

The Effect of Feeling of Loneliness on Burnout Levels in University Students

Üniversite Öğrencilerinin Yalnızlık Duygularının Tükenmişlik Düzeylerine Etkisi

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ABSTRACT: Feeling of loneliness is a matter that is commonly encountered among adolescents and young adults and should be taken into consideration. This study was conducted for the purpose of determining whether or not there was a correlation between the feeling of loneliness and burnout levels in university students. The purpose of the study is to determine whether or not the feeling of loneliness of university students affects their burnout levels. The sample group of the study consisted of 376 students receiving education in Harran University Vocational School of Healthcare Services. The data were collected using a questionnaire between 01 - 31 May 2019. UCLA Loneliness Scale and Maslach Burnout Inventory – Student Form (MBI-SF) were applied to the study group. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and linear regression analysis (ANOVA) in the SPSS 20.0. The acquired results show that the scales used in the study has a higher reliability. Similarly, the results of the linear regression analysis ANOVA show that the feeling of loneliness has a significant effect on burnout. In the results of the linear regression analysis ANOVA, it is found out that the feeling of loneliness has a significant effect on the sub-dimensions of burnout. With regard to the standard regression coefficient, it is expected that 1-unit increase in the feeling of loneliness variable causes 0.279-unit increase in the perception of exhaustion variable. The higher the loneliness levels of students are the more the levels of exhaustion increase.

Keywords: loneliness, burnout, university students.

ÖZ: Yalnızlık duygusu, ergenler ve genç yetişkinler arasında yaygın olarak yaşanan ve dikkate alınması gereken bir sorundur. Bu araştırma, üniversite öğrencilerinin yaşadığı yalnızlık duygusu ile tükenmişlik düzeyleri arasında bir ilişki olup olmadığını tespit etmek amacıyla yapılmıştır. Bu araştırmanın amacı, üniversite öğrencilerinin yalnızlık duygularının tükenmişlik düzeylerine etkisinin olup olmadığını tespit etmektir. Bu araştırmanın örneklem grubu, Harran Üniversitesi Sağlık Hizmetleri Meslek Yüksekokulu'ndaki 376 öğrenciden oluşmaktadır. Veriler 01 – 31 Mayıs 2019 tarihleri arasında anket aracılığıyla toplanmıştır. Araştırma grubuna UCLA Yalnızlık Ölçeği ve Maslach Tükenmişlik Envanteri - Öğrenci Formu (MTE-ÖF) uygulanmıştır. Verilerin analizi, SPSS 20.0 kullanılarak tanımlayıcı istatistikler ve doğrusal regresyon analizi (ANOVA) ile incelenmiştir. Elde edilen sonuçlara göre araştırmada kullanılan ölçeklerin güvenilirliği yüksektir. Doğrusal regresyon analizi ANOVA sonuçlarında yalnızlık hissini tükenmişlik üzerinde anlamlı etkisi olduğu sonucuna varılmıştır. Standart regresyon katsayısına göre yalnızlık duygusu değişkenindeki 1 birim artışın tükenmişlik değişkeninde 0,279 birim artışa neden olması beklenmektedir. Öğrencilerin yalnızlık düzeyleri arttıkça, tükenmişlik seviyeleri de artmaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: yalnızlık, tükenmişlik, üniversite öğrencileri.

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Today, loneliness is one of the most important problems that affect the quality of life of people. There is an increase in the number of people who have trouble in their social relationships, and fall in loneliness (İçer, 2016). The definition of loneliness, generally accepted in the literature, is “it is a disturbing psychological phenomenon which arises from the difference and conflict between the social relationships that a person has and the social relationships that a person wants to have” (Peplau & Perlman, 1982). In other words, the feeling of loneliness, emerging from having important deficiencies in the social relationships of a person in terms of quality and quantity, is related to the several disorders such as unhappiness, anxiety, depression (Demir, 1989). As the feeling of loneliness affects the mental health, it has also serious results that may affect the physical health (Dahlberg, Agahi, & Lennartsson, 2018).

Loneliness cannot be explained as being alone physically in a place; a person may still feel lonely even though several relationships are established in the society (Koçak, 2003). In addition, a person may not want to socialize within his own choice; this should not be assessed as loneliness (McKay, Konowalczyk, Andretta, & Cole, 2017). It is important to prevent temporary loneliness periods from turning into serious and chronic loneliness (Arslan, Hamarta, Üre, & Özyeşil, 2010). When analysed the factors that cause the loneliness, it can be seen that there are several variables. Especially, experiencing separation or exclusion from close people or group, which may leave traumatic effects; inadequate social relationship as a result of being poor at communicating with someone; and the belief that s/he cannot belong to a group because of the cognitive distortions regarding being dislikeable at the lower-self of him/her may cause the loneliness (İçer, 2016). In the studies, some symptoms of loneliness are determined emotionally and cognitively. In the emotion side, it is generally related to dissatisfaction, unhappiness, anxiety, hostility, emptiness, boredom and easiness. In the cognition side, people, experiencing loneliness, are highly sensitive to the acceptance or rejection in the interpersonal relationships or steadily controlling people in order to see whether his/her personal need are met (Arslan et al., 2010)

The concept of burnout was brought in the literature by Freudenberger in 1970s (Tümkiye & Çavuşoğlu, 2010). Freudenberger defines the concept of burnout as getting into a position that cannot carry out duties as necessary because of overworking (Freudenberger, 1974). Later, Maslach and Jackson, stating that long-term stress leads to burnout, define the burnout as “breaking off of a professional from its genuine meaning and objectives, not being able to taking care of people, s/he serves” and analyse it under three sub-dimensions as emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and personal accomplishment (Kaçmaz, 2005). The factor of emotional exhaustion is the determinant of burnout and a person, experiencing emotional exhaustion, moves psychologically away people and causes to the emergence of the depersonalisation dimension. In the last factor, personal accomplishment factor, a person tends to self-evaluate negatively and lives the feeling of inadequacy. The relationship between the concept of burnout and the sub-dimensions is as the increase in the emotional exhaustion sub-dimension and depersonalisation sub-dimension and the decrease in the competency sub-dimension (Ardıç & Polatçı, 2008).

The studies regarding burnout was initially limited to human services, it is expanded to the all occupational groups now, in other words; the assumption that the burnout is common among the workers who directly provide services to people is seen

as invalid. For example, it is shown that students also experience burnout. The burnout among the students means feeling exhausted, inadequate and incompetent because of the intensive work program (Schaufeli, Martinez, Pinto, Salanova, & Bakker, 2002). When the body of literature analysed, while there are few studies on the burnout of students, it is observed that the burnout is the most common among the medical faculty students and the burnout rate of university students is 50% in the available studies (Çam, Deniz, & Kurnaz, 2014).

There are intensive syllabuses and exams to be passed in the education life of students in Turkey (Akıl & Yazar, 2014). Many researchers state that the activities of students such as attending class, submitting homework, studying with a deadline and studying long hours can be accepted as work (Cazan, 2014). Fatigue because of the demands, expected from students regarding their education, developing negative and reckless attitudes towards school and school activities, not giving necessary attention their homework, the perception of inadequacy and the decline in the success are the important indicators of the burnout that students experience (Seçer, 2015). In addition, studies show that students, having experience burnout throughout their education life, would experience burnout in their business life. A study supports that the burnout of students in the teacher-training program is an indicator in the burnout of teacher after the graduation and the estimation of their working competencies (Yang & Farn, 2004).

As mentioned before, the loneliness is one of the emotions that affect the psychosocial well-being of people (Arslantaş & Ergin, 2011). One of the most important reasons that lie behind the equivalent indications like self-accusation, depression, dullness, collapse, despair is that they emerge as a reaction to the loneliness (Akbağ, Sayiner, & Sözen, 2005). Studies have found out that there is a positive close relation between depressive indications and burnout (Sağır, 2015; Tel & Ertekin-Pınar, 2013). Therefore, it is highly possible that loneliness affects the level of burnout. When analysed the researches regarding this relationship, it is seen that Aşık (2016) has found a high positive relationship between loneliness and burnout. In this study, the question of the research is to determine whether there is a statistical and significant relationship between the feeling of loneliness and the level of burnout throughout the period of university in which personal and social development of a person as well as mental development continue.

This study is expected to be one of the pioneer studies since only one study regarding the effect of loneliness feeling of students on the burnout level is encountered when reviewed the literature,. When considered the negative effects of the loneliness and burnout syndromes on the students, it is agreed that it should be given weight and studied more. Taking into consideration that students are the majority of the society and represent the future of the society and the effect of their productivities throughout the university period on their whole life, the importance of this study will be understood better.

The aim of this study is to determine the effect of loneliness feeling of students, studying in Harran University Vocational School of Healthcare Services, on the sub-dimensions of burnout level and develop a suggestion related to the measures to be taken.

Method

The Problem of Study

Throughout the university period in which personal and social development continue in addition to the mental development of individual, determining whether there is a statistically significant relationship between the feeling of loneliness and the level of burnout or not forms the problem of study.

The Population and Sample of the Study

The population of the study consists of 2000 students in Harran University Vocational School of Healthcare Services. With simple random sampling method, the sample group is determined as 350 and it is applied to 376 students.

Data Collection Tools

This study is a descriptive study; data collecting with questionnaire method is used as data collection tool. Before the study, the approval is received from Harran University Social and Human Sciences Ethics Committee with the decision numbered 2019/46. Ethical rules were followed while collecting data in this study. In addition, the permission for the study is received from the Directorate of Harran University Vocational School of Healthcare Services on 29/04/2019. After the necessary permissions are received, the necessary data collection for the research was conducted 1st-31st May 2019. In the questionnaire, Maslach Burnout Inventory – Student Survey (MBI-SS) scale and UCLA Loneliness Scale are applied in order to measure the burnout levels of students.

Maslach Burnout Inventory – Student Survey (MBI-SS) Scale is developed by Schaufeli, Martinez, Marques-Pinto, Salanova, and Bakker (2002) to measure the academic burnout levels of students. MBI-SS has a 3-factor structure, consisting of exhaustion, depersonalisation and personal accomplishment items. Schaufeli et al. applied this scale to Dutch, Spanish and Portuguese students and reported that the scale is seemed to have adequate psychometric features in terms of 3-factor structure. The Turkish adaptation of the scale, its validity and reliability tests are carried out by Çapri, Gündüz, and Gökçakan (2011). A confirmatory factor analysis is made for the structure validity of adapted scale, it is found out that the correlation coefficients, acquired from the scale, are significant at .01 level. For the criterion-relevant validity study, the Burnout Scale Short Version (BS-SV) was applied and it was found out that the correlation coefficients between the total score of BS-SV and sub-factors of MBI-SS are statistically significant at .01 level. For the reliability of the scale, total item test correlation, test-retest correlation and Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficients are calculated. While, calculated total item test correlation of the scale is between .42 and .62 for the first sub-factor, it is between .61 and .69 for the second sub-factor and it is between .32 and .46 for the third sub-factor. In addition, while Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficients of the scale is found as .76 for the first sub-factor, .82 for the second sub-factor and .61 for the third sub-factor, test-retest reliability results are found respectively as .76, .74 and .70. All these results show that the scale is reliable.

For the expressions regarding the burnout in the MBI-SS Scale, participant students are asked to make scoring with 5-score Likert scale and the given scores

constitute the scores of exhaustion, depersonalisation and personal accomplishment, the sub-dimensions of burnout. In the scale, there are 13 items in total, 5 items for the exhaustion sub-dimension, 4 each for both the depersonalisation and the personal accomplishment sub-dimensions. The results of questionnaire, applied to the students, were interpreted with regard to the sub-dimension analysis criteria of Maslach Burnout Inventory – Student Survey. There is a positive relationship between burnout and exhaustion and depersonalisation sub-dimensions and there is a negative relationship between burnout and personal accomplishment sub-dimension.

UCLA Loneliness Scale was developed by Russell, Peplau, and Ferguson (1978). Russell et al. thought that loneliness was a common and serious problem and developing a scale in order to measure it was necessary. The correlation ($r=.67$) with Beck Depression Inventory is found as significant in the validity test of the scale. Internal consistency coefficient, measured for the reliability of the scale, is found as $\alpha=.94$. In order to analyse the stability of the scores, acquired from the scale, tests, carried out bimonthly, shows that the scale is significant ($r=.73$). Similar results were acquired from tests, carried out for the reliability of the scale in different countries. The Turkish adaptation, the reliability and validity tests of the scale was carried out by Demir (1989). For the reliability test, the scale was applied to two groups, divided into whether they were complaining about loneliness or not, the difference between the means of scores was compared with the t-test and the mean of the group, complaining about the loneliness, was found as 47.5, its standard deviation was found as 11.5. On the other hand, the mean of the group, not complaining about the loneliness, was found as 26.44 and the standard deviation was found as 10.8. It was observed that there is a significant ($t=6.29$; $p<.0001$) relationship between the two groups. This result supports the results acquired in the original study. Besides, its relationship with Beck Depression Inventory and the Social Introversion sub-scale was analysed, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient is found significant for both the Beck Depression Inventory ($r=.77$; $p<.0001$) and the Social Introversion sub-scale ($r=.82$; $p<.01$). For the reliability of the scale, internal consistency and test-retest tests were carried out by considering every item and the Cronbach alpha coefficient and its coefficients is calculated as .94 ($p<.001$). Consequently, the validity and reliability levels of UCLA Loneliness Scale are adequate.

UCLA Loneliness scale consists of 20 items, 10 of which are coded straight and 10 of which are coded inversely. A case, indicating thoughts regarding the feeling of loneliness, is presented in every item of the scale and it is asked to make scoring with the 4-Likert scale for how often they experience it. While answering the positive cases, never corresponds to 4, rarely to 3, sometimes to 2 and often to 1, the scoring is the exact opposites of them while answering the negative cases. In the scoring, the lowest score is 20 and the highest score is 80. It is accepted that high score indicates that the level of loneliness is high (Demir, 1989).

Data Analysis

Data was analysed with SPSS 22 packaged software. In order to make statistical analysis of the data, acquired from the study, descriptive statistics were used. In addition, Student t-test, one-way variance analysis (ANOVA) and Tukey test were used in order to determine if there is a significant difference between the groups. Linear

regression analysis is used in order to determine the relationship between the variables of the study. The reliability coefficient of burnout scale, used in the study, is found as .763 and the reliability coefficient of loneliness scale is found as .861. These results indicates that the reliability of the study is high.

Findings

According to the answers of the students, participating in this study, to the scales in the study, the means of scale is shown in Table 1.

Table 1
The Means of the Answers of the Students to the Scales

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Exhaustion	2.87	.965
Depersonalisation	2.59	1.011
Personal accomplishment	3.27	.836
Loneliness	47.64	13.038

For the expressions regarding the burnout in the Maslach Burnout Inventory – Student Form, participant students are asked to make scoring with 5-score Likert scale. With their scoring, the score averages for the sub-dimensions of burnout which are exhaustion, depersonalisation and personal accomplishment are created. In the scale, there are 13 items, 5 items for exhaustion sub-dimension and 4 items for the other dimensions. While exhaustion and depersonalisation affect positively burnout, there is a negative relationship between personal accomplishment and burnout. The burnout levels of students are interpreted according to the sub-dimension evaluation criteria of Maslach Burnout Inventory – Student Form in Table 2. According to this, the students are evaluated as “burnout at moderate level” when analysed the exhaustion sub-dimension, as “burnout at low level” when analysed the depersonalisation sub-dimension, as “burnout at moderate level” when analysed the personal accomplishment sub-dimension (Çelik, Bağrıaçık, & Oral, 2012).

Table 2
Maslach Burnout Inventory – Student Form Evaluation Criteria

Score	Lower - Upper Limit	The Interpretation, corresponding to the Score
1.00	1.00-1.80	Very low burnout
2.00	1.81-2.60	Low burnout
3.00	2.61-3.40	Moderate burnout
4.00	3.41-4.20	Mostly burnout
5.00	4.21-5.00	Highly burnout

There are 20 items, half of which is coded positively and half of which is coded negatively, in the UCLA Loneliness Scale. For the expressions regarding the loneliness participant students are asked to make scoring with 4-score Likert scale. The lowest score in the scoring is 20, the highest score is 80. It is accepted that the higher score is what the higher loneliness level is (Demir, 1989). In the study, the mean of scoring for UCLA Loneliness Scale are taken into account and it is accepted that students above this mean have high level of loneliness. The loneliness mean of study sample is measured as $\bar{X}= 47.64 \pm 13.038$. When analysed the loneliness score of 376 students in the study, it is observed that 192 students (51%) have scores above the average. According to this data, it is found out that at least 1 out of 2 students have the feeling of loneliness in the study population.

Table 3

The Frequency Distribution of Demographical Information of Participant Students

		<i>n</i>	%
Age Groups	18-19 years	125	33.2
	20-21 years	192	51.1
	22 or older	59	15.7
Gender	Female	254	67.6
	Male	122	32.4
Class	1 st Grade	255	67.8
	2 nd Grade	121	32.2
Emotional Relationship	Yes	226	60.1
	No	150	39.9
Close Friend Status	Yes	319	84.8
	No	57	15.2
The Status of Finding Adequate University's Social Opportunities	Yes	21	5.6
	No	213	56.6
	Partly	142	37.8
Family Income	2000 TL and less	21	5.6
	Between 2001 TL and 5000 TL	213	56.6
	5001TL and more	142	37.8

When analysed the results in the Table 3, it is seen that 33.2% of students are 18-19 years old, 67.6% of them is female, 67.8% of them is at the first grade, 39.9% of them has never been in an emotional relationship, 56.6% of them finds the social opportunities of university inadequate and the family income of 56.6% of them is between 2000TL and 5000TL.

The Relationship between Loneliness and the Sub-Dimensions of Burnout

In this part of the study, the correlation coefficients between the perception of loneliness and the sub-dimensions of burnout will be firstly analysed, then the effect of the perception of loneliness on the sub-dimensions of burnout will be analysed with the linear regression model.

Table 4

The Correlation Coefficients between the Perception of Loneliness and the Sub-Dimensions of Burnout

	Exhaustion	Depersonalisation	Personal Accomplishment	Loneliness
Exhaustion	1	.731**	-.134**	.279**
Depersonalisation		1	-.165**	.297**
Personal Accomplishment			1	-.315**
Loneliness				1

(**): it shows the significant relationship for $p < .01$.)

The correlation coefficients are given in Table 4 for the relationship between the perception of loneliness and the sub-dimensions of burnout and for the relationship within themselves. All correlation coefficients are found statistically significant. When analysed the relationship between the perception of loneliness and the sub-dimensions of burnout, it is seen that there is a positive relationship with exhaustion and depersonalisation, a negative relationship with personal accomplishment. Accordingly, it is expected that there is direct proportional relationship between the perceptions of exhaustion and depersonalisation and the perception of loneliness and an inversely proportional relationship between the perception of loneliness and the perception of personal accomplishment. Another finding is that the loneliness has the highest correlation (as absolute value) with personal accomplishment.

Table 5

The Findings of Linear Regression Analysis for the Effect of the Perception of Loneliness on the Burnout Level

	Regression Coefficient	Standard Regression Coefficient	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	1.89		10.418	.0000
Loneliness	.021	.279	5.61	.0000
<i>R</i>	<i>R Square</i>	<i>Corrected R Square</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
.279	.078	.075	31.472	.000a

The regression model, in which the explanatory variable (independent variable) is determined as the perception of loneliness and the response variable (dependent

variable) is determined as the perception of exhaustion, is given in Table 5. In the analysis, ANOVA is used, a statistically significant relationship between loneliness and exhaustion variables is found out. The determination coefficient of the model (modified) is found as .075. According to this data, 7.5% of the variability of the burnout variable is explained with the perception of loneliness variable via the linear regression model. According to the student-t test, used for the coefficient significance of the regression model, each coefficient is analysed and it is found that they are statistically significant. As can be seen from the positive coefficient of the loneliness variable, there is a positively linear relationship between the loneliness and burnout variables. According to the standard regression coefficient, it is seen that 1 unit increase in the perception of loneliness variable is expected to cause 0.279 unit increase in the perception of exhaustion variable.

Table 6

The Findings of Linear Regression Analysis for the Effect of the Perception of Loneliness on the Perception of Depersonalisation

	Regression Coefficient	Standard Regression Coefficient	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	1.89		10.418	.0000
Loneliness	.021	.279	5.61	.0000
<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> Square	Corrected <i>R</i> Square	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
.297a	.088	.086	36.071	.000a

The regression model, in which the explanatory variable (independent variable) is determined as the perception of loneliness and the response variable (dependent variable) is determined as the perception of depersonalisation, is given in Table 6. In the analysis, ANOVA is used, a statistically significant relationship between loneliness and depersonalisation variables is found out. The determination coefficient of the model (corrected) is found as .086. According to this data, 8.6% of the variability of the depersonalisation variable is explained with the perception of loneliness variable via the linear regression model. According to the student-t test, used for the coefficient significance of the regression model, each coefficient is analysed and it is found that they are statistically significant. As can be seen from the positive coefficient of the loneliness variable, there is a positively linear relationship between the loneliness and depersonalisation variables. According to the standard regression coefficient, it is seen that 1 unit increase in the perception of loneliness variable is expected to cause .297 unit increase in the perception of depersonalisation variable.

Table 7

The Findings of Linear Regression Analysis for the Effect of the Perception of Loneliness on the Perception of Personal Accomplishment

	Regression Coefficient	Standard Regression Coefficient	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	4.236		27.265	.0000
Loneliness	-.020	-.315	-6.413	.0000
<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> Square	Corrected <i>R</i> Square	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
.315	.099	.097	41.125	.000

The regression model, in which the explanatory variable (independent variable) is determined as the perception of loneliness and the response variable (dependent variable) is determined as the perception of personal accomplishment, is given in Table 7. The linear regression model, in which the independent variable is the perception of loneliness, the dependent variable is the personal accomplishment, is shown in Table 7. In the analysis, ANOVA is used, a statistically significant relationship between loneliness and personal accomplishment variables is found out. The determination coefficient of the model (modified) is found as .097. According to this data, 9.7% of the variability of the depersonalisation variable is explained with the perception of loneliness variable via the linear regression model. According to the student-t test, used for the coefficient significance of the regression model, each coefficient is analysed and it is found that they are statistically significant. As can be seen from the negative coefficient of the loneliness variable, there is a negatively linear relationship between these variables. According to the standard regression coefficient, it is seen that 1 unit increase in the perception of loneliness variable is expected to cause .315 unit increase in the perception of exhaustion variable.

Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, it is aimed to find out the effect of loneliness levels of students in vocational school of healthcare services on their burnout levels. It is found out that the loneliness levels of students are high, their burnout levels are medium. In this study, when analysed the loneliness scores of 376 students, it is observed that 192 students (51%) have scores above the average. According to this data, at least 1 out of 2 students, having participated in this study, experiences the feeling of loneliness. In addition, the relationship between the perception of loneliness and the sub-dimensions of burnout was analysed in the study. It is seen that the perception of loneliness has a positive relationship with exhaustion and depersonalisation, a negative relationship with personal accomplishment. Accordingly, it is expected that there is direct proportional relationship between the perceptions of exhaustion and depersonalisation and the perception of loneliness and an inversely proportional relationship between the perception of loneliness and the perception of personal accomplishment. When analysed the studies regarding the loneliness levels of students, it is seen that there are similar results with the findings of this study. According to the study, carried out by Özdemir and Tuncay (2008) in Ankara University, 60.2% of the students experience loneliness.

In the study, carried out by Seçim, Alpar, and Algür (2014) in Akdeniz University, 54% of the participant students have scores above the average. In other words, 1 out of 2 students experiences loneliness. In the study regarding the loneliness levels of university students, carried out by Diehl et al. (2018), it is found out that 32.4% of the students feel lonely.

When considered the results of the study, analysing the prevalence of burnout among the university students, it is seen that students generally experience high burnout level (Balkıs, Duru, Buluş, & Duru 2011; Brownlow & Reasinger, 2000; Çapulcuoğlu & Gündüz, 2013; Güdük, et al., 2005; Tümkaya & Çavuşoğlu, 2010). When analysed the results of this study in terms of the burnout level, they are different from the findings in the literature. In the study, carried out by Balkıs et al. (2011), it is found out that 75% of the participant teachers experience burnout. In the study, carried out by Çapulcuoğlu and Gündüz (2013), it is found out that the burnout levels of high school students are high. Contrary to this study, there are studies, in which the burnout level is found low, in the literature. In the study, carried out by Çelik et al. (2012) in order to find out the burnout levels of architecture students, it is found out that the burnout levels of students are low.

When analysed separately the body of literature for loneliness and burnout syndromes, although there are several studies, there is not any study regarding the effect of the feeling of loneliness on the level of burnout. In the studies, it is seen that the relationship of loneliness is generally analysed with the variables such as perceived social support, peer and family relationships, social personal accomplishment, psychosocial harmony, satisfaction with life, self-respect (Dost Tuzgöl, 2007; Güloğlu & Kararımak, 2010; Karahan, Sardoğan, Özkamalı, & Menteş, 2006; Oktan, 2005; Oruç, 2013; Yılmaz, Yılmaz & Karaca, 2008; Zorbaz & Dost, 2014).

In the study named “Investigating the relationships between loneliness and learning burnout”, carried out by Lin and Huang (2012), it is found out that there is a high correlation between the loneliness and burnout of students, the burnout levels of students increase when their loneliness levels increase. In the study on the university students at the first grade, carried out by O’Donovan and Hughes (2007), they state that loneliness has effects on the stress and psychosocial interventions are required to prevent the stress. In the study, Seppala and King (2017) state that burnout in the workplace is not arisen from the loneliness or social isolation but the emotional exhaustion. They emphasise that the more a person burn out, the more s/he feels lonely.

In the study, carried out by Özodaşık (1989) among the university students, it is found out that there is negative relationship between loneliness and assertiveness and positive relationship between loneliness and anxiety and depression. A negative relationship between loneliness and academic achievement is found out. In the study of İçer (2016), it is found out that the feeling of loneliness affects significantly self-respect in a negative way. By and large, when considered these studies, it can be said that the feeling of loneliness is a syndrome which affects negatively the psychological state of a person. In this sense, the finding of this study complies with the literature.

Only one study regarding the effect of loneliness on burnout, carried out by Aşık (2016) about the effect of loneliness in the workplace on burnout, stands out in the literature. Aşık found out that there is a positive and high correlation between loneliness in the workplace and exhaustion in the correlation analysis. Results of the study show

that loneliness in the workplace is a serious problem and the perception of loneliness affect significantly the burnout levels of staff. In this sense, the results of this study coincide with the results in the study of Aşık (2016).

The effect of loneliness status of students in Harran University Vocational School of Healthcare Services on their burnout perceptions is analysed. According to the results of statistical analyses, the reliability of the study is high. There is a positive linear relationship between the loneliness and burnout variables. According to the standard regression coefficient, it is seen that 1 unit increase in the perception of loneliness variable is expected to cause .279 unit increase in the perception of exhaustion variable.

Implications

Students, who have started to university, pass through an important transition which requires high adaptation period. Hence, it can be recommended an orientation program for the first grade students. According to the findings of this study, it is important to have psychological counselling and guidance services in universities, and if available, informing student about them, their awareness of the importance of this service and being easily accessible are necessary. In order to promote the socialization of student, creating social groups and organising activities for this purpose can be recommended. On the other hand, students, separating from their families and studying in a different city, can face with the serious problems such as accommodation and nutrition that affect negatively their life qualities. In terms of decreasing the loneliness and burnout feeling, it is an important factor to determine which student has these problems, support them with scholarship and some social opportunities.

Due to the fact that there are not enough psychosocial support and counselling services for the students in the universities, the psychological state and the loneliness levels of university students are uncertain and they should be researched.

Statement of Responsibility

Hüseyin Eriş; conceptualization, methodology, validation, formal analysis, investigation, resources, data curation, writing – original draft, writing- reviewing & editing, visualization, supervision, and project administration. Sinem Barut; conceptualization, methodology, validation, investigation, resources, data curation, writing – original draft, writing- reviewing & editing, and visualization.

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