

Investigation of the Factors That Effect the University Students' Desperation Levels (Kafkas University Example)

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Received: August 22, 2020 Accepted: September 24, 2020 Online Published: September 30, 2020

doi:10.5539/jel.v9n5p270 URL: <https://doi.org/10.5539/jel.v9n5p270>

Abstract

The desperation is a kind of negative foresight on the contrary of positive foresight for the future. That is to say, to some extent, and it is an emotional situation having negative expectations for the future. The aim of the study, determination the factors that are affecting the university students' desperation levels. This study was conducted to examine the students of Kafkas university despite levels for the future. The sampling groups of this study were the students of Kafkas University Education Faculty educated at Physical Education and Sports Department (25 students), Basic Mathematics Teaching Department (25 students), Science Teaching Department (25 students), and Social Studies Teacher's Department (25 students) 4th class totally 100 participant students in 2016–2017 academic year. The sampling group was selected using simple random—the data handed with the help of the data collecting scale evaluated by using the SPSS Package Program. The preferences are “Yes (Correct) and No (Wrong)”. As a result of this study, there wasn't a meaningful difference in the participant students' desperation levels according to the variables. Students' desperation level means were lower than $p < 0.05$.

Keywords: desperation, depression, future

1. Introduction

Mental health concerns the individual's ability to cope with the normal stress of life and contribute to society (Veness, 2016). Many mental health problems (e.g., anxiety, depression, schizophrenia, and bipolar disorder) may result in an individual's decreased capacity to coping with the normal request of life (Usher, 2020).

Depression is an important issue worldwide and it is characterized by decreased motivation, seriously endangering people's mental and physical health (Alexopoulos, 2019; de Aguiar Neto & Rosa, 2019; Górska et al., 2019; Tao et al., 2020). Globally, more than 264 million people of all ages suffer from depression (James et al., 2018; Duko et al., 2020). It has been a leading cause of disability worldwide and contributes greatly to the overall burden of disease (Jantaratnotai et al., 2017; Belayihun & Mavhandumudzuis, 2018; Breslow et al., 2019; Kingston et al., 2020). It affects 2% of pre-pubertal children and between 5 and 8% of adolescents worldwide (Stephens et al., 2020). Childhood depression can result in many health, social and academic issues (Grover & Avasthi, 2019; Sekhar et al., 2019).

As it is known that the university years are the time periods for the students to live many physical and social problems together. Beyond having the possibility of university education leaving family and known environment and getting used to the new environment, having new friends and environment, and facing a lot of problems such as anxiety about the professional life. These social, cultural and economic changes may affect young people negatively (Cam & Erkorkmaz, 2008).

The living social and psychological problems, being a university student, education and unemployment problems, affect the adolescents' spiritual growth negatively. One of the important psychological problems in this time period is desperation. Generally, in the context of long-term conflict, spreading despair is easier than instilling hope. Hope is a feeling activated when it visualizes a desired and meaningful aim in the future, followed by a positive opportunity in mental state (Cohen - Chen et al., 2020). It expressing the sense of having positive expectations for the future affects mental health positively by giving people the feeling that they can cope with

the negative experiences they may encounter in the future. In intergroup conflicts, hope has been found to be related to concession-making (Rosler et al., 2017), positive intergroup behavior (Lala et al., 2014), forgiveness (Moeschberger et al., 2005), and willingness to provide humanitarian aid (Halperin & Gross, 2011). Recently, experimentally induced hope has been displayed to rise attitude opportunity (Cohen-Chen et al., 2014; Cohen-Chen et al., 2017). As is the case of hope, despair is induced when attempting to think about and imagine the future. However, unlike hope, despair is rooted within feelings of uncertainty (Sallfors et al., 2002), futility, and an inability to imagine a positive future.

Hope and despair express the possibility of fulfilling the expectations of the individual for the future. Despair is defined as individuals believing that they will never overcome their failures, they can never solve their problems, they have false implications for their lives without a real reason, and expect negative results from them, although they do not strive to achieve their goals. Also, despair is defined as negative expectations less than zero in achieving a goal (Kula & Saraç, 2017).

The young have been facing many problems during the university years. Especially the undergraduate students who leave their families educated in different cities had their individual responsibilities mostly. There is much immortality in this process; the danger of unemployment, poverty, striving to gain social status affect the young brains the most. In addition to them, when we add uncertainty in the common position of the country, the amount of young is getting less and less. Some of the new arrangements about the teachers have roles to increase the desperation levels of the candidate teachers. The uncertainty of the national support and state security created frustration for the education faculty graduates. In addition to this, the oral exam/interview practices break the eagerness to work and support the uncertain position. As it is thought in such a context, the candidate teachers graduated from education faculties begin to have more and more desperation level. If so, in what healthy extend of the teachers and teacher candidates' psychological and professional qualifications are having desperation for the future? This is a controversial issue.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the hopelessness level of the senior students at Kafkas University in terms of some various variables.

1.1 Problem Sentence/Question

*What is the desperation level of the students educated at education faculty?

1.2 Sub Problem Sentences/Questions

The students educated at education faculty:

- 1) Is there a meaningful difference among the participant students' desperation levels according to the sex variable?
- 2) Is there a meaningful difference among the participant students' desperation levels according to the main branch variable?
- 3) Is there a meaningful difference among the participant students' desperation levels according to the perceived income variable?

1.3 The Importance of This Study

Growing the hope of promising individuals up or educating the hope of promising individuals in a society is in the hand of their parents first and secondly, it is the duty of their teachers. For that reason, the teachers' qualities, psychological health, self-perception, perspectives on life affect their students in many dimensions. The teacher candidates had these gains during the university years. The answer to each question about how and how much the teacher candidates carry these features is pretty important. In this study, particularly it was tried to study the teacher candidates' desperation levels. Because maybe while the hope is a beginning point of everything, the desperation is a factor to stop and finish many features/possibilities. A negative point of view and idea of a teacher candidate for the future is the reason that causes to lose his or her positive psychology, self-esteem, expectation from life and such as living energy to be an indispensable factor. It is a suspicious truth about how to gain the necessary awareness. In this study it was aimed to develop the awareness of this situation and reveal it objectively.

1.4 Suppositions

It was assumed that the teacher candidates chose the preferences of the data collecting scale correctly, consciously, and sincerely.

1.5 Limitations

This study was limited by the students educated in Kafkas University Education Faculty at Physical Education and Sports Department, Basic Mathematics Teaching Department, Science Teaching Department and Social Studies Teacher Department's 4th class participant students in the 2016–2017 academic year.

2. Method

In this study, a descriptive scanning model was used. This model is related to how to express the existed variables objectively. In this study, the participant students educated at different departments of Kafkas University Education Faculty were chosen/defined, such as sampling groups and their desperation levels were studied on.

It was accepted that the universe of this study was the education faculty teacher candidate undergraduate students in Turkey. The sampling groups of this study were the students of Kafkas University Education Faculty educated at Physical Education and Sports Teacher Department (25 students), Basic Mathematics Teaching Department (25 students), Science Teaching Department (25 students) and Social Studies Teacher's Department (25 students) 4th class totally 100 participant students in 2016–2017 academic year. The sampling group was selected randomly.

2.1 Model of Research

In the current research, a general survey model, one of the descriptive research methods, was used. The general survey model was described in Karasar (2005) as a research method that aims to define an existing situation according to a previous study (Karayol & Dođar, 2020).

2.2 Data Collection Tools

In this study "Beck Desperation Scale" developed by Beck, Lester and Trexler (1974) was used to collect the data and revised according to Teshome Hambisa et al. (2020). It has been recognized as a powerful tool to determine depression mood (De Berardis et al., 2017). This scale contains 20 items and the items have two preferences. They are "Yes" and "No". This scale is a kind of self-assessment scale and is scored in the range of 0–1. The score range of the scale is between 0–2. The "Yes" preference for the 11 items of the scale takes 1 point and for the 9 items, "No" preference takes 1 point too. If the points are high, it is accepted that the desperation level is high.

2.3 Data Analysis

In this study, two different statistical analysis methods were used to evaluate the data with the help of the SPSS 22.00 Package program. These methods were; Mann Whitney U Test and Kruskal Wallis H Test. As a result of these tests to understand if the data showed normal variation or not Kolmogrow-Smirnow and Shapiro-Wilk's results were found meaningful at the importance level of $p < 0.05$. Because of this result, it was understood that the data were not suitable for normal parametric variation. So nonparametric analysis was used to evaluate the data.

Table 1. Skewness ve Kurtosis analysis

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	S.d	p	Statistic	S.d	p
TOTAL	.200	100	.000	.887	100	.000

Note. a. Lilliefors Significance Correction.

3. Result and Discussion

In this study, it was tried to find out the university students' desperation levels according to some variables. They were; sex, undergraduate program, income level, main branch department. As a result of this study, there wasn't a meaningful difference in the participant students' desperation levels according to the variables. Students' desperation level means were lower than $p < 0.05$.

Table 2. The data/findings related to students' defining/demographic features

	n	%
Sex		
Female	61	61.0
Male	39	39.0
Undergraduate Program		
Numerical	50	50.0
Verbal	50	50.0
Income Level		
0–1000 TL	39	39.0
1000–2500 TL	47	47.0
2500 and above TL	14	14.0
Main Branch Department		
Social Studies Teacher	25	25.0
Physical Education and Sports Teacher	25	25.0
Science Teacher	25	25.0
Math Teacher	25	25.0

When Table 2 examined the participant students, 61% were female and 39% were male and 50% of them had education in the numerical program and 50% of them had education in the verbal program. 39% of the participant students' incomes were about 0–1000 Turkish Liras, 14% of the participants had 1000–2500 Turkish Liras as income and 14% of them had 2500 and more than 2500 Turkish Liras as income. On the other hand, 25% of participants were from Social Studies Teacher, 25% were from Physical Education and Sports Teacher, 25% were from Science Teacher and 25% were from Math Teacher departments.

Table 3. Participant students' standart deviation and mean scores related to desperation scale

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Arithmetic Mean	S.s. (S.D.)
Total Score of Desperation Scale	100	.00	20.00	6.67	5.45

When Table 3 was examined, it was understood that the students' desperation score means were about 6.67 ± 5.45 .

Table 4. Differences about the students' desperation scores according to their defining/demographic features

	N	Row mean	Row total	Test	p
Sex					
Female	61	50.22	3063.50	U = 1172.500	.904
Male	39	50.94	1986.50		
Undergraduate Program					
Numerical	50	50.20	2510.00	U = 1235.000	.917
Verbal	50	50.80	2540.00		
Income Level					
0–1000 TL	39	52.26		KW = .256	.880
1000–2500 TL	47	49.10			
2500 and above TL	14	50.32			
Main Branch Department					
Social Studies Teacher	25	48.66		KW = 463	.927
Physical Education and Sports Teacher	25	52.94			
Science Teacher	25	48.48			
Math Teacher	25	51.92			

When Table 4 was examined, it was understood that there wasn't a meaningful difference in their desperation scores according to their demographic features such as sex, undergraduate program, income level and main branch unit. Because all the differences were higher than $p < 0.05$ meaning level. These findings showed that there wasn't a meaningful difference.

Özmen and Dilek et al. (2008) studied on the subject of “The factors affecting the high school students’ dissertation levels.” In this study they found out that generally, the high school students were hopeful about the future but on the other hand there were some desperate students too. As a result of this study, the children grown up by some families having lower rate income level were more desperate ones. These findings do not support our study.

Ceyhan (2004), in the study named “The examination of the teacher candidates desertion levels continuing the program of graduate education without thesis in the teaching area of secondary education”, defined that beyond the teacher candidates’ desertion levels were low, some teacher candidates were living more leveled desertion and the male teacher candidates had more leveled desertion than female teacher candidates. According to another data of this study was that; the teacher candidates who were having the hope of being appointed had higher desertion levels than the teacher candidates, not having the hope of not being appointed. These findings are not in line with our study.

Ayda (2011), in the study called “The definition of the music department undergraduate students dissertation levels: The example of Ankara State Conservatory of Hacettepe University”, it was found out that according to the data; the candidate teachers had higher desertion levels at desertion sub-dimension related to the emotion and expectation, motivation lose and hope for the future. On the other hand, the candidate teachers had lower levels of desertion distributed in the sub-dimensions of feeling and expectations. As a result, according to the high schools that the candidate teachers graduated from, there was a meaningful difference related to the dissertation levels. These findings are not in line with our study.

Şahin (2009) studied a similar subject. In the study called “The desperation levels of students educated at education faculty”, it was tried to find out the student’s desertion levels were low, but there were some students who were living high level of desertion feeling according to the variables of sex, main department branches, living areas and income levels. So is there were meaningful differences in the dissertation levels. But according to the class level, parents’ education levels, there weren’t a meaningful difference. These findings do not support our study.

Doğan (2012) defined in the study named “Investigation of art candidate teachers’ desertion levels” that they had a low level of desertion. On the other hand, according to the sex and class-level variables, there was a meaningful difference. These findings are in line with our study.

Tercanlı and Demir (2012) and in their study called “The evaluation of Beck Dissertation Scale some variables (Gümüşhane City Example)”, the people living in Gümüşhane had some meaningful differences about their desperation levels in terms of the variables of education level, his or her husband or wife’s education level and profession, income level, registered in the population hometown. On the other hand, there weren’t meaningful differences according to the age, sex, marriage status, child number, if there were health insurance and the family model, there wasn’t a meaningful difference. These findings are in line with our study.

According to Deveci, Ulutaşdemir and Açıık (2011) and their study “The factors affecting the students’ desertion levels of a vocational training center”, they found out that the desperation levels of male participants, the participants who were working more than five days a week, the participants who changed their works, the participants who worked more than eight hours a day, the participants who didn’t enjoy their works, the participants who had some chronic health problems, the participants who smoked a cigarette and had alcohol were higher than the other participants. These findings do not support our study.

Özçelik, Aktaş and Ocağcı (2014) explained in their study “The effect of career choice on the university first-class students’ desperation levels” that the male participant students’ desperation levels were higher than the female participant students. According to the income level variable, there wasn’t a meaningful difference, but when it was looked at the mean scores according to lower-income positions, the desperation levels were higher. These findings do not support our study.

4. Suggestion

As a result of the data of this study, schools and all duty persons must lower the desperation levels of students because this feeling affects learning success and future expectations negatively.

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