectations were found to positively predict proactive career behaviors ($\beta = .51$, $p < .001$). On the other hand, vocational outcome expectations were found to have a significant mediating role in the relationship between visions about future and proactive career behaviors. Bootstrap confidence intervals were calculated to assess whether the mediating effect was significant. The confidence intervals obtained did not include zero, which showed that the vocational outcome expectations had a significant mediating role [$\beta = .42$, BC-Bias 95% lower-bound = .258, upper-bound = .562]. The results obtained in the structural equation modeling analysis are presented in the Table 2.

Table 2. Mediation Analysis Findings

Pathway	Coefficient	Confidence Interval (CI) (Bias%95)		R^2
		Lower-bound	Upper-bound	
<i>Total effect</i>				
VAF → PCB	.62***	.540	.699	
<i>Direct effect</i>				
VAF → PCB	.20***	.041	.394	
VAF → VOE	.81***	.757	.865	.66
VOE → PCB	.51***	.338	.763	
<i>Indirect effect</i>				
VAF → VOE → PCB	.42***	.258	.562	.47

*** $p < .001$; N = 367.

Note: VAF: Visions About Future; PCB: Proactive Career Behaviors; VOE: Vocational Outcome Expectations

Discussion

The aim of the current study was to examine the relationships between visions about future, vocational outcome expectations, and proactive career behaviors in the context of the relationships suggested in the SCCT (Lent et al., 1994). The results indicated that visions about future and vocational outcome expectations predicted proactive career behaviors. It was also found that vocational outcome expectations were a partial mediator in the relationship between visions about future and proactive career behaviors.

One finding of the current study was that visions about future predicted proactive career behaviors positively. Therefore, H_1 hypothesis was accepted. According to this result, as the visions about future levels of individuals increase, their tendency to have proactive career behaviors increases. Considering that the visions about future reflect the positive orientation towards the future, it can be said that it may have a role in activating the proactive career behaviors that individuals will use to build their future (Ginevra et al., 2017; Hirschi, 2014). When the literature on the relationship between visions about future and proactive career behaviors is examined, it is seen that there are limited studies. In studies where there are findings on the relationship between visions about future and proactive career behaviors, it has been found that visions about future predicts proactive career behavior positively (e.g., Doganulku, 2022; Doganulku & Guneslice, 2022; Korkmaz, 2023). In addition to these studies, it is seen that variables such as hope and optimism, which reflect visions about future, are associated with important career behaviors and characteristics such as career adaptability (Bolukbasi & Kirdok, 2019; Buyukgoze-Kavas, 2014; Korkmaz & Cenkseven Onder, 2019; Santilli et al., 2017), career exploration (Hirschi et al., 2015), and career planning (Patton et al., 2004). Thus, results from the literature support the findings of the current study.

Another finding of the study was that vocational outcome expectations had a partial mediating role in the relationship between visions about future and proactive career behaviors. The obtained findings support the H₂ hypothesis. This finding of the study showed that individuals can act more actively about their careers with the increase in the idea that they can achieve positive and desired results. This suggests that individuals have more proactive career behaviors when they perceive higher levels of visions about future and vocational outcome expectations.

Although the place of visions about future and vocational outcome expectations is important for career counseling, studies dealing with the relationship between these two concepts have not been found. The finding obtained in the study is new for the career counseling literature. In the relevant literature, it is suggested that the results obtained by individuals from their past attempts are related to their outcome expectations (Brown & Lent, 1996). From this point of view, it can be said that orientations such as hope, optimism, and pessimism that individuals derive from life outcomes are related to vocational outcome expectations. It is possible to come across studies that personal sources such as visions about future explain vocational outcome expectations in the related literature. For example, in his study with university students, Isik (2013) examined the relationship between social support, which is an environmental factor, and locus of control, which is a personal source and vocational outcome expectations. In this study, a relationship was obtained between locus of control, which is a personal variable, and vocational outcome expectations, which supports the findings of the current study. In addition, Sari et al. (2017) found that personal resources such as self-transcendence, self-consciousness, and self-control predict vocational outcome expectations in university students. Accordingly, the findings of the current study showed that visions about future may be one of the personal resources that affect the development of vocational outcome expectations (Lent et al., 2004). On the other hand, Gurpinar et al.'s (2021) study supported the finding of the current study between vocational outcome expectations and visions about future. In this study, a negative relationship was obtained between career stress and vocational outcome expectations. In addition, career stress negatively predicted vocational outcome expectations. Similarly, in the study conducted by Kim and Lee (2019), a negative relationship was obtained between career stress and vocational outcome expectations. It is seen that career stress caused by not knowing exactly what individuals will do in the future (Choi et al., 2011) affects vocational outcome expectations. Similarly, in a study conducted by Gonulluoglu and Cakmak (2022) on university students, the relationship between career anxiety reflecting individuals' negative tendencies towards the future and vocational outcome expectations was examined. The findings showed that there is a negative relationship between career anxiety and vocational outcome expectations. Finally, Vela et al. (2019) examined the predictability of positive psychological variables on vocational outcome expectations in their study on university students. In this study, it was found that hope predicted vocational outcome expectations positively, as well as other positive psychology variables (i.e., gratitude, and meaning in life). As a result, it is seen that the

positive relations between individuals' opinions that positive things will happen in the future (i.e., visions about future) and vocational outcome expectations are consistent with the literature. Therefore, the individual's positive orientation towards the future (higher hope, and optimism and lower pessimism) can be considered as an important personal resource in determining vocational outcome expectations.

It is possible to come across the literature and the results of the studies that show that vocational outcome expectations are related to the behavior of the individual. However, no study has been found on the predictor of vocational outcome expectations to proactive career behaviors. When the relevant literature is examined, the importance of outcome expectations in revealing behavior is emphasized (Adachi, 2004). It is argued that high outcome expectations in the individual positively affect the individual's behavioral performance (Schaub & Tokar, 2005). According to Bandura (1989), outcome expectations can contribute to behaviors. Therefore, it can be said that the finding of vocational outcome expectations predicting proactive career behaviors is consistent with Bandura's (2001) view that individuals who think that they can achieve positive and desired results will spend more time on activities they think. Studies in the literature also support this finding of the current study. For example, Domene et al. (2011) revealed that the motivation (e. g., academic motivation), which is the basis of behavior, is affected by outcome expectations (e. g., career outcome expectation). Betz and Voyten (1997) in their study on university students revealed that vocational outcome expectations are the most important predictors of career research behaviors. In addition, Patton et al. (2004) found that vocational outcome expectations are a predictor of career planning and career exploration behaviors that reflect proactive career behaviors. As a result, the findings obtained from this study show that the higher the individual's vocational outcome expectations, the closer the individual is to exhibiting proactive career behaviors.

In the literature, it is stated that vocational outcome expectations, one of the concepts of positive outcomes, and hope for the future is related to career behaviors (Vela et al., 2019). According to the 'model of the person, contextual, and experiential factors', personal inputs affect outcome expectations as a result of learning experiences, and outcome expectations lead to choose actions (Lent et al., 1994). When evaluated in terms of this model, the findings of the current study strengthen that visions about the future perform the functions of personal inputs and proactive career behaviors perform choice actions in the model. Therefore, the findings showed that having a positive attitude toward the future increases vocational outcome expectations, and this increase contributes to individuals' participation in proactive career behaviors. It is seen that this result is consistent with the conceptual model of SCCT (Lent et al., 1994). In this conceptual model, it is seen that learning experiences (i.e., visions about future) influence outcome expectations (i.e., vocational outcome expectations), and outcome expectations influence related behaviors (i.e., proactive career behaviors).

SCCT is an approach that emphasizes the capacity of individuals to direct career behaviors (Lent et al., 1994). The findings of the current study revealed important results that contribute to the theoretical claims of SCCT. The findings obtained from the current study supported the claim that outcome expectations are cognitive motivators that enable the goal, action, and outcome process (Lent et al., 2017). In addition, the findings supported the role of vocational outcome expectations in motivating behavior and extended this motivating state to proactive career behaviors (Bandura, 2001; Ozyurek, 2018).

Recommendations and Limitations

Based on the findings of the current study, some recommendations can be made for implementation. First, the levels of hope, optimism, and pessimism, which are the future orientations, can be addressed in the proactive behavior of individuals in the career counseling offered. These variables can be emphasized in increasing the proactive career behaviors of individuals. In addition, in order to increase the effectiveness of this relationship, individuals' beliefs about vocational outcome expectations can be addressed. Individuals' proactive career behaviors can be made stronger by working on negative vocational outcome expectations. Intervention programs involving visions about future and vocational outcome expectations can also be prepared in career intervention studies to increase proactive career behaviors in university students. The validity of the findings obtained from the current cross-sectional study can be tested by examining the effectiveness of these intervention programs. Thus, results that will increase the validity of the cause-effect relationships between visions about future, vocational outcome expectations, and proactive career behaviors can be obtained.

Experimental studies have shown that vocational outcome expectations can be increased (Diegelman & Subich, 2001; Isik, 2010; Eskisu et al., 2020). It is stated that the use of the concepts related to vocational outcome expectations in career intervention studies to be carried out to strengthen vocational outcome expectations in the future will be beneficial in career interventions to be prepared (Isik, 2011). For this reason, vocational outcome expectations can be strengthened by including visions about the future in career interventions based on SCCT. In addition, the validity of the results of the current study can be examined by testing the effectiveness of the developed programs.

The results obtained from the current study were obtained from university students. Similar research models can be tested in different groups in future studies. For example, the current study's research model can be examined in job seekers, career transitions, or employees. Thus, the generalizability of the results obtained from the current study to other groups can be tested. Proven evidence can be used to reinforce individuals' vocational outcome expectations and proactive career behaviors. In addition, the models to be examined in future studies can be expanded within the scope

of SCCT. For example, serial mediation analysis findings can be examined by testing a research model that includes self-efficacy expectations.

Policy Implications

It can be said that preparation for business and working life has become more important in the uncertain labor market that has emerged with rapid technological changes. In such an environment, it becomes more important to focus on the self-directed career characteristics of the individual. The university education period is a critical period in terms of acquiring these characteristics (Rogers et al., 2008). For this reason, while determining higher education policies and strategies, considering policies focusing on individuals' self-directed career characteristics and prioritizing their development will contribute to individuals' success in the uncertain labor market. The 2023 Education Vision Document of the Turkish Ministry of Education (2018) also supports this implication. In this vision document, it is stated that the main purpose of the Turkish Ministry of Education is to raise individuals equipped with the skills of the age and the future. In this direction, it can be said that it will be important to prioritize education policies and strategies in higher education for the development of self-directed career features such as visions about the future, vocational outcome expectations, and proactive career behaviors.

Conflict of Interest

No potential conflict of interest was declared by the authors.

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Credit Author Statement

Author 1: Conceptualization and Methodology, Writing- Original draft preparation, Visualization, Investigation, Data Curation, Formal Analysis, Writing - Review & Editing.

Author 2: Conceptualization and Methodology, Writing - Original draft preparation, Visualization, Investigation, Data Curation, Formal Analysis, Writing - Review & Editing.

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Informed consent for participation was obtained before the completion of the survey. All procedures in the current study involving human participants were conducted in accordance with the ethical standards of the 1975 Helsinki Declaration. In addition, before the current research was conducted, the necessary ethical approval was obtained from the Social and Human Sciences Ethics Committee of Tokat Gaziosmapasa University (Date-Decision no: 07.12.2022-01-56).

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