**Turkish Version of Career Competencies Questionnaire:**

**A Cross-Cultural Validation Study**

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**Abstract**

The 21st century is a world where individuals can craft their careers by entering different jobs or tasks in their current job. To craft their careers, individuals need career skills and competencies. Akkermans et al. integrated prominent theories into their career competencies model and defined six competencies: reflection on motivation, reflection on qualities, networking, self-profiling, work exploration, and career control. The current study aims to examine the validity and reliability of the Career Competencies Questionnaire in a Turkish undergraduate sample. The convenient sample consists of 333 undergraduate students (70.3% female and 29.7% male) from various departments and universities in Turkey. Data analysis was performed with the R programming language via RSTUDIO 1.4. Confirmatory factor analysis showed that the Turkish form has a similar construct to the English one. Measurement invariance for gender was found in both metric, scalar, and strict models. Pearson correlations showed that the career competencies dimensions related to career adaptability skills and career engagement. Therefore, criterion validity was also supported. The results claim that the Turkish form of the Career Competencies Scale can be used to assess undergraduate students' career skills. Moreover, career centres in universities can benefit from this scale for determining students' career needs.

**Keywords:** Career development, career competencies, career skills, scale adaptation, career counseling

**INTRODUCTION**

The career development of the 21st century offers people many job opportunities across their entire lives. Nowadays, more and more people change their jobs, tasks, or even professions several times throughout their lives. In this regard, the organizations that employed them have had limited influence over their careers. Once it was realized that people have their own dynamic careers beyond the boundaries of their organizations (Defillippi & Arthur, 1994; Hall, 2004), which skills and competencies need to be built to craft a successful career became one of the most noteworthy questions. People must be able to make proper decisions about various career options to control and give direction to their careers.

The career competencies were defined as the core skills and information at the centre of career development (Akkermans et al., 2013). There are prominent theories and research to classify career competencies (Defillippi & Arthur, 1994; Francis-Smythe et al., 2012; Hall, 2004; Kuijpers & Scheerens, 2006). Akkermans et al. (2013) integrated prominent theories into their model and defined six competencies: reflection on motivation, reflection on qualities, networking, self-profiling, work exploration, and career control. Accordingly, career competencies are included skills and information that one know its own motivations, goals, and capabilities, and one know how to contact others and show them its own qualities, and also one knows how take actions for their career. Akkermans et al.'s (2013) model was validated in several cultures and age groups (Akkermans et al., 2013; Grosemans & De Cuyper, 2022; Yamada et al., 2022).

Research provides proof that career competencies are related to career success (Kuijpers et al., 2006; Talluri & Uppal, 2022) and career satisfaction (Çolakoğlu, 2011; Kong et al., 2012). Even if career competencies were studied on employees first, undergraduate students can also benefit from these competencies to manage the school-to-work transition process (Grosemans & Cuyper, 2021; Presti et al., 2022; Stremersch et al., 2021). The present study intended to test the career competencies model (Akkermans et al., 2013) in a sample of Turkish undergraduate students. Accordingly, this study aimed to provide validity and reliability evidence for the Career Competencies Questionnaire in a Turkish sample. We hope that this measurement will help career practitioners assess students’ competencies and also be used by researchers to contribute to the career literature.

**METHOD**

**2.1. Participants**

The current research is a scale adaptation study. The convenient sample consists of 333 Turkish undergraduate students (70.3% female and 29.7% male) from various departments of their universities. The data was obtained through the online form in late 2022. Selcuk University's Department of Education Ethic Committee confirmed that this study follows ethical standards.

**2.2. Scale Adaptation Process**

The scale adaptation process was carried out according to the recommendations of Behling and Law (2019). Firstly, we contact the authors who developed the career competencies scale for approval to use it in Turkish. Then we started the initial translation. The four academics from English language learning, Turkish education, and psychology reviewed the initial translation and made revisions. Because this scale developed over an employee sample, we adapted the form to fit undergraduate students. After the translation process, the revised form was applied to undergraduate students from various departments. The data was analysed to obtain validity and reliability proofs. Data analysis was performed with the R programming language via RSTUDIO 1.4 (RStudio Team, 2021).

**2.3. Measurements**

Akkermans et al.'s (2013) Career Competencies Questionnaire was translated and adapted to Turkish. The questionnaire has 21 items in the six factors. To assess criterion validity, the Short Form of Career Adaptability Skills Scale (developed by Savickas & Porfeli, 2012; adapted from Işık et al., 2018) and the Career Engagement Scale (developed by Hirschi et al., 2014; adapted from Korkmaz et al., 2020) were used. The Short Form of Career Adaptability Skills Scale has 12 items in four factors, which are concern, control, curiosity, and confidence. The Career Engagement Scale is formed into nine items.

**RESULTS**

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with the WLSMV estimator showed that the Turkish form has a similar construct to the English one. After modifications, the fit indices were as follows: χ² = 657.424, df = 172, p<.001, RMSEA = 0.092 %90 CI [0.085, 0.10], CFI = .98. Factor loadings varied between coefficients .68 and .96. Then, four models were formed by grouping according to gender to assess measurement invariance (van de Schoot et al., 2012). As a result of comparisons among the models, there were no significant differences (model 1 vs. model 2: Δχ² = 16.99, df = 15, p = 0.32; model 2 vs. model 3: Δχ² = 12.72, df = 15, p=0.62; model 3 vs. model 4: Δχ² = 18.64, df = 21, p = 0.61). Therefore, metric, scalar, and strict invariance were provided.

Pearson correlations were examined for criterion validity. Accordingly, the relationships among career competencies dimensions, career adaptability, and career engagement varied between r = .39 and .76. Pearson correlation coefficients concentrated between .60 and .70. Moreover, hierarchical regression analysis revealed that career competencies dimensions and career adaptability skills with gender and perceived socioeconomic status explained 66% of the total variance of career engagement (F(12, 320) = 54.37). Career competencies dimensions explained 13% of the total variance of career engagement after controlling career adaptability skills and demographics.

Lastly, Cronbach alpha coefficients were calculated to examine the reliability. Cronbach's alpha varied between .86 and .94.

**DISCUSSION**

This study examined the validity and reliability of the Turkish version of the Career Competencies Questionnaire. The results show that the Turkish form data fit the six-dimensional structure suggested by Akkermans et al. (2013). The CFA fit indices were adequately good (Hu & Bentler, 1999). Comparing validation research of the Career Competencies Questionnaire from various cultures and age groups (Akkermans et al., 2013; Grosemans & De Cuyper, 2022; Yamada et al., 2022), it may be suggested that the fit coefficients are similar to those in this study. Therefore, there was adequate proof of construct validity.

The findings show that correlations among career competencies, career adaptabilities, and career engagement were of medium to high size (Cohen, 1992). Further, career competencies significantly predicted career engagement. These findings are compatible with the other studies that reported correlations among career competencies, career adaptabilities, and career engagement (Akkermans et al., 2018; AlKhemeiri et al., 2021; Nilforooshan ve Salimi, 2016; Saraswati vd., 2021; Sou vd., 2022). Thus, there was sufficient evidence for criterion validity. The results claim that the Career Competencies Questionnaire provides psychometric standards adequately for the Turkish undergraduate student sample.

This study can be noteworthy in terms of adapting the Career Competencies Questionnaire into Turkish. The career practitioners in university career centres may benefit from this measurement to identify students career needs. Further, future research may use the Career Competencies Questionnaire to understand university students’ career skills. However, this study has some limitations regarding its convenient sample and cross-sectional nature. Considering the limitations, the results should be interpreted with caution.

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