

Analysis of Vocational Choice Satisfactions and Factors Affecting Vocational Choices of University Students in According to Some Independent Variables

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ABSTRACT

The general purpose of this study is to analyze the factors affecting university students' vocational choices and their satisfaction with their vocational choices in terms of gender and economic situation perception variables. In line with this general purpose, firstly, the affecting factors of the vocational choices of university students were determined, and then the satisfaction of university students with their vocational choices was examined. Following these determinations, the factors affecting vocational choice for male and female students and whether vocational satisfaction differs in terms of the economic situation perceived by male and female students were investigated. This research, which aims to determine the factors affecting university students' vocational choices and their satisfaction with their vocational choices, is in a comparative type of relational screening model. The scanning model is used to detect a situation, individual or object that occurred in the past or is still ongoing, in its own conditions and as it exists. In determining the sample size, the number criterion corresponding to five times the number of items in the survey was taken as the basis. Since the number of items in the scale is 25, the sample must be at least 125. This research was conducted in 2014 with 692 university students in Anadolu University, Hacettepe University, Selçuk University and Yalova University. Data were collected with the "Vocational Choice Survey" (VCS) developed by the researchers based on literature review. VCS consists of 25 open and closed-ended questions covering vocational choice characteristics. SPSS 21 statistical package program was used to analyze the data collected from the students. Frequency distribution and Chi-Square Test were used to analyze the data. Research findings reveal that the most important factor affecting university students' vocational choices is the employment opportunities of the department they study in. Apart from this, it is seen that the suitability of the department of study with their personality, the university entrance score obtained, the desire to meet the demands of the family and the increase in demand for the department of study are also effective factors in the vocational choices of university students. The research results show that the university students included in the research have high levels of vocational satisfaction. In addition, the results of the research reveal that university students' perceptions of their economic situation are not a factor affecting their vocational choices and satisfaction, but gender is an important variable affecting the vocational choices and satisfaction of university students. Based on these research findings, it can be recommended to make reforms in the education system that will increase male students' satisfaction in their professional choices and transform their social role perceptions.

Keywords: Vocation, Vocational choice, Factors, Satisfaction, Gender.

INTRODUCTION

Vocational choice is one of the most important determinants of a person's probability of finding a job, his income level, his way of living, whether he does his job willingly or not, his success at work, his sense of responsibility, whether he is happy or not. For this reason, vocational choice is seen as an important turning point in individuals' lives and is considered a process that affects almost the entire future of the individual

because it affects the individual's living standards and future plans (Yurdakal, 2019: 1206). Another issue regarding the vocational choice is that the name of a certain vocation also represents certain information about the people who practice that vocation. The vocation he chooses reflects the person's motivation for the vocation, his insight about himself, his abilities, his way of perception, and his knowledge and perception about that vocation (Kuzgun, 2000: 131; Hepkul, 2014: 43). In this respect, it is possible to express the vocational choice as the choice of one's lifestyle. Therefore, vocational choice is truly one of the most important turning points in human life. For this reason, making the right decision about the individual's vocation plays an important role in being happy and successful in life (Pekkaya and Çolak, 2013: 799).

The decision to choose a vocation is one of the most important decisions that individuals make throughout their lives, both in terms of determining their future life and providing opportunities for people to realize themselves. In order to make the right decision, a person must know his own qualifications and be able to establish a meaningful relationship between the two by getting to know the vocations. In other words, a person's ability to be successful and happy depends on the quality of the vocation he chooses (Sharf, 2006: 26).

According to Holland (1997), individuals who know their own interests and abilities will actively seek a vocation that suits them, and there is a relationship between vocational development and personality dynamics, the environment in which vocations are created, and the activities required by vocations. For example, there are six types of personality and six types of vocation, and the vocational choice is a reflection of personality. Individual's vocational choice; it determines the interaction between the person's behavior, personality type and the characteristics of the environment (Kniveton, 2004: 48; Pilavcı, 2007: 32-33; Pekkaya and Çolak, 2013: 801).

According to Roe's (1957) theory; Choosing a vocation is a phenomenon that emerges with the needs in the early stages of life. According to Roe, people whose need to be loved is not met sufficiently or whose conditioned to need, tend to pursue vocations that do not require interaction with people in the future (Roe, 1957: 212. Cited in Pekkaya and Çolak, 2013: 801).

According to the Trait Factor Theory developed by EG Williamson based on the studies conducted by Frank Parsons, the closer there is between the qualifications required by a vocation and the qualities of the individual, the higher the probability of vocational success in working life. Therefore, if individuals choose the right vocations for themselves and receive training compatible with their personal qualities, they become more successful in their business lives, their contributions to the workplace increase, they work more efficiently, and their personal satisfaction is also greater (Lent and Brown, 2006; Hepkul, 2014: 42-43).

Choosing a vocation is an extremely complex process. Due to this nature of the process, it becomes difficult to determine the factors that are effective in the process, to explain the relationship between the factors, and to determine those that will positively affect the outputs or the effect of each factor on the output. In this process, psychological factors such as abilities, interests, values, needs and social factors such as socio-economic level and gender are effective. At the same time, according to the Developmental Theories put forward by Ginzberg et al. and Super, age is also an important factor in the vocational selection process. According to this theory, people's recognition of their self and values increases with advancing age. Indeed, people's attitudes towards vocational choices, which are purely emotional and imaginary at first, begin to become more realistic as they get older (Pekkaya and Çolak, 2013: 799).

Ginzberg defines the period between the ages of 20-25 as the realistic period in choosing a vocational, the Super period as the period between the ages of 18-21 as the period when discussions and the validity of the choices are tested, and the period between the ages of 22-24 as the period when reality is taken into consideration more (Kıyak, 2006: 54-57). According to Developmental Theories, the most realistic decision-making age for vocational choice is the age of 18, which corresponds to post-secondary education in our

country (Kuzgun, 2000: 166-177; Hepkul, 2014: 43-44).

People often have multiple potentials and are suitable for more than one vocation. Which of a person's various talents will be appropriate to evaluate through vocational activities is determined by his social position and the reinforcing or inhibiting attitude of the environment, especially his family (Kuzgun, 2000; Hepkul, 2014: 43). In this context, family is an important factor that must be taken into consideration when choosing a vocation. In addition to the factors mentioned above, when choosing a vocation, income advantages, vocational opportunities, job security elements, etc. It is known that many factors are effective.

As can be seen, many factors are effective in individuals' vocational choices, although their theoretical bases are different. In the vocational preferences of individuals revealed by research with a categorical approach, the economic return of the vocation, the prestige of the vocation or the individual's social status expectation, employment opportunities, the suitability of the vocation to the individual's interest, physical and mental structure, the suitability of the vocation to the individual's future goals or vocational expectations, the individual's vocational knowledge and skills. level, vocational experience, the individual's environment depending on the family, society, country and culture in which he lives, upbringing, individual's expectation of responsibility, socio-economic status, educational status of their families, family vocation, future outlook of the vocation, personal and demographic characteristics, etc. It can be said that many factors are effective (Yurdakal, 2019: 1206-1209; Pekkaya and Çolak, 2013: 803; Dinç, 2008: Genç, Kaya and Genç, 2007: 50):

Research reveals that vocational choices are mainly based on economic factors, and therefore people's vocational choices differ from their actual interests. As a matter of fact, it is known that many vocations in our country have become more preferred due to reasons such as increasing employment opportunities and better living conditions. In particular, the economic situation of the family is an important factor in taking into account the economic conditions of the vocation in an individual's vocational choice. In the context of this factor, students may turn to vocations with higher prestige depending on their families' socio-economic levels, as well as vocations that they can acquire in a very short time (Yurdakal, 2019: 1207).

It is also a known fact that in our country, university students make vocational choices based on the score they received from the university entrance exam rather than the vocation they choose due to the university entrance system, without having any knowledge about the field in which they will study. University students in Turkey often make their vocational choices by chance. However, when university students start their vocational lives, their ability to do their jobs effectively depends on their high level of vocational interest, independent of other factors. If their level of interest in the vocation they are trained for is low, their level of vocational satisfaction will be low, no matter how good the other vocational conditions are. In this case, the most important factor that will affect the vocational satisfaction of university students is their personalities that reveal their vocational interests and abilities. Individuals either develop their qualifications according to the characteristics of the vocation they choose, or the vocations they choose reflect their personality traits. Therefore, it is extremely important for students to choose vocations that suit their personalities, both in terms of their motivation during the education process and their vocational success. As Holland stated, when the vocation and personality match, a person finds satisfaction, continues his job and advances in his vocation. Considering that vocational satisfaction is an important factor in vocational success, it is necessary to determine the factors affecting students' vocational satisfaction in order to implement policies and practices aimed at increasing success both in the educational process and in vocational life (Aytaç and Bayram, 2001: 90).

When the literature is examined, it can be seen that the factors affecting the vocational choices of high school students and university students and the reasons for choosing some vocations are examined by Yurdakal (2019), Akar (2012), Aypay (2003), Ekiz, 2006; Arslan (2002), Çelik and Üzmez (2014), Dinç (2008), Erol, Yergin and Mercan (2012), Genç, Kaya and Genç (2007), Gökgöz and Zeytin (2012), Karadağ

(2012) has been researched by Pekkaya and Çolak (2013), Yılmaz, Dursun, Pektaş and Altay (2012). On the other hand, it seems that research on analyzing the vocational choice satisfaction of undergraduate university students in terms of various variables is very limited. In this context, this study aimed to determine the factors affecting the vocational choices of university students, as well as their satisfaction with their vocational choices, and to determine whether they differ in terms of various variables. In line with this main purpose, answers to the following questions were sought in the research:

- What are the factors affecting the vocational choices of university students?
- What are the vocational choice satisfaction levels of university students?
- Do the factors affecting university students' vocational choices differ according to gender and economic status perception variables?
- Does university students' satisfaction with their vocational choices differ according to gender and economic status perception variables?

METHOD

Research Model

This research, which aims to determine the factors affecting university students' vocational choices and their satisfaction with their vocational choices, is in a comparative type of relational screening model. The scanning model is used to detect a situation, individual or object that occurred in the past or is still ongoing, in its own conditions and as it exists (Karasar, 2000). With survey research, data is collected in order to determine the intended characteristics of the study group (Büyüköztürk et al., 2008; Karaca, Karaca, Karamustafaoğlu and Özcan, 2021).

Population and Sample

In determining the sample size, the number criterion corresponding to five times the number of items in the survey was taken as the basis. Since the number of items in the scale is 25, the sample must be at least 125. The research was conducted on 710 students studying at Anadolu University, Hacettepe University, Selçuk University and Yalova University in the spring semester of the 2013-2014 academic year. Since 18 surveys were not filled out in accordance with the instructions, the data obtained from 692 of the students were included in the analysis.

DATA AND COLLECTION

Data were collected with the "Vocational Choice Survey" (VCS) developed by the researcher based on literature review. VCS consists of 25 open and closed-ended questions covering vocational choice characteristics. While 13 of these questions are related to the demographic, social and economic characteristics of the students, 12 of them were prepared to measure the vocational choices of the students.

VCS, which was prepared by reviewing field research on vocational choice and the scales developed on these subjects, was examined by an expert in terms of language. In terms of content validity, the opinions of field experts working at universities were consulted. In line with the opinions of field experts, the necessary corrections were made and the data collection tool developed to determine the vocational choices of university students took its final form.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

The following techniques were used to analyze the data in accordance with the purpose of the research:

- Factors affecting students’ vocational preferences and their satisfaction with their vocational preferences were evaluated using frequency distribution on the basis of open and closed-ended questions.
- Chi-Square test was used to test whether the factors affecting students’ vocational choices and their satisfaction with their vocational choices differ according to gender and economic situation perception variables. While performing the Chi-Square test, in cases where the number of pores with an expected value of less than 5 exceeds 20% of the total number of pores, a combination is made at the row/column levels where the expected value is low in order to increase the number of observations in the pores and, as a result, the expected values (Büyüköztürk, 2002). , p.142). In line with this requirement, the “strongly disagree” reaction category, which is among the reaction categories (strongly agree, agree, undecided and disagree) given to the factors affecting vocational choice and vocational preference satisfaction expressions, was combined with the previous category, the “disagree” category and was predicted that the number of pores with an expected value of less than 5 could be reduced to below 20%.

In all analyzes conducted in the study, the significance level was accepted as .05 and those with higher significance are stated in the relevant tables. SPSS 21 statistical package program was used to analyze the data collected from the students .

RESULTS

Factors Affecting Students’ Vocational Choices

The university students included in the research according to the factors affecting their choice of the department they are currently attending is shown in Table 1:

Table 1. Distribution by Factors Effective in Students’ Choice of the Department They Currently Attend

Factors Affecting Your Vocational Choice	N	%
1) University entrance score	64	9.2
2) Meeting the family’s wishes	11th	1.6
3) Hope of finding a job	327	47.3
4) Compatibility between personality and vocation	171	24.7
5) Increase in demand for the vocation	39	5.6
6) Other	80	11.6
Total	692	100

When Table 1 is examined, almost half of the students (47.30%) choose their department with the hope of finding a job; 24.70% find their preferred vocation suitable for their personality. According to Table 1, although not as effective as “hope of finding a job” and “personality and vocation compatibility” in students’ department choices, factors such as “university entrance score”, “increased demand for their preferred profession” and “the demands of the family” affect students’ career choices. In addition, it is seen that 11.60% of the students included in the research marked “other” and stated that more than one factor was effective in their vocational choices. For these students, different combinations of factors such as the compatibility between personality and vocation, university entrance score and increasing demand for their preferred vocation, as well as the hope of finding a job, were effective in their vocational choice.

When choosing a vocation, it is an important factor that the vocation to be chosen is suitable for your

personality structure. However, only 171 of the 692 students included in the study chose the department they were studying in simply because they found it suitable for their personalities. Based on this finding, it reveals that university students do not or cannot pay attention to whether the department they choose is suitable for their personality structure when choosing a department. Moreover, the current education system has not developed an examination system that matches the vocational competencies of the departments with the suitability of the personality structure. Students have to choose appropriate departments depending on the sufficiency of their university entrance scores.

Undoubtedly, “university entrance score” is an important factor in terms of professional choice for all departments. Because students can make vocational choices based on their university entrance scores and can only choose departments for which their scores are sufficient. As a matter of fact, research shows that 63% of university students do not list the department they attended or graduated from among their first three choices in the university exam (Aytaç and Bayram, 2001: 90). In this context, it would be appropriate to examine the university preference rankings of the students included in the research and the place of the department they are currently attending in this ranking. It is seen that a significant majority of the students included in the research ($n = 311$, 44.94%) prefer primarily the faculty and department they are studying. In fact, 120 of these students chose the department they studied in first place. On the other hand, 381 of the students included in the research stated that they did not voluntarily choose the faculty and department they studied at.

Like the university entrance score, the obligation to meet the demands of the family is an important factor determining vocational choice in our country. As a matter of fact, 11 of 692 students stated that they made their vocational choice to meet their family’s wishes. This finding supports the research findings of Genç, Kaya and Genç (2007), in which they stated that familial and environmental factors are among the factors that guide individuals in choosing a vocation.

The results of my research show that more than half of the students settle in the department they study in with the hope of finding a job, and that they care most about economic expectations in their vocational choices. This finding obtained by the research supports the research finding of Yurdakal (2019) and Dinç (2008), in which they stated that the factor that individuals attach most importance to in their vocational choice is economic standards.

Students’ Vocational Choice Satisfaction

The university students included in the study according to their satisfaction with choosing the department they are currently attending is given in Table 2.

The distribution of the university students included in the study according to their vocational choice satisfaction is given in Table 2.

Table 2. Distribution of Students According to Vocational Choice Satisfaction

Vocational Choice Satisfaction	N	%
1) Yes	616	89.02
2) No	76	10.08
Total	692	100

When Table 2 is examined, it can be seen that the majority of the students included in the study (89.02%) are satisfied with choosing the department they are currently attending, while a significant 10.08% are not satisfied with the department they are currently attending. In fact, it was determined that all 76 students were

willing to change the department they were attending. This situation reveals that students are not very voluntary in their vocational choices and are forced to make vocation choices regardless of their own interests, abilities and personality structures. Because the education system prevents students from choosing the vocation they want. In university education, it is seen that students' scores in university entrance exams are important instead of choosing a vocation they like, and they use their choices in line with the wishes of society and the environment rather than making a conscious choice. This situation may inevitably lead to students being forced to study in schools they do not want and to start life in a vocation they do not like (Aytaç and Bayram, 2001: 90).

Whether the Factors Effective in Students' Vocational Choices Differ Depending on Gender and Economic Status Perception Variables

In this part of the research, it was tried to determine whether the factors affecting students' vocational choices differ according to gender and economic situation perception variables.

According to Gender

Whether the factors effective in the university students' vocational choices differ according to gender are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Chi-Square Test Results on Whether the Factors Effective in Students' Vocational Choices Differ According to Gender

Factors Effective in Choosing a Vocational	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Gender	N/%	N/%	N/%	N/%	N/%	N/%	N/%
Woman	39 5.60%	9 1.30%	197 28.50%	132 19.10%	28 4.00%	61 8.80%	466 67.30%
Male	25 3.60%	2 0.30%	130 18.80%	39 5.60%	11th 1.60%	19 2.70%	226 32.70%
Total	64 9.20%	11th 1.60%	327 47.30%	171 24.70%	39 5.60%	80 11.60%	692 100%

$\chi^2=20.52$ df=5 p=.001* *p<.01 **p<.05

When Table 3 is examined, there is a significant (p<.01) difference in the students' level of agreement with the factors affecting their professional choices in terms of gender. According to this result, male students prefer the department they study in because they think that they will find a job more easily than female students and the university exam score is only sufficient for the department they study in, while female students prefer departments and professions that they find more suitable for their personality than male students.

When Table 3 is examined, there is a significant (p<.01) difference in the students' level of agreement with the factors affecting their vocational choices in terms of gender. According to this result, male students choose the department they study in because they think that they will find a job more easily than female students and the university exam score is only sufficient for the department they study in. On the other hand, female students prefer the departments they study in because they see them as the best vocation they can do and because they find them suitable for their personality structure. The reason for this difference between men and women can be explained by the roles assigned according to gender. As a matter of fact, in our country, men who have to support the household due to the social division of labor look at their income and employment opportunities, regardless of whether the vocation they choose suits their personality

structure.

According to Perception of Economic Situation

Whether the factors effective in the university students' vocational choices differ according to their perception of economic situation are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Chi-Square Test Results on Whether the Factors Effective in Students' Vocational Choices Differ According to Their Perception of Economic Situation

Factors Effective in Choosing a Vocational	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Perception of Economic Situation	N/%	N/%	N/%	N/%	N/%	N/%	N/%
Good	27 3.90%	6 0.90%	147 21.20%	94 13.60%	22 3.20%	45 6.50%	341 49.30%
Neither good nor bad	34 4.90%	5 0.70%	157 22.70%	67 9.70%	17 2.50%	27 3.90%	307 44.40%
Bad	3 0.40%	0 0.00%	23 3.30%	10 1.40%	0 0.00%	8 1.20%	44 6.40%
Total	64 9.20%	11th 1.60%	327 47.30%	171 24.70%	39 5.60%	80 11.60%	692 100%

$$\chi^2=14.87 \text{ df}=10 \text{ p}=.137$$

When Table 4 is examined, it is seen that there is no significant difference ($p > .01$ and $.05$) in the students' level of agreement with the factors affecting their vocational choices in terms of their perception of the economic situation. This result reveals that the perception of the economic situation is not an important variable in terms of participation in the factors affecting vocational choice.

Whether Students' Vocational Choice Satisfaction Differs Depending on Gender and Economic Status Perception Variables

In this part of the research, it was tried to determine whether the vocational choice satisfaction of the students included in the research differed according to gender and economic situation perception variables.

According to Gender

Chi-Square test results regarding whether the career choice satisfaction of the students included in the research differ according to gender are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Chi-Square Test Results on Whether Students' Satisfaction with Vocational Choices Differences According to Gender

Vocational Choice Satisfaction	I'm satisfied	I am not satisfied	Total
Gender	N/%	N/%	N/%
Woman	426 61.60%	40 5.80%	466 67.30%
Male	190 27.50%	36 5.20%	226 32.70%
Total	616	76	692

	89.00%	11.00%	100%
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$\chi^2=8.40$ df=1 p=.004* *p<.01 **p<.05

When Table 5 is examined, there is a significant (p<.01) difference in the students' level of agreement with their vocational choice satisfaction in terms of gender. Accordingly, female students' vocational choice satisfaction levels are higher than male students' vocational choice satisfaction levels. This result supports the finding that male students prefer the department they study in because they think they will find a job more easily than female students and because their university exam score is only sufficient for the department they study in. On the other hand, it supports the finding that female students, unlike men, prefer vocations that they find more suitable for their personality structures.

According to Perception of Economic Situation

Chi-Square test results regarding whether the vocational choice satisfaction of the students included in the research differ according to their perception of economic situation are shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Chi-Square Test Results on Whether Students' Satisfaction with Vocational Choices Differences According to Their Perception of Economic Situation

Vocational Choice Satisfaction	Pleased	I am not satisfied	Total
Perception of Economic Situation	N/%	N/%	N/%
Good	310	31	341
	44.80%	4.50%	49.30%
Neither good nor bad	269	38	307
	38.90%	5.50%	44.40%
Bad	37	7	44
	5.30%	1	6.40%
Total	616	76	692
	89.00%	11.00%	100%

$\chi^2=2.95$ df=2 p=.229

When Table 6 is examined, students' satisfaction with their vocational choices does not show a significant difference (p>.01 and .05) in terms of their perception of the economic situation. This result reveals that the perception of the economic situation is not an important variable in terms of vocational choice satisfaction.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The research results support the literature on the subject and indicate that students prefer the department they are currently attending; It reveals that at least one of the factors "University Entrance Score", "Meeting the Family's Requests", "Hope of Finding a Job", "Compatibility Between Personality and Vocation" and "Increase in Demand for the Vocation" is effective. However, among these factors, the hope of finding a job and the compatibility between personality and vocation appear to stand out as the dominant factors affecting vocational choice.

According to the research findings, while the vast majority of students (89.02%) are satisfied with choosing the department they are currently attending, a significant 10.08% of them are not satisfied with the department they are currently attending. As a matter of fact, the fact that more than half of the students

included in the research do not include the department they study in among their primary preferences, but prefer departments with higher scores, supports this situation. Despite this, it is seen that a significant majority of students (76.16%) are not willing to change the department they are currently attending, and only 23.84% of the students want to change the department they are currently attending. This situation can be explained by the employment opportunities offered by the departments studied.

Research results reveal that the factors affecting students' vocational choice differ according to gender. In this context, the reasons why male and female students choose the department they study differ. Compared to female students, it is seen that the hope of finding an easy job and the university entrance score are effective in the vocational choices of male students. On the other hand, unlike boys, it seems that the most effective factor in the vocational choices of female students is the compatibility between the vocation and their personality structures.

The results of the research reveal that male students' satisfaction with their vocational choice is lower than female students, in other words, their satisfaction with the department they are currently attending, and that they do not find their preferred vocation suitable for their personalities compared to female students. Based on this result, it is clear that measures should be taken to increase male students' satisfaction with their vocational choices and that educational reform is needed to transform their perception of their social roles.

It is hoped that this research, which aims to determine the factors affecting students' vocational choices and their vocational choice satisfaction, will provide a data source and be guiding in terms of education policies, social policies, employment policies, and universities' demands for opening programs. In addition, the results of the research are expected to make a serious contribution to the national and international literature and to researchers studying vocational choice and vocational satisfaction.

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